



November 2019 Newsletter

Westney Wanderings



1 - In this Issue:



The Durham District School Board acknowledges that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships, both historic and modern, with the territories upon which our school board and schools are located. Today, this area is home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. We acknowledge that the Durham Region forms a part of the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, the Mississauga Peoples and the treaty territory of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation. It is on these ancestral and treaty lands that we teach, learn and live.

2 - Land Acknowledgement

Key Stories:

- **Treaty Week**
- **Lunch Options**
- **Progress Reports and Interviews**
- **Character Education**
- **SCC News**

- **Kiss and Ride**

Message from the Office



Westney Heights. has been hopping with activity over the past month! Our students are engaged in all kinds of learning. Pictures of learning at Westney and our School Improvement Plan Learning Journey are posted in our gym hall. Check in at the office and come in and take a look!

Progress Reports go home on November 13th. Parent/Teacher/Student conferences will be held on November 14th and 15th. This year families will book conference times online. Intermediate students will have a drop-in format in the gym during these hours. Our staff are looking forward to meeting with families during these dates.

Thank you to our community for supporting all of our procedures that help maintain a safe school. Our Kiss n' Ride and Safe Arrival procedures are working smoothly thanks to the cooperation of all families. Please use the sidewalks and marked yellow paths for walking to ensure safety while on school property. Please remember not to park or drop off students on Brennan Road as it creates traffic issues and

students may then try to cross through the parking lot in areas where drivers are not expecting pedestrians to cross. Also, we ask that families do not park in the parking lot during pickup and drop off times. This creates safety concerns as other families and students are using the kiss and ride due to the additional traffic.

We would like to thank all the families that supported our Fresh from the Farm fruit and vegetable basket orders. We will communicate when the orders will be ready for pickup. All of the money raised will support the purchase of additional technology. Our first Healthy Hunger order was a hit in October. We have our second Healthy Hunger lunch offering coming up with food available from Quesada including a Halal option. Visit www.healthyhunger.ca to order lunch for your child/children before Sunday, November 3rd at midnight.

Our Remembrance Day assembly will take place on November 11th. Our families are invited to the school for our assembly which starts at 10:30 a.m.

Yours in education,

Shannon Robertson and Ryan Harney

Principal

Vice-Principal

Safe Schools



Safe Arrival

If your child is going to be late or absent please call the school messenger safe arrival line at **1-844-350-2646** anytime before 8:55 am.

Parent Portal

It is extremely important that all Westney families have updated their information on the DDSB Parent Portal. This includes up to date phone numbers and email addresses. It can be a challenge to contact parents or guardians in the event of a student illness if the contact information is not up to date. We also send out a number of information items including our school newsletter via email which makes it important to have current email addresses as well. This can be done throughout the school year as contact information changes. We truly appreciate your efforts to stay connected with the school.

Volunteers in School

Thank you to all of our volunteers who have received a criminal background check in order to volunteer at Westney Heights. If you are volunteering in classrooms, driving for teams or clubs, or support field trips with our students we require that you have a criminal background check that is current within three years. We have a letter in the office that you can bring to a Durham Regional Police Service location for a discounted fee. We truly appreciate our volunteers and continue to put the safety of our students first. Because of the involvement of our volunteers we continue to be able to provide additional experiences that would otherwise not be available. Thank you to all of our amazing volunteers!

Treaty Week

Ontario has designated the first week in November as Treaties Recognition Week to promote education and awareness about Treaties and Treaty relationships. All students, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, are enriched by learning about the histories, contributions and perspective of First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples in Canada. Raising awareness about Treaty relationships and working with First Nations is part of the Ontario government's Treaty strategy, which is promoting constructive engagement with First Nation communities and revitalizing Treaty relationships. Here at Westney Heights PS we will be recognizing Treaties Recognition Week through announcements and classroom discussions.

