



Runnymede CI School Council Newsletter

February 2019

Dates to Remember

- Feb 1 – Semester 2 Starts**
Ontario College Applications Due
- Feb 6 – Report Cards Mailed Out**
- Feb 7 – Welcome Back Assembly**
- Feb 7 – Mountview Open House (5-7pm)**
- Feb 9 – Robotics Community Day**
- Feb 11 & 12 – Grad Photo Retakes**
- Feb 15 – PA Day!**
- Feb 18 – Family Day!**
- Feb 25 – School Council Meeting (7-9 pm)**
- Feb 27 – African History Month Assembly**
- Mar 6 – Ski Trip**
- Mar 11-15 – March Break!**
- Mar 20 – Parent Teacher Interviews (2-4 & 6-8 pm)**
- Mar 25 – School Council Meeting (7-9 pm)**

Semester One is complete and students are gearing up for an exciting and successful Semester Two. Stay apprised of RCI happenings by reading on below!

SAVE THE DATES

The remaining School Council meetings will be split between working meetings for planning and general meetings for all parents. Mark March and May on your calendars and be part of the great work being done among RCI parents, teachers and administration!

Feb 25th – Executive Planning Meeting

**Mar 25th – School Council General Meeting
(all parents invited)**

Apr 29th – Executive Planning Meeting

**May 27th – School Council General Meeting
(all parents invited)**

Have a topic you would like to see presented at a School Council meeting? Let us know at kimberly.dewitte@live.com

Help Keep Prom Ticket Costs Down

The RCI Prom Committee plans to hold a Raffle Fundraiser to help keep final tickets costs as low as possible. They are looking for prizes and you can help!

Consider donating a gift card or other item. And if you know of a business that might donate an item, ask them to help out.

The prizes should be items teenagers want, such as:

- Movie tickets
- Gift cards (EB Games, Foot Locker, etc)
- Candy

Please drop off donations to the office & **thank you** for your support!!

Ward 7 Update

The Ward 7 meetings keep us connected to happenings in the TDSB. Here are some recent highlights:

Draft Dress Code Policy - Parent Input Requested (Deadline February 28)

TDSB is proposing a new dress code policy to establish standards and fair and equitable practices for student dress in school. View the draft policy and provide your input at the link below:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Policies-Procedures-Forms/Policy-Consultations>

New Land Acknowledgement

Over the past year, the Indigenous Community Advisory Committee (ICAC), Toronto District School Board, Elders, Indigenous parents/guardians and staff undertook a review of the Treaty Acknowledgement used across the Board. This work was in consultation with TDSB staff and students, as well as Indigenous partners and Nations.

Through this review, the ICAC revised and approved the following Acknowledgement for all TDSB schools and events system-wide:

"We acknowledge we are hosted on the lands of the Mississaugas of the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Wendat. We also recognise the enduring presence of all First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples."

The acknowledgement of the land on which we are situated is an important show of respect, presence and an assertion and recognition of Indigenous self-determination. It aims to bring Indigenous presence and voice to Canadian society and its institutions (e.g., schools); create an opportunity for Indigenous students and staff to begin their day within their cultural context; and foster mutual respect and reconciliation.

All TDSB schools and staff will begin using the new Land Acknowledgement at the beginning of the school day and at the beginning of events, gatherings and meetings by January 7, 2019.

Other Ways to Stay Updated

There are many resources for parents on the TDSB and PIAC (Parent Involvement Advisory Committee) websites. Check out the following links:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/ward7/>

<http://torontopiac.com/index.html>

TEACHER FEATURE

Soofia Omari

February 2018

Meet Noorain Alam,

One of Runnymede's amazing social science and history teachers, Ms. Alam has been teaching for almost 18 years! She has taught previously at George S. Henry Academy but has spent a big chunk of time at Runnymede CI. Ms. Alam obtained her Bachelor of Science in psychology with honours from the University Of Toronto as well as a Bachelor of Education from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. She currently sits on the staff equity Committee and facilitates the International Club which exposes students to the vast array of colourful cultures, countries, and traditions from around the world! She has also previously assisted in the Runnymede Human Rights Club and the Debate Club. You will get to know more about Ms. Alam and her role at Runnymede in this Q&A!

Q: What made you want to go into teaching?

A: I like to work with young people because they are so vibrant, energetic, insightful, enthusiastic and they love to learn and use their minds to think, analyze, deconstruct and create. It's so amazing and a real privilege to be part their learning process as they make discoveries, connections and create. To be present with them as their minds are expanding, frontal lobes are synthesizing and more and more neural connections are developing is a phenomenal experience.

