

Hello parents/guardians and students:

I hope that all of our Harbord family is keeping healthy and well.

On behalf of our staff: Thank you for your communication, on-going support, and whatever encouragement or assistance you have been able to provide your child during the remote learning period thus far. Asking your Harbord student a question like “how was your learning today?”...or “what cool and fun activity did you and your teachers do today?” is important. Others may have tried saying something like “I’m sure your teachers would love to hear from you --- or ‘see you’, so make sure you connect with them actively and let them know how you are doing. Be engaged in your class...and let your teachers know if you need anything”. And a few others, may be finding that this whole ‘remote learning’/COVID 19 thing overwhelming --- that’s okay too. BUT the key is to communicate with the school (your child’s teacher, guidance counsellor, Student Success Teacher, VP, etc.) and we will do our best to support you and your child. During challenging times, working together is often the best ‘remedy’. And knowing too that we ALL have the same priorities of ‘student success’ and collective well-being are re-assuring.

As we complete our week three of “Harbord remote-learning 2.0”, I hope that our students and staff are getting into a groove and have found a ‘sweet spot’ in balancing our school work, our mental health, and our ‘home’ lives. I know that our staff have been trying to be creative and responsive to our current collective learning situations. In fact, I know of a particular lesson in one of our Health and Physical Education classes where students were asked to complete several physical activity tasks using a choice-board of ‘household chores’. I’m sure some parents came home happily surprised and appreciative! (I wish my high school-aged son had the same teacher instruction!!!) Students: “Keep learning, keep plugging away, keep ‘getting-at-it’, and enjoy the interactions along the way” ---I know that our teachers are enjoying the connections too!

Since we last communicated, here are some updates:

Student Supports (Guidance, Student Success, Social Worker, CYW)

As mentioned above, please continue to let us know how you and your child are doing. Simply: “just reach out (let us know) so that we can help...”. Remember, TDSB staff all have emails that are firstname.lastname@tdsb.on.ca. If you are having difficulty, have questions, or have been unable to connect with teachers and/or Guidance staff, please continue to email the school at Harbord@tdsb.on.ca or call the school at (416) 393-1650. Our staff are checking the email and voice messages daily. Parents/Guardians: please answer a call to your phone even if ‘no caller id’ appears as this ‘blocked call’ may be from your teachers/staff trying to reach out to you and your child.

The TDSB has many resources to support student mental health and well-being. I’ve attached a link here from the TDSB website with wonderful resources: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/In-Person-Learning/Resources-During-Covid-19>

If you are needing Virtual Learning IT support, click here: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/In-Person-Learning/Student-Virtual-Learning-IT-Support>

Our Guidance department has sent out our Guidance Bulletin earlier today with valuable information about ‘Course Selection’, ‘Optional Attendance’, and ‘Quad 3 timetables’ --- please look through that carefully!

Upcoming Credit Rescue schedule, PA Days, and Quad 3 start

The last day of instruction for most classes in Quadmester 2 is Tuesday, February 2. If there are any students who are in need of completing any work/project/assignment to pass their course and earn their credit, these students will have that opportunity on our Credit Rescue Days on February 3 and 4 from 12:30pm to 1:45pm (depending on the course/teacher, there may be classes on these days in morning). Both days have the same schedule: Course 1 is 12:30pm to 1:45pm and Course 2 is 2:00pm to 3:15pm. Again, this work will be done virtually at home with their teachers. Keep up the hard work Tigers!

Please note: February 5 and February 12 are both PA days and students are not required to attend school. Quadmester 3 begins on Monday February 8, 2021 (Day 1) and we will all start together Learning Remotely (online) as per government directive.

Harbord Virtual Learning and Continuation of Simultaneous Learning model in Quadmester 3

We will be starting the new Quadmester (new courses) with all learners engaged in virtual/remote learning. If and when, we are directed back to in-person learning during Quadmester 3 (at this time, the government directive of remote learning ends February 9), our model of Simultaneous Learning in Quadmester 2 will continue in Quadmester 3. For those students who are continuing in Harbord Virtual Learning or had requested to switch to Harbord Virtual learning, you will continue to have Harbord teachers teach you remotely, simultaneously in the classroom with other peers who are learning in-person. Students who are continuing with in-person, face-to-face learning, we are excited to see you 'physically' ---- hopefully soon! Final Quadmester 3 timetables will be loaded closer to the start of February 8 and can be accessed through the TDSB Connects App. Please check the App for your timetable and your email for communication from your teachers regarding virtual meeting links and other pertinent information.

