

**Vanier Community Newsletter – Week 16 (December 20, 2024)**

Dear Vanier Family,

As we close out the final week before winter break, I want to reflect on the wonderful experiences we've shared this past week. We wrapped up with a wide array of activities, including our festive Holiday Concert, Skate Day for our ESL & LEAP students, the PEEL students' Family Luncheon, a special Holiday Breakfast provided by our Nutrition Program, an enriching cross-curricular field trip to the AGO, and a memorable Semi-Formal at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre. These events are just a few of the highlights, and you'll find some snapshots of these moments on the following pages of this newsletter.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to our dedicated staff and student leaders, whose hard work made these activities possible. Your energy and commitment to enriching our school community are truly appreciated! I would also like to extend a special thank you to our entire school community—parents, caregivers, staff, and students—for your generous contributions to our holiday drive. Your kindness will make a difference for many families this season.

Please join me in congratulating our **December Students of the Month**:

Academics	Character Traits	Citizenship	Leadership
Atta Ul Ilah Ahmadi (Gr 9)	Khushi Masjedi (Gr 12)	Justin Sherlock (Gr 11)	Hosna Masjidi (Gr. 12)
Aisha Habib (Gr 9)	Amilton Calongo (Gr 10)	Armita Mohammadi (Gr 12)	Reenad Ali Saleh (Gr 9)
Kainat Ayam (Gr 10)	Armineh Karimi (Gr 12)	Niousha Sharifabad (Gr 9)	
Amirhossein Arjmandi (Gr 12)		Lucas Gonano (Gr 11)	
Imane Boukaila (Gr 12)			

As we head into the holiday season, I want to wish everyone in our Vanier community a safe, restful, and joyous holiday break. Whether you are celebrating Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or simply enjoying some time off, may your days be filled with love, laughter, and happiness.



I recognize that for some, the holiday season can be challenging. Please take a moment to explore the **Mental Health & Well-Being** section further down in this newsletter for valuable resources and support. I encourage anyone who may need assistance to reach out.

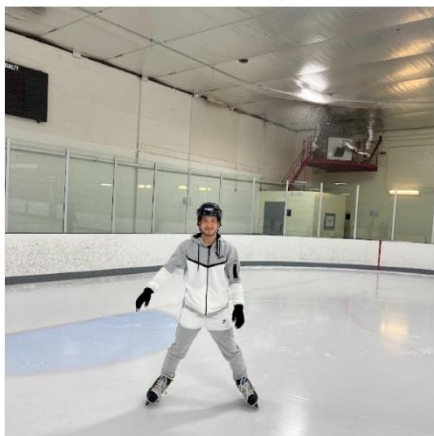
Have a wonderful New Year, and I look forward to welcoming everyone back to school on **January 6th, 2025**.

**Karen Johnson**

**Daniel Muttiah**

**Susan Tsin**

**Skate Day with for our ESL and PEEL classes**



**Holiday Breakfast...Bring on the cheer!**



**PEEL Department - Holiday Luncheon with Families**



**Oh what a Night! Semi-Formal @ the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre**



**Our Holiday Concert-** featured performances from our Band, Choir, Dance Class, Guitar Ensemble, and a special item by our PEEL students!



## Updates from our Guidance Office

**Virtual Secondary School (VSS).** VSS will be accepting Semester 2 transfer requests for students who would like to make the switch due to extenuating circumstances...**NEW!!!**

Please see below some important information about requesting VSS:

- The principal must complete the application request for VSS
- The transfer request will only be considered if there is space available at VSS.
- There is limited space and a limited selection of courses. Compulsory courses may not be available. An exact timetable match will likely not be possible.
- VSS follows a remote synchronous (live, interactive) learning model. Asynchronous learning options are not available.
- VSS students must have a working computer device and are expected to participate in all classes using a camera and microphone.
- The Ministry of Education requires that all students attending VSS reside in Ontario. There are no exceptions.
- Only Core French is available at VSS. French Immersion and Extended French are only offered in-person.
- Only virtual COOP placements are available at VSS.
- Students who are learning remotely cannot play team sports with their home school by address/former home school.
- Students in a graduating position will graduate from VSS, not their former school.

Students who are currently attending school In-Person can request Virtual/Remote Learning for the 2025-26 school year through the [Out-of-Area Admission process](#), beginning in **January 2025**.

While it is their goal to accommodate requests for Virtual/Remote Learning, VSS cannot guarantee that all requests will be met. Priorities for Out-of-Area Admission (as per [Out-of-Area Admissions Policy](#)) also apply to Virtual/Remote Learning.

**Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR).** PLAR is the formal evaluation and credit-granting process whereby students may obtain credits for prior learning. To learn more about how to apply for PLAR for your child, please click [here](#)...**NEW!!!**

**College Application Deadline.** The deadline to submit college applications for equal consideration is **Saturday, February 1st, 2025**. For more information visit <https://www.ontariocolleges.ca/en>

**OUAC Applications.** This a reminder that the OUAC application deadline for university-bound students is **Wednesday, January 15th, 2025**. We suggest students aim to have their OUAC applications done and submitted on or before the holiday break. The OUAC site sees peak volumes of traffic over the Christmas holidays. This is when OUAC support staff are working reduced hours. Support may be limited. Be sure to plan your post-secondary application timelines accordingly! For more information visit <https://www.ouac.on.ca/>

**MyBlueprint.** All students who are new to Vanier are required to activate their myBlueprint accounts. myBlueprint is an online application tool that all TDSB students use to complete their course selections for next year. Course selection for September 2025 will begin in February 2025. The activation process is very quick and easy. New myBlueprint accounts should be activated no later than Monday, December 16th, 2024. For instructions on how to activate a new myBlueprint account, [click here](#).

**Google Classrooms.** All students should be connected to the Guidance Google Classrooms. This is how we communicate important information with students. Please ensure your child is connected with Guidance! Use the following codes to join: **Vanier Guidance - i5wekc6**  
**Vanier Graduates 2025 - mz23ybh**

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## 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 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, from 6:30 – 8:00.** Thanks to all the parents who have come out to our council meetings so far. We appreciate you making the time.

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## News from the Trustee's Office

Please click [here](#) for the December 2024 newsletter from Trustee Li's office

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## Drop-in Sessions for Parents/Guardians/Caregivers

Special Education and Inclusion is pleased to once again offer a series of drop-in sessions designed for parents/guardians/caregivers on navigating special education resources and supports within the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). These informal gatherings provide a welcoming space for parents to learn about available services, ask questions, and connect with other families. Facilitators will guide discussions on topics such as supporting student transitions and exploring occupational therapy/physiotherapy strategies to use at home with students. All drop-in sessions for the 2024-2025 school year can be found [here](#).



## General Information & News

- Student Clubs and Activities:** There are numerous clubs for your child to participate in at Vanier. For a list of these clubs and other activities being hosted by our Student Council, please visit their website, <https://sites.google.com/tdsb.on.ca/qvsssac/home>
- Reporting an Absence:** TDSB is offering a more efficient way for parents and caregivers to report all student absences, late arrivals, or future absences by using the [School Messenger](#) app. You can also report by calling the school messenger portal at **1-833-250- 2290**. All attendance being reported before 9:00 a.m. must be done using School Messenger. You no longer need to call the school directly.
- TDSB Connects App for Students.** The TDSB Connects app is available to all students through the [Google Play Store](#) and the [Apple App Store](#). The app contains school announcements and integrates with the school Google calendar and is an excellent way to make information available to students. Both these tools also link into the school's Brightspace Homepage. If possible, students are highly encouraged to download the APP on their devices.
- TDSB Disconnecting from work Policy.** Please be aware that, as outlined in this policy, TDSB staff will not be available to make or respond to any work-related communications (emails, telephone, texts, etc.) between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. Monday to Thursday; after 6 p.m. on Friday; Saturday; Sunday; and on statutory holidays.
- Start of Year Forms**  
The technology used for the Start of the Year forms is changing. The PowerSchool Enrollment Module will be used by families to complete these forms online. Parents/Guardians should have received an email on August 30, 2024, with instructions on how to register for this module. Please click [here](#) to get instructions on how to complete these on-line forms.
- Student Login and Password**  
*Returning students* - Please note that student accounts remained active over the summer and their passwords did not expire. As a result, student account passwords will not be centrally reset for school opening.



Students in Grades 5-12 can reset their own passwords directly on the login page of many online tools, including Brightspace and Zoom. Once registered, students will be able to use security questions, email, phone, text message or an “authenticator” smartphone app, to validate their password reset requests. For additional information, please view this [infographic](#) or [demo video](#).

**New students** - Students new to TDSB will have their password set to the Shared Secret Password. This is a combination of the last 4 digits of the student number, followed by 2 digits for your day of birth, and 2 digits for your month of birth, followed by “@Tdsb” (case sensitive and 13 characters in total).