This a great link to understand “All you need to know about Treaties”.

https://www.ontario.ca/page/treaties?_ga=1.12939895.1930507153.1473704090



This year we are very happy to present a variety of special lunch/smoothie days that will support our school and local businesses in the Durham Region as well. These special lunch days will be on select Fridays throughout the year. Families can order lunches for their children through the website **HealthyHunger.ca** up to *five days in advance* of the lunch/smoothie date. Go to the website, 'Register a Student,' and choose Westney Heights PS. All of the dates and restaurant partners will be listed!

Our upcoming lunch/smoothie days are:

Friday, November 8th: *Quesada Burritos & Tacos*

Friday, November 22: *Booster Juice*

Friday, December 6th: *Mr. Sub*

Friday, December 22nd: *Booster Juice*

Our hope is that these days are a benefit to families. Any feedback that you can provide is welcome, please contact Mrs. Robertson or Mr. Harney to share. If successful, we will arrange for more special lunch days throughout the school year.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING WESTNEY HEIGHTS PS!



Walking @ Westney



We would like to take the time to thank all of our families who continue to walk to school in the morning and afternoon when possible. This week during a walk with a number of community agencies to assess safety concerns and barriers to walking to school many of the individuals commented on the number of families who walk to school. Thank you to all that continue to be role models of activity for their children when possible by walking to school.

Lunch Drop-Off Request



If you are dropping off late lunches, school work, extra clothes, etc., please have these items clearly labelled before you arrive so as not to disturb the office more than necessary. You may leave these items on the counter in the office. Also please be sure your child knows ahead of time that these items are being dropped off, and that they know they should come to the office to pick them up. This way the office staff does not have to interrupt your child's class during the school day.

All students should arrive at school on time. As well, please send all lunches, snacks, and necessary school work/clothes for the day with your child when they arrive first thing in the morning. This will prevent unnecessary "buzzing in" of visitors to the school.

WE Scare Hunger

We were able to collect **over 1000 items** filled with either non-perishable food items and hygiene products! Amazing! All of these products will be donated to local charities to ensure they find their way to families who need them. A huge thank you to all that donated throughout our campaign.

Sincerely,

The We Team

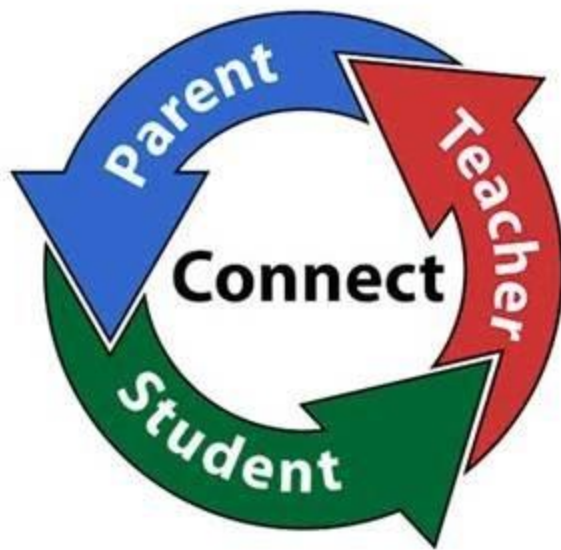
Volunteer of Distinction



We would like to congratulate Irimi Atkinson who was nominated and named as the Westney Heights' Volunteer of Distinction for all her work and dedication around the school, specifically as our SCC secretary for the 2018-2019 school year and her volunteer work in our primary classes. Irimi was honored at the DDSB Volunteer of Distinction Awards Ceremony on Thursday October 23, 2019.

Progress Reports and Interviews

Progress Reports will be sent home with students on Wednesday November 13, 2019. This will be followed by Student - Parent - Teacher conferences on Thursday November 14 after school (4:00 to 8:00 pm) and on Friday November 15 (9:00 - 11:00 am). Parents of students in Kindergarten to grade 6 will be asked to sign-up for a conference time through the link that will be sent directly to parents next week. The conference time slots will be filled on a first come, first served basis. Please look for further information next week. Parents of students in grades 7 & 8 will not sign up for a time slot as all of the intermediate staff will be in the gym for parents to meet with on a first come, first served basis in order to allow parents to meet with homeroom teachers and rotary teachers as appropriate. Students are encouraged to attend and participate in the conferences.