But it's not all one-sided! As much as I love teaching, I love learning even more. A natural extension of learning is the desire to share and apply that knowledge and insights. I think the best way to do that is by teaching, advocating or writing. Since I didn't go into writing or advocacy work, teaching was the only other profession left that would allow me to learn and then share what I have learned with others and also learn from them (my students). Sometimes, I read an essay, a reflection or response paragraph and I'm blown away at the intelligence and insight of the students. Class discussions are another area that sometimes leaves me speechless--like when a student makes an observation or sees something that I didn't see despite having taught a particular subject for so many years. That's what makes teaching exciting--the discovery process!



Q: If you didn't go into teaching what do you think you'd be doing right now?

A: Legal work--but the advocacy kind that helps people (like under-represented, marginalized communities), not corporations. Maybe I'd be a writer of some sort--but not fiction. I'm not very imaginative. Any writing that I would have done would also be about or reflect the stories of immigrant communities--whether they are first or second generation Canadians.

Q: What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

A: Reading, watching movies, taking walks, spending time with family

Q: What's the worst part of your job?

A: Marking. Can I hire someone to do that for me? Ok, how about some community service hours?

Q: What impact do you hope you'll have by being a teacher?

A: That people will deepen their existing qualities of being open-minded, engaged, logical, and critical thinkers who have empathy with humanity and use their freedoms and rights to be active citizens who call out injustice when they see it, who work to rectify wrongs in a peaceful and civilized manner to make the world a more welcoming place for everyone. That's all anyone wants--safety, security, dignity--it's only when people don't get those basic needs met, that we have problems in society.

Q: What's your favorite subject to teach and why?

A: I like all my subjects. I might enjoy some courses more than others but as a professional, it is my job to be engaged with the course, so that I can pass on that enthusiasm to my students. If I act like I don't enjoy what I'm teaching, the students won't enjoy learning it and that would be a disservice to them. I owe it to them to be "in love" with the subject matter and to teach it competently, at the very least.

Q: What's your favorite thing about Runnymede?

A: The students. They make the building. They outnumber staff. If they were not invested in their education and their RCI community, then we would have a problem, which we don't. Yaay!

Q: What are some words of wisdom you have for Runnymede students?

A: Do yourself, your grades, and your mental health a favour and get off the phone!



Toronto District School Board Parent Conference 2019

Join us for the Parents as Partners Conference on Saturday, March 30, 2019!

This all-inclusive conference is organized by TDSB parents for TDSB parents, guardians and caregivers. Participate in workshops, network with parents and community agencies and learn new strategies to support your child's success.

Registration opens in February! Register early as there is limited space in each workshop!

Who:

- ALL parents/guardians/caregivers of TDSB students are invited and welcome to attend.

What:

- Parents as Partners Conference 2019 is a FREE conference. Whether your child is just beginning on their educational journey in elementary school or closer to graduation and planning for the future, there are informative and empowering sessions for parents/guardians/caregivers of students of all ages and stages of education.

Where:

- Beanfield Centre (formerly named Allstream Centre) 105 Princes' Blvd, Toronto
- Busing is available and can be chosen when you register online. Pickup at each busing location will be at 8 a.m.
- [View a map of the Beanfield Centre \(formerly named Allstream Centre\).](#)



Parents as Partners

Toronto District School Board
Parent Conference 2019

Saturday, March 30, 2019

Beanfield Centre

105 Princes' Blvd, Toronto

Why:

- The Parents as Partners Conference 2019 is planned by parents, for parents and we are so pleased to be able to offer a selection of sessions that cover a broad range of topics to provide parents with useful information and resources to help your child improve their achievement and well-being at school and at home.



Keynote Speaker - Karl Subban

Karl Subban is a former Toronto school principal and the father of five children, including three NHL players. He's dedicated his life to helping others reach their potential. In his powerful talks he explores teamwork and leadership and offers a fresh take on what it means to succeed.

Accessibility:

All seminar rooms are wheelchair accessible and reserved seating will be available. Please identify yourself to conference staff for assistance in locating wheelchair accessible entrances and washrooms. Feel free to contact us in advance of your arrival if you have any concerns.

Day Camp for Children

A free day camp is available for children ages 4 to 12 to support conference participants. Children will participate in a camp at nearby [Parkdale Jr and Sr PS](#). More details will be available when registration opens.