

Vanier Community Newsletter – Week 20 (January 31, 2025)

Dear Vanier Family,

This Friday (Jan. 31), we officially commenced semester 2. As we turn the page, we congratulate our Vanier students for their hard work and perseverance throughout the first semester. We encourage all students to continue working at their highest potential as they move into semester 2. At the end of the school year, we will identify all the students in grades 9 – 11 who have earned an 80% or more overall average in their courses. We will recognize these students at our annual awards celebration in the Fall of 2025, an event that underscores the importance of academic excellence. As per usual, we will recognize and celebrate those in grade 12 at our annual graduation ceremony at the end of June.



In addition to celebrating and recognizing students for their academic achievements, we will also acknowledge students in grades 9 – 12 who have demonstrated exemplary character, leadership, and contribution to our school with some special awards described below.

Perseverance and Personal Achievement Award: Awarded to students who have demonstrated outstanding perseverance, personal growth, and commitment to success.

School Life Award: Awarded to students who have made significant contributions in at least three of the following areas: student leadership, environmental initiatives, peer tutoring, curricular program involvement, athletic involvement, and other extra-curricular activities.

Outstanding Leadership Award: This award recognizes a student for their exceptional leadership and service to their school and/or their community.

School Service Award: Awarded to a student who has demonstrated care and support of fellow students, shown consistent respect for others, helped facilitate a more positive experience/cultural harmony for students at Vanier, and demonstrated active community involvement.

As you know, Vanier is a bustling and vibrant place and will be even more so in Semester 2! There are so many things to look forward to, including our African Heritage and Chinese Heritage month activities during February, our annual talent show, VIBE, in April, our Prom in early June, and graduation near the end of June. With all these activities, plus the monthly holidays, semester 2 will go fast! Students will have to be extra diligent in their schoolwork to ensure that they are always putting in 100% effort and not procrastinating with their assignments. And we, as a staff, will continue to support them and provide opportunities that enrich their mental health and well-being.

Let's make this a great semester, Vanier!

Karen Johnson

Principal, Georges Vanier SS
416-395-3250 Ext. 20010

<https://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/georgesvanier>

Susan Tsin

Daniel Muttiah

2024-2025 Vanier School Advisory Council Members

Nalini Devineni (Co-Chair)	Ivy Chi
Stephanie Hennaoui (Co-Chair)	Helen Huang
Danielle Ferguson-Shivrattan (Secretary)	Amit Koul
Cordelia Ramses (Treasurer)	Sachida Tiwari
Mohammad Rashed Ahmazai	Susanna Scocchia (Teacher Rep)
Fely Beck	Neha Devineni (Student Rep)

Our next parent council meeting will be on **Tuesday, March 4th, 2025, from 6:30 – 8:00 pm.** At this meeting we will be having a special presentation from our school's social worker, as she shares strategies for navigating life with teenagers. We look forward to seeing many of you there.

Parenting for Liberation – In Conversation with Trina Greene Brown

Join the Parent/Caregiver and Community Engagement Office in collaboration with the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement for Parenting for Liberation – ***In Conversation with Trina Greene Brown***. We invite parents and caregivers who identify as Black and/or are raising Black children to engage in a powerful storytelling experience. We will explore ways to amplify Black children's voices and nurture joyful Black families.

Date: **February 5, 2025**

Time: **6:30 – 7:30 p.m.**

Location: Virtual, [Registration link](#)

For more information contact, jeffrey.caton@tdsb.on.ca, Centrally Assigned Principal, or rukiya.mohamed@tdsb.on.ca, Program Coordinator, Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement.

Looking for Feedback from TDSB's Muslim Community members

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) invites TDSB students, families and community members who self-identify as part of the Muslim diaspora to attend a community consultation. These consultations will support the development of a multi-dimensional strategy to affirm Muslim identities and address Islamophobia within the TDSB. Attendees are encouraged to participate in conversations exploring the various ways the TDSB can nurture, affirm, and support Muslim students, families, and community members, while also understanding and addressing manifestations of Islamophobia. Click [here](#) to access more information about this event.

Student Activity Fee

This year's student activity fee (SAF) will be \$35 per student OR \$60.00 if you have two children in our school. This SAF fee pays for a Yearbook, student ID card, and Student Council activities. **By the end of this month, we will have to submit to our publishers the number of yearbooks to produce for our school. As such, parents are encouraged to use School Cash Online to pay their child's student activity fee, so they won't miss out on the yearbook, as soon as possible.** If needed, financial assistance is available to offset the activity fee. You may contact the principal to provide/obtain more information.