Cricket Team



This month our Westney Wildcats will be participating in the Durham Cricket Challenge for the third year in a row! Thanks to all of the students, teachers and parents who are helping to promote the game of cricket in our community! Go Wildcats!

Kiss and Ride

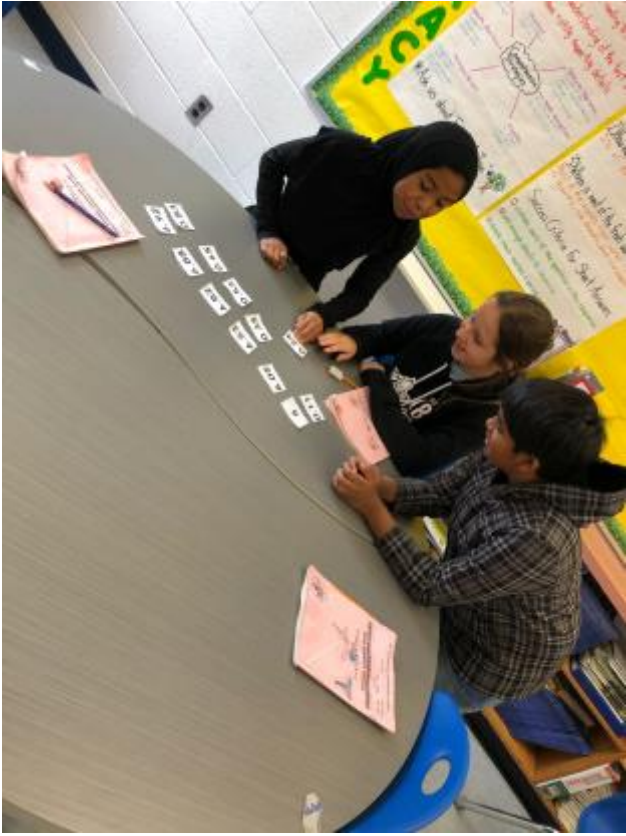


Once again, we need your help to ensure the safety of all of our students. We ask that if you are dropping off or picking up your child in person to please use our Kiss and Ride program.

Please keep the following in mind when using the kiss and ride.

1. The kiss and ride is for picking up and dropping off only. Please do not park your vehicle to enter the school or supervise your child on the playground. This creates a traffic jam for other people who are using it.
2. Between 8:45 - 9:00 and 3:30 - 3:45, please do not drive through parking lot area unless you are using the kiss and ride.
3. Please enter at the west entrance and exit at the east entrance on Brennan.
4. Please do not park on the student crosswalk. This area is marked with yellow lines and is used for students to walk along.
6. Please do not park in the parking lot or driveway. Please use side streets if possible to reduce the number of vehicles on Brennan at or near bell times.
7. Marked handicapped parking spaces are only to be used with a permit. We have a number of students who require loading and unloading in these areas.
8. Please remember that Smoking and Vaping is prohibited on school property or within 20m of school property. Please do not smoke or vape in your vehicle or outside of your vehicle while on school property.

Your assistance in this area is greatly appreciated and necessary to ensure the safety of all of our students!





Schoolyard Behaviour



Over the course of the first two months of school we as a staff have had to remind numerous students about respecting the trees and other natural aspects of our schoolyard. As noted in the code of conduct in front of the agenda of our grade 1-6 students and shared with the grade 7 and 8 families, hanging on limbs of trees and breaking branches is identified as a behaviour to avoid. We want to protect the trees that we have on our property as they provide valuable shade during the warmer months. Please review this expectation with your child or children.