Inspiration about what lies ahead...and our future generation - Amanda Gorman (America's first-ever youth poet laureate) and her 'words'

It's very likely that many of our Harbord community members have either watched Amanda Gorman (America's first-ever youth poet laureate) recite her poem at the Inauguration this past Wednesday and 'steal the show', or saw/read highlights about her impactful poem and performance --- she was certainly one of my highlights. If you haven't seen or heard about it, or would simply like to be inspired again, below is the text of the poem as well as a link to Amanda Gorman being interviewed on CNN by Anderson Cooper. What I (along with many educators) found particularly noteworthy was Ms. Gorman's explanation right at the beginning of the interview about how she prepared herself to write the poem. Anderson asks, "How did you go about crafting this?" Her reply reveals that she did "her homework" and the hard work that comes with almost anything great that one accomplishes – a valuable lesson for our students. Also of note, at approx. the 6:54 point in the video she says, "I cite my sources," which I'm sure many of our teachers found joy in!

I know, at Harbord we have many future leaders in the making as well! So proud...

<https://www.cnn.com/videos/style/2021/01/21/amanda-gorman-poet-laureate-interview-inauguration-vpx.cnn>

The Hill We Climb: the Amanda Gorman poem that stole the inauguration show (Article)

[Amanda.jpg](#)

SOURCE : The Guardian

The Hill We Climb: the Amanda Gorman poem that stole the inauguration show

Amanda Gorman

Wed 20 Jan 2021

When day comes, we ask ourselves where can we find light in this never-ending shade?

The loss we carry, a sea we must wade.

We've braved the belly of the beast.

We've learned that quiet isn't always peace,
and the norms and notions of what "just" is isn't always justice.

And yet, the dawn is ours before we knew it.

Somehow we do it.

Somehow we've weathered and witnessed a nation that isn't broken,
but simply unfinished.

We, the successors of a country and a time where a skinny Black girl descended from slaves and raised by a single mother can dream of becoming president, only to find herself reciting for one.

And yes, we are far from polished, far from pristine,
but that doesn't mean we are striving to form a union that is perfect.

We are striving to forge our union with purpose.

To compose a country committed to all cultures, colors, characters, and conditions of man.

And so we lift our gazes not to what stands between us, but what stands before us.

We close the divide because we know, to put our future first, we must first put our differences aside.

We lay down our arms so we can reach out our arms to one another.

We seek harm to none and harmony for all.

Let the globe, if nothing else, say this is true:

That even as we grieved, we grew.

That even as we hurt, we hoped.

That even as we tired, we tried.

That we'll forever be tied together, victorious.

Not because we will never again know defeat, but because we will never again sow division.

Scripture tells us to envision that everyone shall sit under their own vine and fig tree and no one shall make them afraid.

If we're to live up to our own time, then victory won't lie in the blade, but in all the bridges we've made.

That is the promise to glade, the hill we climb, if only we dare.

It's because being American is more than a pride we inherit.

It's the past we step into and how we repair it.

We've seen a force that would shatter our nation rather than share it.

Would destroy our country if it meant delaying democracy.

This effort very nearly succeeded.

But while democracy can be periodically delayed,
it can never be permanently defeated.

In this truth, in this faith, we trust,

for while we have our eyes on the future, history has its eyes on us.

This is the era of just redemption.

We feared it at its inception.

We did not feel prepared to be the heirs of such a terrifying hour,

but within it, we found the power to author a new chapter, to offer hope and laughter to ourselves.

So while once we asked, 'How could we possibly prevail over catastrophe?' now we assert, 'How could catastrophe possibly prevail over us?'

We will not march back to what was, but move to what shall be:

A country that is bruised but whole, benevolent but bold, fierce and free.

We will not be turned around or interrupted by intimidation because we know our inaction and inertia will be the inheritance of the next generation.

Our blunders become their burdens.

But one thing is certain:

If we merge mercy with might, and might with right, then love becomes our legacy and change, our children's birthright.

So let us leave behind a country better than the one we were left.
With every breath from my bronze-pounded chest, we will raise this wounded world into a wondrous one.
We will rise from the golden hills of the west.
We will rise from the wind-swept north-east where our forefathers first realized revolution.
We will rise from the lake-rimmed cities of the midwestern states.
We will rise from the sun-baked south.
We will rebuild, reconcile, and recover.
In every known nook of our nation, in every corner called our country,
our people, diverse and beautiful, will emerge, battered and beautiful.
When day comes, we step out of the shade, aflame and unafraid.
The new dawn blooms as we free it.
For there is always light,
if only we're brave enough to see it.
If only we're brave enough to be it.

Lastly, please continue to practice the health and safety measures following the most up-to-date Toronto Public Health directives. We are in this TOGETHER!

“Harbord, we CARE for each other. TOGETHER. We are ONE!”

Thank you and have a FUNomenal weekend!

Steve