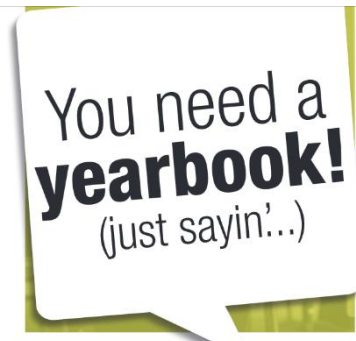


PHOTO DAY for STUDENTS.

Edge Imaging Photography will be back in the building on **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2025** (morning ONLY) to take photos for Vanier students who did not get photos or an ID card in the Fall. Students will be called down in the morning. Be sure to bring your best smile! See flyer below!

Grade 12 students who still need to sit for a Graduation Photo Session may also book a time for grad photos online for this same day (Feb. 18). The sitting fee is \$35. See flyer below!

Achievement

Timetable Changes. For semester 2, students will begin four new courses. Some students may want to make timetable changes based on their semester one achievements and interests. Please click on this [link](#) for information on how to request timetable changes.

Please note that there are limited options in semester 2 as most courses are already full.



Course Fair Day – Feb 5th, 2025. Students will have the opportunity to learn about the courses offered at each grade level so they can be better prepared to make their course selections in MyBlueprint, if they are returning to Vanier next school year. The absolutely last day to enter your courses into myBlue Print will be February 24th, 2025.

Semester 2 Report Cards. These will be emailed on **Wednesday, February 5th, 2025**, to parents/caregivers and students. As usual, if you do not receive the email or cannot access the report card, please do not hesitate to contact our Main office.

YOUR PHOTO DAY IS APPROACHING!

February 18!



Showcase Your Best Smile

- Students will be photographed at school.
- You must be photographed to receive your student ID.
- Review your images and purchase online with ease!



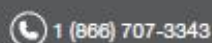
DON'T FORGET

To help make your photo day seamless, check out our photo day tips at edgeimaging.ca/photo-day-tips



GET REMINDERS

Sign up for notifications at edgeimaging.ca/photoday to get real-time updates about your photo day and stay in the know with Edge.



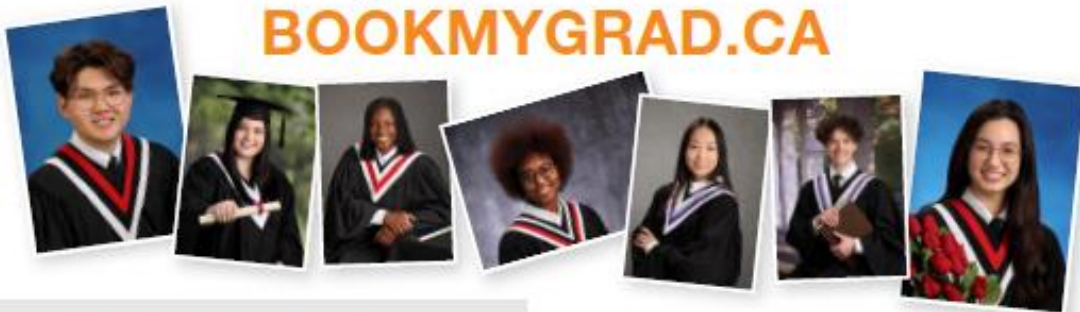


GRAD PHOTOS

DON'T MISS OUT!

Book your portrait session at

BOOKMYGRAD.CA



#EdgeGrad25

Do Good & Get Rewarded!

