

Vanier Community Newsletter – Week 1 (Sept 6, 2024)

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year! We hope you have had a spectacular summer filled with fun and relaxation and are looking forward to a wonderful school year.

This weekly newsletter is a vital tool to keep you informed about the latest happenings at Vanier and in the community. It also shares resources that could be beneficial for you. We strongly encourage you to spare a few minutes each week to go through it, as it will keep you connected and engaged with the school community.

As we embark on a new school year, it's an opportunity for us all to reset and set new goals. As a school, we are unwavering in our commitment to providing an environment and the conditions for students to feel a sense of belonging, achieve, and thrive. We also encourage all our students to play their part by showing up to classes prepared to learn, asking questions when they don't understand, managing their time well, giving their best in assessments/evaluations, always showing respect to their peers and staff, and getting involved in extracurricular activities.

NEW CELL PHONE POLICY

As you have heard over the past few months, cell phones/mobile devices are not to be used during instructional time unless for academic purposes as directed by the teacher or for health concerns. Cell phones must be out of sight in the classroom (turned off or on silent mode). If these are spotted, the teacher will ask the student to willingly put it away. Failure to do this will result in them being sent to the Main Office to see a vice-principal, where they will be placed in a safe location for the remainder of the school day. This new direction will help reduce the distraction of cell phones and mobile devices so that students can be more engaged and focus on learning.

More information for parents/guardians/caregivers and students is available on the TDSB website at: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Elementary-School/Cell-Phone-Mobile-Device-Use>



Let me end by welcoming you again to the 2024-2025 school year. You are a vital part of our Vanier Family. We look forward to connecting with you this year at our numerous school events (e.g., parent council meetings, parent/caregiver–teacher interviews, Arts night, and many more). Our doors are also open if you need to connect with us one-on-one, in person. Here's to a GREAT year!

Karen Johnson

Principal, Georges Vanier SS
416-395-3250

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

Daniel Muttiah

Susan Tsin

Vanier School Advisory Council (VSAC)

The first meeting of our School Advisory Council will be *held in-person* at the school on **Tuesday, October 1, 2024, at 6:30 pm**. All parents/caregivers are welcome and encouraged to attend. Parents/caregivers must be ELECTED to the School Council, however.

Parents/caregivers can nominate themselves or others for election to the School Advisory Council. The election of all council members will be held at the first official meeting of the year. You may access the nomination form by clicking [here](#).

Once all the members of council are elected, they will then elect/select the executive Members of Council which include 1-2 Co-Chair(s), 1-2 Vice-Chair(s), 1 Treasurer, and 1 Secretary.

Please click [here](#) to learn more about the role and responsibilities of those serving on a school advisory council.

General Information & News

1. **Day Schedule & Key Dates:** Our regular school day starts **at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 3:15 p.m. EXCEPT on late start days, where classes begin at 9:55 a.m. and end at 3:15 p.m.** Late start dates will be on the 3rd and 4th Wednesdays of every month.

Please click [here](#) to see our Daily Schedules & Late Start Dates.

Please click [here](#) to see the 2024-2025 calendar of TDSB's key dates

2. **Student Activity:** Please note that a \$35.00 student activity fee (SAF) will be collected from each student within the first three weeks of the school year. This SAF fee pays for a Yearbook, Vanier Athletic Association, Student ID card, and Student Council activities. Parents/guardians/caregivers are encouraged to use School Cash Online to pay the student activity fee.

Please use this link, <https://tdsb.schoolcashionline.com/>, to register for Cash Online if you have not already done so.

If needed, financial assistance is available to offset the activity fee. You may contact the principal, karen.johnson@tdsb.on.ca to provide/obtain more information.

3. **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.

4. **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.



5. **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).

The infographic below provides the formula to the Shared Secret Password.



6. **One to One Device Program - Action Required**

The families of students in grade 9 who wish to participate in the One-to-One Device Program **MUST** complete the [Student Device Agreement form that was emailed to them on Friday, August 30th, 2024, by TDSB IT services.](#)

Participation is optional; students/families who do not wish to participate should **opt-out**. Students are responsible for taking care of their Chromebook as families will be responsible for repairing/replacement costs. Chromebooks will be available to students who sign up for one by early October.