Picture Retake Day

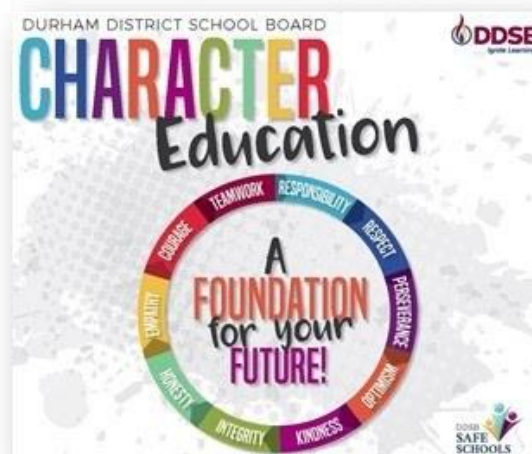


Picture Re-takes will take place on Wednesday, November 6th. Anyone who missed having their photo taken or would like picture re-takes should come prepared for the morning of November 6th.

Lunchroom Supervisors

Lunchroom supervisors play a vital role in our school. Our wonderful team of lunchroom supervisors support students from our kindergarten classes and developmental classes to our grade 8 students. They ensure our students are safe in both the classroom and on our yard and assist students with problem-solving and with bumps and bruises that happen while playing. We are always looking to add to our team with community members willing to help our students in both a full and part time basis. If you are interested in joining our team please contact Mr. Harney or Mrs. Nugent in the office for an application package.

Character Education at Westney



As part of the Durham District School Boards on going and updated focus on Character Education, Westney Heights staff will be highlighting the importance of strong character traits. As well, the Safe Schools Department and the DDSB social media platforms will be highlighting that trait during that month. Here are the character traits that we will focus on during the months of the school year:

September- **Optimism-**

October– **Teamwork-**

November- **Empathy-**

December- **Integrity-**

January- **Responsibility-**

February- **Kindness-**

March- **Respect-**

April- **Honesty-**

May – **Perseverance-**

June- **Courage-**



<https://sway.office.com/epWHXpz2bm5STdl2#content=8i68ND706SiITi>

School Community Council

SCC Meeting—Thursday, November 28th @ 5:30pm in The library - Everyone is welcome.

The role of the School Community Council Members is to act as a link between the council and the community, and to reflect the views of parents during the decision-making process.

The council typically meets on the last Thursday of most school months.

Proposed dates for the 2018-2019 school year:

Jan. 30, 5:30pm

Feb. 27, 5:30pm

Mar. 26, 5:30pm

May 28, 5:30pm

Dates of Significance



Faith Days in November:

November is Albanian Heritage Month

Ontario is home to more than 28 000 Albanian Canadians. During the month of November, people of Albanian origin celebrate the Albanian Declaration of Independence which declared them an independent and sovereign nation. Albania also commemorates Liberation Day in this month which is the day that it was liberated from Nazi Germany forces after the Albanian Resistance. On this day, the Province recognizes the meaningful contributions that Albanians have made to Ontario. It is an opportunity to remember, celebrate and educate future generations about Ontario's rich history. Source: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/16a29>

November is Hindu Heritage Month

Ontario is home to a large and vibrant Hindu community. Since the first Hindu immigrants arrived in Canada at the beginning of the 20th century, Hindu Canadians from across Ontario have made significant contributions across all fields: science, education, medicine, law, politics, business, culture and sports. Hindu Canadians have helped build Ontario into the multicultural success story that it is and have helped to build this province into the best place to live, work and raise families. They continue to help foster growth, prosperity and innovation throughout Ontario. Hindu Heritage Month is an opportunity to remember, celebrate and educate future generations about Hindu Canadians and the important role that they have played and continue to play in communities across Ontario

Source: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/s16035>

Treaties Recognition Week November 5-11

Ontario has designated the first week of November as Treaties Recognition Week to promote education. Treaties Recognition Week was introduced to honour the importance of Treaties and to help Ontarians learn more about Treaty rights and Treaty relationships. Treaties Recognition Week provides an opportunity for educators to continue planning curriculum-linked learning activities about Treaties and will help build awareness and a greater understanding of why we acknowledge the land/territory we are on.