## Achievement

### Extended Absence....**NEW!!!**

TDSB schools will be out for Winter break from December 23 – January 3. We will return from the Winter break on January 6th and will transition into a very crucial part of the semester – our evaluation season – where students will be engaging in summative tasks (culminating projects and exams). I want to take this opportunity to remind students that daily attendance is crucial to their success. Extended absences may jeopardize a student’s credit-earning opportunities. As such, students should avoid taking vacations during school time, especially during the summative evaluation season in January. If students will be away from school for more than 5 days, parents and students must complete our extended absence form, which can be accessed [here](#).

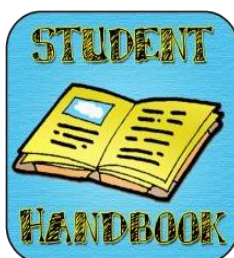


### Semester 2 e-Learning Course Registration

Semester 2 e-Learning Day School course offerings were added to the [e-Learning Day School website](#) on October 16, 2024. Students and families are encouraged to review these offerings before registration opens to students on November 12, 2024 at 10 a.m. through the [e-REG system](#).

**Peer Tutoring.** *If you are a **grade 9 - 11 student** who **wants help with your Math, Science, or English** coursework, you may request 1:1 or small group [peer tutoring](#).*

Information on how to request a tutor is posted throughout the school, as well as on the SAC website and Instagram accounts. You may also access the poster by clicking [here](#).



**Student Handbook.** Students are asked to take time to review the Georges Vanier [Student Handbook](#) as soon as possible so they become aware our school’s policies and procedures.

**Pay particular attention to the [GVSS Assessment & Evaluation Policy 2023](#) and our [Academic Eligibility Policy For Extracurricular Activities](#)**

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**After School Numeracy and Literacy Program.** Starting next week, students can receive extra help/support with their math and literacy from some of our teachers. This is not a casual drop-in session; students will be expected to sign up and attend these sessions over the course of the semester. Name of the teacher, days/times and location for these supports are shown below:

Literacy Support	Ms. Gerstnerova	<b>Mon &amp; Wed</b> 3:30 – 4:30 pm	Room 211
	Mr. Hussain	<b>Tues &amp; Thursday</b> 3:30 – 4:30 pm	Room 203
Numeracy Support	Ms. Li	<b>Mon &amp; Wed</b> 3:30 – 4:30 pm	Room 316

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## Equity

### Chinese Heritage Month at the TDSB: Chinese Poster Challenge

The TDSB proudly recognizes Chinese Heritage Month in February each year. During this month, several learning resources and educational opportunities will be provided to our students and staff to further enhance their knowledge of Chinese heritage.

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 begins on Wednesday, January 29, 2025. Currently we are inviting all students from Kindergarten to grade 12 to participate in a Poster Challenge to celebrate the Lunar New Year.

This year we celebrate the Year of the Snake: ***Tenacious and Transformative***. We hope to encourage our students, staff and the TDSB community to make impactful changes amidst challenges.

Please see the [attached](#) for full details of the Poster Challenge.  
**Deadline: Friday, January 10, 2025, by 11:59 pm.**

## **Black Student Summer Leadership Program**

The [Black Student Summer Leadership Program](#) (BSSLP) offers Black high school students a transformative, paid opportunity to gain hands-on experience, develop professional skills, engage in Youth Participatory Action Research, and expand their networks in a variety of fields. Students are paired with mentors and organizations that match their passions, fostering growth in a supportive environment. (See Flyer below).

### **Program Features:**

- **Mentorship & Training:** Receive guidance from experienced professionals and gain skills for future careers.
- **Career Pathways:** Explore industries where Black individuals are underrepresented, including arts, communications, tech, public health, skilled trades, and more.
- **Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR):** Build critical thinking and advocacy skills while addressing issues affecting your community and school.
- **Career Development:** Grow professional networks and develop transferable skills to set you up for success.

The BSSLP empowers students to build the skills and confidence needed for future academic and career success while making a positive impact in their communities.

### **Key Details:**

- **Eligibility:** Black students in Grades 10-12, 16 years old by July 1, 2025
- Info session on December 10, 2024 - Click [here](#) to register <https://bit.ly/BSSLPIS>
- Application opens: December 13, 2024
- **Application closes: January 10, 2025**
- TDSB students can apply [here](#) - <https://bit.ly/BSSLP2025>
- [Click here to view flyer](#)

Don't miss this exciting opportunity. Apply today and take the first step toward your future!