7. **Start of Year & Student Device Forms.** Parents/guardians or Students over the age of 18 years will receive a link for each of their children containing the Start of Year Forms. These forms will be completed online and submitted. The technology used for the Start of the Year forms and Student Device Forms has changed. The PowerSchool Enrollment Module will be used by families to complete these forms online. Parents/Guardians should have received an email with a link on August 30, 2024, asking them for student information and their permission. Please click [here](#) to get instructions on how to complete these on-line forms.

8. **Health and Safety Measures.** To help reduce the risk of illness from Covid-19 and other viruses, students are encouraged to stay home when sick, complete the school screening (self-assessment) before coming to school, clean their hands often and stay up to date on their vaccinations.



While mask-wearing is not mandated, it is still recommended that these are worn when indoors.

9. **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.

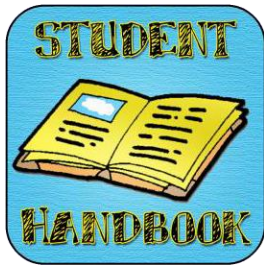
Achievement

Course changes. Our Guidance team is still quite busy registering students and scheduling them into courses. We know that for various reasons (e.g., earning summer school credits), some students may need changes to their timetables. Students using their TDSB email accounts may request a timetable change using this [form](#). We will try and get through these requests as quickly as possible.

Course outlines. Course outlines will be distributed by September 9, 2024. The document indicates the course objectives, expectations of students, and the course evaluation structure. All courses include the triangulation of evidence of student achievement using Conversation, Observations, and Student Products.



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



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

Indigenous Education

Compulsory Grade 11 English Course (NBE): Understanding Contemporary First Nations, Métis and Inuit Voices

As of September 2024, Understanding Contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Voices NBE3U/C/E will be the compulsory Grade 11 English course for TDSB students. This aligns with the Board's strategic direction and commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls To Action (TRC) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Contemporary First Nations, Métis and Inuit Voices, created by the Ministry of Education, has been taught in the TDSB with great success for many years and is supported by the Elders' Council, the Urban Indigenous Community Advisory Committee, the TDSB's Urban Indigenous Education Centre, and Indigenous writers, poets, and artists.

The NBE curriculum is organized into five strands shown below: (Four of which are the same as the current Grade 11 English course)

- A. First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Perspectives and Text Forms in Canada (**NEW**)
- B. Oral Communication
- C. Reading and Literature Studies
- D. Writing
- E. Media Studies

Equity

At Vanier, we will continue to work towards equitable outcomes for all our students by incorporating culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy into all courses. This involves getting to know the students we have in our classrooms and delivering material in a way that demonstrates students seeing themselves reflected through visual representation in the classroom, content of learning material, and students' voices. The links below take you to some equity resources and supports.

Equity, Anti-racism, Anti- Oppression

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Equity-Anti-Racism-and-Anti-Oppression>

Parents of Black Children Advocacy Group www.Parentsofblackchildren.org

Special Education

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Leadership-Learning-and-School-Improvement/Special-Education>

Indigenous Education <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Community/Indigenous-Education>

Parent Concern Protocol

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Contact-Us/Steps-to-Address-Questions-Concerns>

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](#)

Mental Health Resources: The TDSB is committed to improving the mental health and well-being of student. Please click [here](#) to access mental health and well-being resources for students and guardians.

Back To School Resources:

Students: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Innovation/Welcome-Back-Students>

Parents: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Innovation/ForParents>

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 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 a

Upcoming Dates & Events

September 10	Welcome back/Opening Assemblies (Assembly Day Schedule)
September 18	Late start, PLC
September 20	Photo Day September 26 & Gr. 9 Curriculum Night
September 24	2023-2024 Honour Roll & Special Awards Distribution
September 25	Late start, Staff Meeting
September 26	2023-2024 Honour Roll & Special Awards Celebration
September 30	National Day for Truth & Reconciliation/Orange Shirt Day

Parent Concern Protocol

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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

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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

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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

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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