Inuit Day November 7th

On International Inuit Day, we celebrate the cultural, history, and impact Inuit people have on Canada and around the world. Click here for a Storytelling Project: <https://www.itk.ca/taimannganit/>

Indigenous Veterans Day November 8th

National Aboriginal Veterans Day began in Winnipeg in 1994 when Indigenous veterans were not recognized in Remembrance Day activities. Over 12,000 Indigenous people are estimated to have volunteered in all three wars, including 7,000 First Nations members, and approximately 300 died during these conflicts. First Nations, Inuit and Metis people were not eligible for conscription because they were not citizens of Canada (they were also unable to vote), but many volunteered despite the challenges they faced, including traveling long distances from remote communities to enlist, learning a new language (English), and coping with racism against them. Indigenous people were not allowed to join the Canadian Air Force until 1942 and the Canadian Navy until 1943. Both men and women enlisted, serving as soldiers, nurses and in other roles. Many served with distinction, winning medals for bravery in action. After the war, enlisted Indigenous people returned home to continued discrimination, including in some cases denial of benefits, loss of Indian Status, and expropriation of their land by the government for non-Indigenous veterans. It was only in 1995 that Indigenous veterans were allowed to lay wreaths commemorating their fallen comrades at the National War Memorial in Ottawa. The first monument commemorating the role of Indigenous people during these three wars was dedicated in 2001 in Ottawa. It took until 2003 for the Government of Canada to provide veterans' benefits to First Nations soldiers who had been denied them in the past, and Metis veterans have never received them.

Source: <https://www.righttoplay.ca/en-ca/national-offices/national-office-canada/whats-new/honouring-indigenous-veterans-this-national-aboriginal-veterans-day/>

November 11, Remembrance Day

On Remembrance Day we honour all who served and continue to serve our country during times of war, conflict and peace. Every year, at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, people who live in Canada as well as many other Commonwealth countries will stop what they are doing to observe a moment of silence to pay tribute to the sacrifices that were made and are still being made on our behalf. Over 6000 First Nations soldiers fought alongside the Canadian Forces throughout the First and Second World Wars. However, those who returned from the war quickly realized that the freedom that they fought for did not equally apply to them. This then, may also be a time to look both into the past and forward toward a better future for Canada's Indigenous People.

November 16, International Day of Tolerance

The United Nations has defined tolerance as respect, acceptance and appreciation of the endless richness of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human (Declaration of Principles on Tolerance, 1995). The International Day of Tolerance encourages people to learn about,

respect and recognize the rights and beliefs of others. It is also a time to reflect on the impact of intolerance and how various forms of injustice, oppression, racism and other forms of discrimination have a negative impact on society.

November 16, Louis Riel Day

Louis Riel was a Métis man who is also called the 'Father of Manitoba'. He was a heroic and influential teacher and leader who took on the challenge of ensuring that the Métis people could preserve their heritage and identity. To do this, Riel headed a Provisional Government which negotiated the Manitoba Act and provided some protection for the French language. He was a man of strength and courage, but he was not seen as a hero by everyone. Riel was labelled as a traitor for taking a stand and defending Métis rights and was consequently executed by the Canadian government.

Louis Riel Day is held every year across the homeland on November 16, the anniversary of Riel's execution in 1885. While Louis Riel Day marks one of the great tragedies of Canadian history, its recognition demonstrates their continuing resilience and determination to regain their rights and preserve their way-of-life in Ontario and across the Homeland. To commemorate Louis Riel Day, MNO citizens and communities hold events across the province to recognize the many contributions of the Métis to Canada, to celebrate Métis culture and to highlight the struggles that Métis continue to face. The great niece of Louis Riel, Augustine Abraham called for unity among Métis people. Listen to the voice of Alexandre, 7 ans qui est Métis. <https://unis.ca/videos?v=0j77zxwvot6ub>

