



## **FRIDAY FILE – Feb. 2nd, 2024**

***KINDNESS. RESPECT. PRIDE.***

***Follow us on X (former Twitter) @ZionTdsb***

**School Website Link** <https://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/zionheights/>

**School Contact Information:**

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Dear Zion HMS families,

The month of February always brings lots of excitement and learning opportunities for our students! Aside from Valentine's Day events, February is also African Heritage (Black History) Month and Chinese Heritage Month in the TDSB. As with all our TDSB Heritage Months, students will make daily announcements to honour these two important heritages and cultures. Next week we will also be cheering on our Boys' Basketball Teams as our Grade 7s and 8s compete in their respective tournaments - GO LIONS!!! Term 1 Report Cards will go home on February 13th, and more information will be shared with parents next week on booking Parent-Teacher Conferences.

Please scroll down for more important school and community updates!

*Thank you,*

***Chi Le  
Principal  
Zion Heights Middle School***

***Monica O  
Vice-Principal  
Zion Heights Middle School***

## ***Looking Ahead at ZHMS***

Feb. 6 - Grade 7 & 8 Boys Basketball Tournament @ Don Mills MS

Feb. 7 - Grade 8 Basketball Tournament @ ZHMS

Feb. 8 - Grade 7 Basketball Tournament @ Bayview MS

Feb. 8 - ZHMS School Council Meeting @ 6:30 PM

Feb. 13 - Term 1 Report Cards Go Home

Feb. 13 - Updated IEPs to be sent home digitally






Feb. 15 - 16 - Parent / Teacher Conferences

Feb. 16 - Professional Activity Day - No Classes

### ***Student Clubs / Extracurriculars @ ZHMS***

- Boys Basketball
- Seneca Hill Chess (after school)
- Volleyball (drop-in)
- Library Helpers
- Math Club
- Eco Team
- Zion Advisory Club (ZAC)
- Band / Strings
- Basketball (drop-in)
- ZAC activities

***Students, just a reminder to dress for the weather!***

	Mon 02/05	Tue 02/06	Wed 02/07	Thu 02/08	Fri 02/09
	A mix of sun and clouds	Mainly sunny	A mix of sun and clouds	Cloudy with sunny breaks	Light rain
					
	3°	1°	4°	5°	7°
Feels like	0	-2	2	2	5

## *What's Happening at ZHMS...*



*Our most recent  
ZHMS Pizza  
Lunch was  
another success  
thanks to our  
wonderful  
parent  
volunteers and  
our ZHMS School  
Council - thank  
you!*



*Parents, just a reminder  
our next ZHMS School  
Council Meeting is on  
Feb. 8!*





*Thank you for your service Ms. Tharmaratnam! Best wishes to you and your family during this exciting time!*



*Thank you to our AYJ  
Co-Op Students for  
their efforts this year!  
We hope to see you  
again soon!*