Find out how you could win a bursary
Check out edgeimaging.ca/win
for details

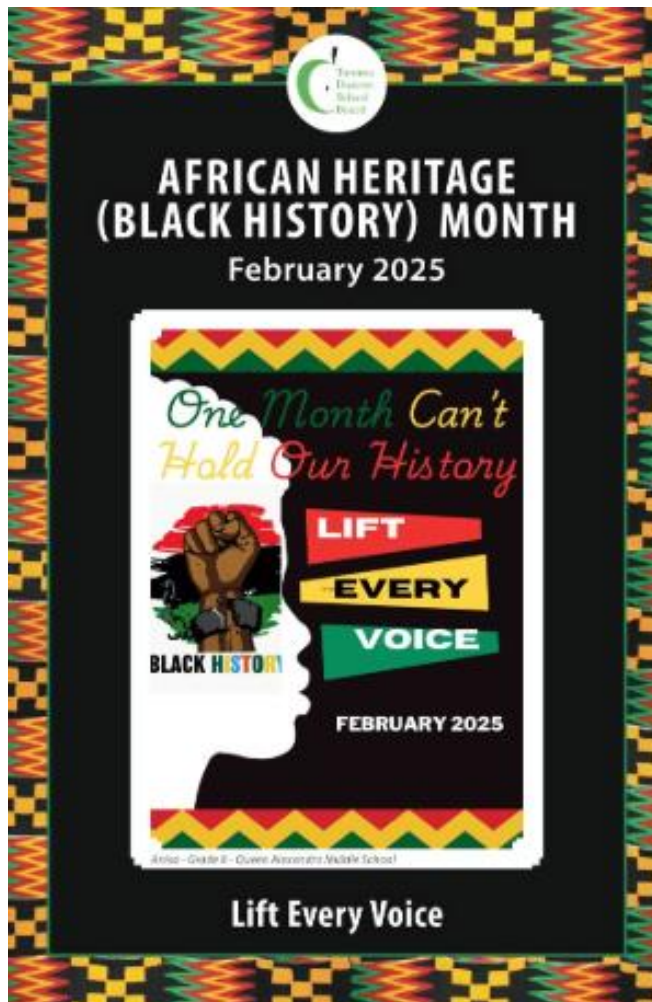
Book your session today!

Grab your student card and go to **bookmygrad.ca** to book your Graduation Photo Session! Enter your school code and student number to get started.

SCHOOL CODE: GVR (photos on Feb 18)

Equity

African-Heritage Month at the TDSB - February 2025. During the month of February, the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) proudly recognizes African Heritage (Black History) Month. African Heritage (Black History) Month is recognized across Canada, thanks to The Honourable MP Jean Augustine, who introduced the motion in the House of Commons in December 1995; it officially took effect in February in 1996.



The [Black History Month Act](#) was also passed in Ontario in 2016 and has been formally recognized since. African Heritage (Black History) Month is an occasion to commemorate present and past individuals who helped shape the path of our future student leaders, while also celebrating the many achievements and contributions of numerous individuals with this heritage! Their voices and actions impact our society, and work to continuously improve the world we live in.

The chosen theme for 2024-2025 is **Lift Every Voice**. This theme is drawn from the iconic first line of the Black National Anthem, resonates deeply as it encourages collective strength, unity, diversity, and resilience. Whether you identify as Black, African, African-Caribbean, Black 2SLGBTQI+ or African-Indigenous, this powerful phrase invites us to acknowledge and celebrate our shared heritage, recognize our historical and ongoing struggles, and honour our achievements. It also serves as a call to action, encouraging inclusivity, collaboration, and solidarity, reminding us of the impact we can make when we raise our voices together for justice, equity, and the greater good.

Toronto District School Board (TDSB) organized a variety of events to celebrate the rich heritage of the people and nations of Africa and the African Diaspora for our students, staff, and community members. This includes the Know Your Worth Black Youth Empowerment Conference for secondary schools in partnership with York University Black Law Student Association.