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



Centre of  
**Excellence** for  
**Black Student**  
Achievement



## **2025 BLACK STUDENT SUMMER LEADERSHIP PROGRAM**

The **Black Student Summer Leadership Program (BSSLP)** offers a transformative opportunity for Black high school students to gain hands-on experience, develop research and professional skills, and expand their networks in a range of career fields. Paired with mentors and organizations that match their passions, students will have a chance to thrive in a supportive and growth-oriented environment.

### **Program Features:**

- Paid summer employment (July-August 2025)
- Mentorship & professional development
- YPAR (Youth Participatory Action Research)
  - Training: April-May and July-August 2025
- Career exploration in for-profit & not-for-profit sectors
- Building social & professional networks
- Long-term focus on increased Black representation in various career pathways.

### **Eligibility Requirements:**

- **Black student** attending a TDSB High School in **Grade 10-12**
- **Must be 16 years old** by July 1, 2025
- **Must be available for YPAR training** (April-May and July-August 2025)
- **Must be available for full-time summer employment** (July-August 2025)



### **Registration Information:**

Registration opens: Friday, December 13, 2024

Registration closes: Friday, January 10, 2025



Application Now Open: <https://bit.ly/3DnHrSU>

## Health & Well-being

**Breakfast Club:** The Vanier School Nutrition program serves breakfast between 8:00 – 9:00 am in front of room 208A each school day. Our students are welcome to grab breakfast before heading to their morning classes. Food for our breakfast program is made possible by the **Toronto Foundation for Student Success (TFSS)**. They are looking for financial donations so they can continue to support our students. Please click on the live links below to donate if you can do so. [Nutrition Donation form](#) [TFSS Parent Donation Form Instructions](#)

### Inspiring Minds @ Vanier

Inspiring Minds is a program for youth to develop skills that lead to personal empowerment. Program runs Tuesday's at lunch in room 221 from October 17th - December 17th. Please see flyer on next page (QR code) for info on how to join/sign up.

### Winter Well-Being Guide 2024-2025

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 tailored 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: [The 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.](#)



**THE CANADIAN  
TRAINING INSTITUTE**

**Ontario**

This initiative is funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

# INSPIRING MINDS

## YOUTH PROGRAM

### WHY CHOOSE US?

Inspiring Minds is a program for youth to develop skills that lead to personal empowerment.


## Open for Registration

Programming will take place at George Vanier Secondary School Tuesdays during lunch from October 15th to December 17th

Participants learn about topics such as:  
Healthy Relationships  
Managing Anger  
Dealing with Stress  
Leadership  
And more!

## JOIN US



 [targueta@cantraining.org](mailto:targueta@cantraining.org)

## Kids' Helplines:

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

**Black Youth Help Line** – available 9 AM – 10 PM [www.blackyouth.ca](http://www.blackyouth.ca) 416-285-9944

**LGBT Youth Line** – Sunday – Friday 4 PM – 9:30 PM – PEER SUPPORT\*  
Live chat: [www.youthline.ca](http://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](http://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 a

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## Upcoming Dates & Events

Dec 25	Christmas Day
Dec 25 – Jan 2	Hanukkah
Dec 26 – Jan 1	Kwanzaa
Jan 1	New Year's Day
Jan 6	School re-opens; classes start @ 9:00 am



## Parent Concern Protocol

**1**

Step One

**Classroom Teacher**

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

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**2**

Step Two

**School Principal**

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

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**3**

Step Three

**School Superintendents**

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

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**4**

Step Four

**Trustees**

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

Phone: 416-397-3000 • Email: [GeneralInquiries@TDSB.on.ca](mailto: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](mailto:jennifer.hayward@tdsb.on.ca)

Margarita Leventis

Supporting Students with Surnames G - M

[margarite.leventis@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:margarite.leventis@tdsb.on.ca)

Loraine Chichester

Supporting Students with Surnames A - F

[loraine.chichester@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:loraine.chichester@tdsb.on.ca)

#### Special Education:

Steven Maurer (Assistant Curriculum Leader)

[steven.maurer@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:steven.maurer@tdsb.on.ca)

#### Student Success:

Paula Burgess (Assistant Curriculum Leader)

[paula.burgess@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:paula.burgess@tdsb.on.ca)

**Superintendent:** Kurt McIntosh (LC2|FOS13)

416-395-8808 • [Kurt.McIntosh@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:Kurt.McIntosh@tdsb.on.ca)

**Trustee:** James Li • Ward 13

416-395-8787 • [James.Li@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:James.Li@tdsb.on.ca)