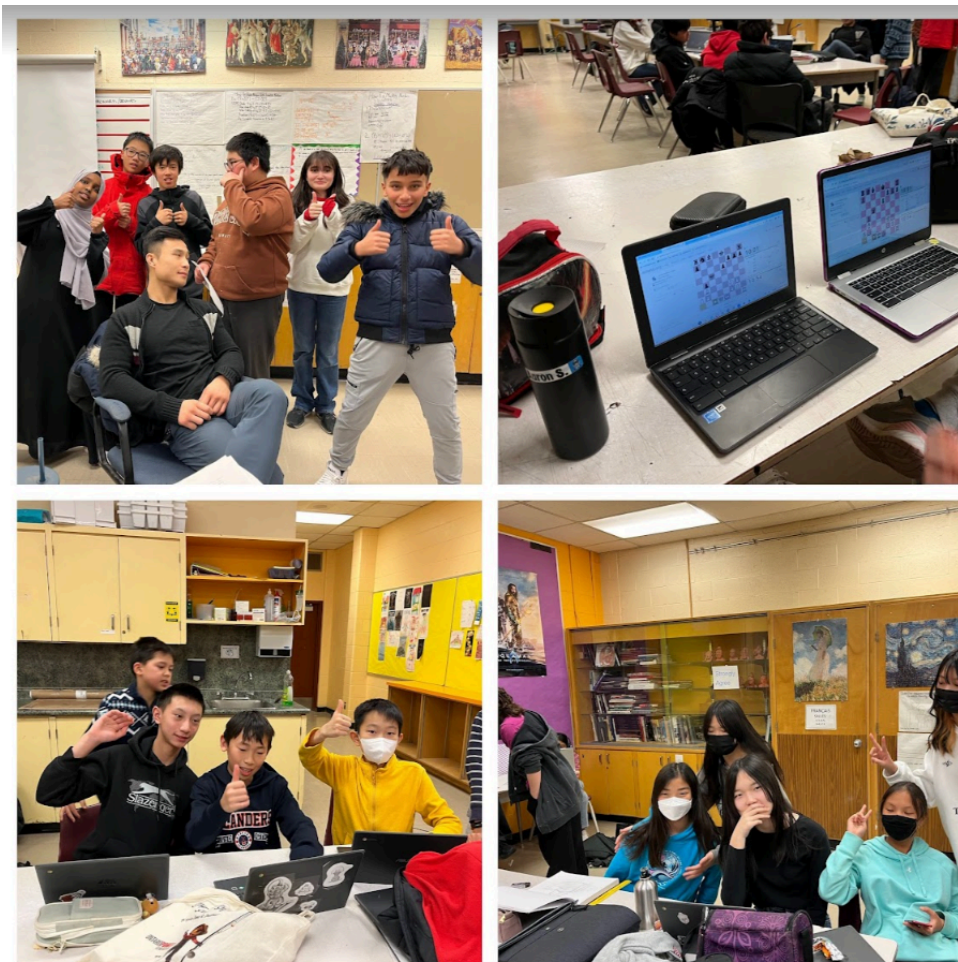


*Thank you for an incredible Term 1 Mr. Vaughan!*

*Let's celebrate with some boba!*

*Welcome back to Ms. Park who will be returning to lead  
our Music Program at ZHMS!*

*Our Chess Club Rocks! Join Mr. Foo and Co. weekly for some mental stimulation & fun!*



### Seven Remarkable Mental Benefits of Playing Chess

- Better Concentration.
- Relieving the Symptoms of ADHD.
- Boosting Self-Confidence.
- Stimulating Creativity.
- Prevention of Alzheimer's Disease.
- Raising IQ.
- Enhancing Patience and Resilience.



## ZHMS IMPORTANT SCHOOL UPDATES

The 2023-2024 ZHMS Yearbook Is Now Available to Order on SchoolCash Online!



There are lots of memories tied to the school and we hope that you join this celebration with us. The school yearbook remains one of the best investments in a child's school memories. To secure your child's copy of the yearbook **please ORDER YOUR ZHMS YEARBOOK on SchoolCash Online! All ZHMS families can purchase a yearbook!** Please email Ms. Barlas at [toula.barlas@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:toula.barlas@tdsb.on.ca) if you require assistance using SchoolCash Online!

## *School Drop Off & Pick Up Safety Reminders*

At Zion Heights Middle School, we are fortunate to have several safety initiatives, programs, and policies that contribute to a safe and caring school. Even though most incidents happen away from school, we want to emphasize to all students, staff and parents the importance of awareness and the need for extra care in even the most ordinary and everyday routines, no matter where you are.

- **Morning Drop-Off and After-School Pick-Up Reminders**
  - Morning supervision begins at 8:38 AM, teachers are on duty during this time and students should not be dropped off at school earlier than 8:38 AM
  - ***Please do not idle in the drop-off/pick-up area; starting next week staff on duty will kindly ask parents idling in the morning to proceed to the exit lane to reduce morning congestion outside the school***
  - The community parking lot can also be used across the field for morning drop-off
- **Afterschool Pick-Up Reminders Morning Drop Off and After School Pick Up Reminders**
  - Teachers are on duty after school from 3:05 PM - 3:20 PM; an outbound phone in the office can be used by students to call parents when needed



- ***Please do not idle in the drop-off/pick-up area; starting next week staff on duty will kindly ask parents to park in a parking spot or proceed to the exit lane to reduce congestion outside the school***
- The community parking lot can also be used across the field when our school parking lot is full during after school pick up

***Please Slow Down When Entering & Exiting our School Parking Lot***

## **LUNCHROOM SUPERVISORS NEEDED AT ZHMS**



If you are interested in becoming a Lunchroom Supervisor at Zion Heights Middle School please email Ms. Toulas Barlas at [toula.barlas@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:toula.barlas@tdsb.on.ca)

Please note that experience working with children is required for this position.

## **SCHOOL COMMUNITY MESSAGES**

### **Parent/Caregiver Participation in Vice-Principal Interviews**

The Toronto District School Board is currently recruiting parents/caregivers/guardians who are interested in participating in the Vice-Principal Interview Committees. Procedure 705 - Selection, Promotion, and Placement Process for Vice-principals allows for parent/caregivers /guardian representatives identified through the Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC) to participate in Vice-Principal interviews.

If you would like to volunteer to participate in the Spring 2024 Vice-Principal interviews you are required to do the following:

1. Complete the Expression of Interest (link - [Interview Survey](#)) no later than January 31, 2024
2. Be available for the virtual VP Process and Interview Training Session scheduled for Monday, February 5, 2024 ( Virtual) 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Please note attendance at a training session is mandatory to participate as a Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Representative on a Vice-Principal Interview Team.