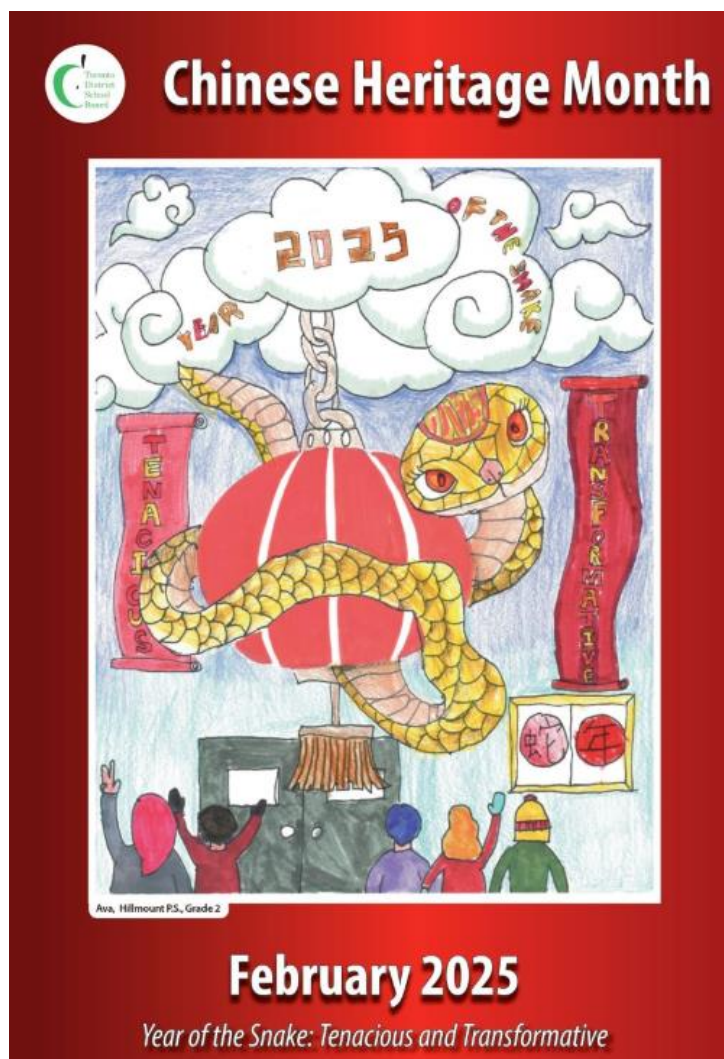
Here at Vanier, our BCU Club (Black Collective Union) is busy working on a dramatic performance, which they will be presenting to our entire school community as part of our local African Heritage Month celebrations. Stay tuned for further information about this.

Black identifying students within the TDSB were asked to submit a poster of their interpretation of the theme, *Lift Every Voice*, for the African Heritage (Black History) Month Poster Contest. The poster included on this page is one of the winning entries.

Honouring African Heritage Experiences

People of African descent have a rich legacy of cultural practices and traditions across generations. The Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement in collaboration with various community educators is excited to offer diverse learning experiences focused on honouring and affirming African, African-Caribbean, and Black students' identities. These African-centred programming and learning experiences provide opportunities for students, staff, caregivers, and community members. Please click [here](#) for a calendar of events for the month of February.

For more information contact, jeffrey.caton@tdsb.on.ca, Centrally Assigned Principal, or rukiya.mohamed@tdsb.on.ca, Program Coordinator, Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement.



Chinese Heritage Month at the TDSB - February 2025. The TDSB proudly recognizes Chinese Heritage Month in February each year. This year, we celebrate the **Year of the Snake: Tenacious and Transformative**. We hope to encourage students, staff, and the TDSB community to make impactful changes amidst challenges.

The Lunar New Year, also known as the Spring Festival, is one of the most significant holidays of the Chinese heritage. The date is determined by the traditional lunisolar Chinese calendar, and the celebration lasts 16 days. This year, the first day began on Wednesday, January 29. Festivities can include family gatherings, decorations, and of course, a feast!

All TDSB students were invited to participate in the popular Chinese Heritage Month Poster Contest. The poster shared here was one of the winning entries!

Health & Well-Being

The [Winter Well-Being Guide 2024-2025](#) is now available. The Guide is prepared by the Mental Health and Well-Being Committee, in collaboration with the Mental Health Leads and the System Leader for Mental Health and PSS. [The Winter Well-Being Guide 2024-2025](#) offers updated, culturally relevant, and responsive resources to support students and parents/caregivers/guardians in fostering mental and physical wellness during the winter months. It also includes specific supports for students with disabilities and complex needs.

To ensure accessibility for our diverse community, the guide has been translated into the top spoken languages within the TDSB. You can access it here: [Winter Well-Being Guide 2024-2025](#)

Learn4Life Adult General Interest Program - Winter Registration Opens Wednesday, November 13, 2024

Registration for winter courses in the Learn4Life Adult General Interest Program opens on November 13 at 8:30 a.m. Available to adults 18 and older, the Learn4Life program offers a unique opportunity to pursue interests, expand knowledge, and engage in lifelong learning. The program features a wide range of courses and activities designed to cater to diverse interests and passions—from art and fitness to languages, sports and handiwork.

Some of the new courses this term include:

1. Making Your Home Smarter
2. Classics of Horror
3. Wood Carving Introduction
4. How to Minimize Cost of Living and Maximize your Purchasing Power
5. Strength for Life - Full Body Fitness
6. Portugal's Iconic Pastel de Nata Workshop



Courses start January 11, 2025. [Visit Learn4Life's program page for more information.](#)

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Helpline 9-8-8 Quick access to support from trained responders, available 24/7/365. Support in English and in French, by phone and text. High quality, evidence-based, equitable suicide prevention and crisis support for everyone in Canada.