November 19-23 Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week

Bullying is defined as a form of repeated, persistent and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance (Ontario Ministry of Education). Looking at your School Climate Data and planning next steps is a part of how schools can work proactively in response to how students are feeling. <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/climate.html>

November 20, Transgender Day of Remembrance

Transgender Day of Remembrance is held in November to honour Rita Hester who was killed for being who she was. This day urges us all to raise awareness of the threat of violence faced by people who identify as transgender and the persistence of the prejudice felt by the transgender community. DDSB Support Documents Scroll to Recommended Reading https://sites.google.com/s/1Fr78mY-T4608ykL8uSYMkEnyiNLHsOtG/p/1hs9LE3SjgY0Xo_hw7pV6SJNikZpsFEWr/edit

November 23, Holodomor Memorial Day

The Holodomor is the name given to the genocide by famine that occurred in Ukraine from 1932-1933 under Joseph Stalin's regime. As many as 10 million people perished. In Ukrainian, "Holod" means starvation/famine and "moryty" means to inflict death. This Memorial Day was introduced in 2009 in Ontario. For more information and resources, please see: <http://www.holodomoreducation.org/index.php/id/181>

November 25, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

Violence against women is still a devastating human rights violation present in today's world. For far too long, impunity silence and stigma have allowed violence against women to escalate to pandemic proportions—one in three women worldwide experience gender-based violence. While gender-based violence can happen to anyone, anywhere, some women and girls are particularly vulnerable - for instance, young girls and older women, women who identify as lesbian, bisexual, transgender or intersex, migrants and refugees, indigenous women and ethnic minorities, or women and girls living with HIV and disabilities, and those living through humanitarian crises. Violence against women continues to be an obstacle to achieving equality, development, peace as well as to the fulfillment of women and girls' human rights. All in all, the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)- to leave no one behind - cannot be fulfilled without putting an end to violence against women and girls. Source: <https://www.un.org/en/events/endviolenceday/>

November Upcoming Dates and Events



November

4 Pizza Day

6 Photo Retake Day

Grade 8 students to Pickering High School

8 Healthy Hunger lunch: Quesada Burritos and Tacos (Orders due by Sunday, November 3rd)

13 Progress Reports Sent Home

14-15 Progress Report Interviews (evening of the 14th, morning of the 15th)

15 PA Day

18-20 Dental Screening for JK, SK, grades 2, 7, and developmental

20-22 Grade 6 trip to Durham Forest

21 MADD presentation for intermediate students

22 Healthy Hunger lunch: Booster Juice

INDIGENOUS FAMILY NIGHTS



PLEASE JOIN US!

Location: G.L Roberts CVI– 399 Chaleur Ave. Oshawa

Time: 5:00-7:00 pm

Fall Dates: October 21, November 4, November 18, December 2

Elders and special guests provide mentorship in a warm and engaging environment where participants are invited to experience a wide variety of culturally inspired activities. Students in JK to Grade 5 must be accompanied by an adult, but parents/guardians/families of all participating students are welcome to join in. The session will take place in the cafetorium. Please park behind the school and enter through the back door to the right of the greenhouse.

For more information, please contact Melissa Morton @ melissa.morton@ddsb.ca or (905) 666-6469





ARUNODHAYA FOUNDATION PRESENTS
international dance education expo



Dance Workshops & Performances

Saturday, November 9th, 2019 | 2:30 pm - 5:30 pm

Celebrate the joy of dancing

Featuring
Arunodhaya Dance Academy
Afiwi Groove School
Zahra's School of Middle Eastern Dance
The Love of Salsa
Canada Yosakoi Team KAEDE

Free Event



Dance workshops 2:30 PM- 4:10 PM	Ajax Community Center HMS ROOM 75 Centennial Rd, Ajax, ON L1S 4S4	Performances 4:30 PM - 5:30 PM
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Register Online at:
<https://idee.eventbrite.com> or call 905-903-3661



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