3. Be available for the Spring 2024 cycle. Interviews for the Elementary Vice-Principal and Secondary Vice-Principal will be held on the following interview dates:
  - Tuesday, February 20, 2024
  - Thursday, February 22, 2024
  - You will not be scheduled for more than one of these dates.
  - Depending on the number of interview teams scheduled, not all parent representatives may be scheduled.
  - You will be informed by e-mail no later than the week before the scheduled date if you have been placed on an interview team or identified as an alternate/backup for the day.
  - The interview day begins with a team caucus at 8:00 am with the site coordinators. The last interview of the day will commence no later than 3:30 pm.

For further information please contact [cindy.beneteau@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:cindy.beneteau@tdsb.on.ca)

Thank you in advance for your interest and support in this important process.

### Chinese Heritage Month at the TDSB: February 2024

TDSB's Chinese Heritage Month is proudly recognized in February each year. This year we celebrate the Year of the Dragon: Majesty, Brilliance, Confidence, Leadership.

Lunar New Year, also known as the Spring Festival, is one of the most important celebrations for Chinese communities around the world. Lunar New Year is celebrated annually, and its dates are based on the lunar calendar. For 2024, it starts Saturday February 10 and ends Saturday February 24. The festivities include family gatherings, decorations, and of course a feast!

Please follow us on X (formerly Twitter) for daily messages throughout the month of February @tdsbChineseHM.

### African Heritage (Black History) Month - February 2024

At the TDSB, a motion to recognize African Heritage (Black) History Month was carried in January 2002 and reaffirmed again in January 2004. During the month of February, 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.

This year's chosen theme is Our Black Is.. Our Black Is Resilient, Community, Beautiful, Unity, Joy, Self-Determination, Excellence, Empowering, Purpose, Brilliance, Engaging, Creative, Belonging, Tenacious, Powerful, Faith, Audacious, Powerful, Me...

This open statement, "Our Black Is... was selected as the 2024 African Heritage Month theme, as it is for Us as a Community to define. We invite our community to continue to boldly define ourselves.

Please enjoy a brief video (coming soon) on Our Black Is... conveying reflections from our students from elementary students to secondary level.

### **White Cane Week**

White Cane Week, happening this year from February 4 - 10 in Canada, serves as a platform for fostering awareness and deepening understanding of the lived experiences of those with a visual impairment. This week focuses on the profound impact that a visual impairment can have on individuals living in Canada.

The white cane is a powerful symbol, not only signalling to the world that the holder has a visual impairment, but also representing independence. Serving as an indispensable mobility tool, the white cane empowers individuals who are blind, deafblind, or visually impaired to navigate their surroundings safely and autonomously.

Within the TDSB, a small yet significant group of students rely on white canes for navigation. Through meticulous instruction from Orientation & Mobility Specialists, these students become more confident and independent every day. White Cane Week not only shows how important the white cane is as a symbol, but also highlights how it makes a big difference in the daily lives of those who depend on it for navigation.

### **Somali Heritage Month Event: Invitation to Attend – February 9th, 2024 / 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm**

We are delighted to announce the continued celebration of Somali Heritage at the TDSB, an occasion marked by recognition and appreciation of Somali traditions and customs. In our commitment to providing enriching experiences for our students, we extend a warm invitation to all to join us in celebrating the richness of Somali culture on February 9th, 2024, at Kipling Collegiate Institute from 6-9 pm ([flyer](#)).

Aligned with this year's theme, "Educate. Elevate. Excel.," the event promises an immersive exploration of Somali heritage. The Somali Heritage Month committee, in collaboration with the Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation, has curated a captivating evening dedicated to cultural celebration, exploration, and affirmation.

This cultural exploration through the arts will showcase a diverse range of talents, including spoken word poets, digital and visual artists, and photographers. Attendees can anticipate a vibrant panel discussion that delves into the intricate layers of Somali heritage, providing a platform for insightful conversations and shared perspectives.

We invite you to join us in fostering a deeper understanding of the themes encapsulated in Somali Heritage Month, as we come together for an evening of unity, appreciation, and celebration. Your presence will contribute to the collective spirit of education, elevation, and excellence.

### **TDSB Virtual Community Fair for Parents/Caregivers of Children, Youth and Young Adults with Special or Complex Needs Let's Talk about Transition to Adulthood**

Adult Transition Planning can be very challenging for Parents/Caregivers of Young Adults with Special/Complex Needs. Please Join Us as We invite Lead Adult Transition Agencies as they share some Crucial Steps in this Planning Process. Help set up your Young Adult for Success as they transition from TDSB. This is Part 1 of a 2 Part series where Part 1 will focus on Funding requirements and Part 2 will focus on Community Agencies sharing about their Recreational, Social, Life Skills or Employment Programs. ([flyer](#))

For more information email [virtualfairinfo@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:virtualfairinfo@tdsb.on.ca)



## Mental Health & Wellness

The [2023-2024 Winter Well-Being Guide](#) is filled with activities, games, wellness tips, identity-affirming resources and community agencies to support wellness for all students, caregivers/guardians, families, and school communities over the winter months!

*Here are some awesome Pencil Sketch Art pieces from just a few of our talented Grade 6 students at ZHMS!*