Kids' Helplines:

Kids Help Phone Line is a 24 hour/7 days per week crisis line that youth can contact for support:
Online Chat: www.kidshelpphone.ca Phone: 1-800-668-6868 Text: 686868

Black Youth Help Line – available 9 AM – 10 PM www.blackyouth.ca 416-285-9944

LGBT Youth Line – Sunday – Friday 4 PM – 9:30 PM – PEER SUPPORT*

Live chat: www.youthline.ca Text: 647-694-4275 Call: 1-800-268-9688

Naseeha - Muslim Mental Health Help Phone – 1-866-Naseeha (627-3342)

Call: 1-866-627-3342 (7 days/week 12-9 PM) Text: 1-866-627-3342 (Mon-Fri 12-9 PM)

Hope for Wellness Help Chat – offers immediate mental health counselling and crisis intervention to all Indigenous peoples across Canada

Live chat: www.hopeforwellness.ca Call: 1-855-242-3310 (24/7)

Other Resources:

Help Ahead is the centralized resource and intake phone line for multiple trusted community-based mental health organizations in Toronto. Help Ahead has up-to-date information about the available programs and services and can find local supports to address the needs of your child and family.
<https://www.helpahead.ca/> 1-866-585-6486

What's Up Walk-In Clinic provides free mental health counselling for children, youth, young adults and their families, and family with infants. <https://www.whatsupwalkin.ca/resources/>

One Stop Talk is a free, confidential service that lets children and youth aged 0-17 years call or connect online from anywhere in Ontario to get brief mental health services. Parents seeking services are encouraged to visit *One Stop Talk* with their child to ensure access to this service.
<https://onestoptalk.ca/aboutpage/>

Upcoming Dates & Events

Feb 5	Course Selection Fair (Assembly Day schedule)
Feb 5	Report Card Day – Electronic distribution
Feb 12	Welcome Back Assembly
Feb 14	PA day
Feb 17	Family Day
Feb 18	Photo Day – Take 2
Feb 18 – 21	SAC Spirit Week
Feb 19	Late Start Day; classes begin @ 9:55 am

Parent Concern Protocol

1

Classroom Teacher

Step One

If you have any questions or concerns, the first person to go to is your classroom teacher. The classroom teacher can help with:

- Any questions about the classroom
- Classroom rules and consequences
- Homework and assignments

2

School Principal

Step Two

If you would like more information or you have questions that are beyond the classroom, the school principal can help.

- Concerns about an individual school
- Student registration
- Student schedules
- Student suspensions
- Report card concerns
- Classroom concerns
- Code of Conduct
- Safety and security
- Budget and fundraising
- School Council

3

School Superintendents

Step Three

Superintendents are responsible for a Network of Schools. They support school staff and can be contacted if you have questions that have not been answered or for help with:

- Alternate attendance request
- Suspension appeals

4

Trustees

Step Four

Trustees are your elected community officials. They are available to help you with the following areas of the TDSB:

- Concerns about your community
- Ideas and suggestions for the Board
- Items on Board Agenda
- Board policies under review
- Board budget
- Collective bargaining

Board Office

You can contact the Board Office directly for any questions or concerns related to:

- Continuing Education
- Night and summer school
- Adult education
- ESL
- Board documents

Phone: 416-397-3000 • Email: GeneralInquiries@TDSB.on.ca

School Information

School Phone #: (416) 395 – 3250

School's Twitter: @GeorgesVanierSS

School's Website:

<https://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/georgesvanier>

Our Student Support Team:

Guidance:

Jennifer Hayward (Assistant Curriculum Leader)

Supporting Students with surnames N - Z

jennifer.hayward@tdsb.on.ca

Margarita Leventis

Supporting Students with Surnames G - M

margarite.leventis@tdsb.on.ca

Loraine Chichester

Supporting Students with Surnames A - F

loraine.chichester@tdsb.on.ca

Special Education:

Steven Maurer (Assistant Curriculum Leader)

steven.maurer@tdsb.on.ca

Student Success:

Paula Burgess (Assistant Curriculum Leader)

paula.burgess@tdsb.on.ca

Superintendent: Kurt McIntosh (LC2|FOS13)

416-395-8808 • Kurt.McIntosh@tdsb.on.ca

Trustee: James Li • Ward 13

416-395-8787 • James.Li@tdsb.on.ca