




September 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:

- **Lunchroom Supervisors Needed**
- **Terry Fox Run**
- **Lunch Options**
- **Character Education**
- **SCC News**

Message from the Office



Dear Families,

It is a great pleasure to welcome all our students and families back for the 2019-2020 school year. The staff have been hard at work getting everything ready for the first day of school.

We are excited to begin our school year with “The First 20 Days of Well-Being and Belonging at Westney Heights.” We know that learning can only take place when students feel safe, feel a sense of belonging and can share their ‘voice.’ Every teacher in the school has planned activities to learn more about their students, celebrate their uniqueness and build a community of learning. Students are participating in community circles to share to share ideas and thoughts, and trying new activities that promote self-regulation, mental health and well-being.

We are also very pleased with the improvements in our parking lot and feel that the safety of all of our students was prioritized in the design of the parking lot. Thank you to those families who are using the sidewalk and designated walkways through the parking lot to model behaviour for our students. Don't forget that we have a kiss and ride that is staffed with adults who can ensure a faster and smoother drop off for your child or children.

Our goal is to ensure this year is a memorable one of fun and learning. We encourage students to set high standards but to always remember there is support from home and school. We work with families as partners in education. We're looking forward to seeing parents and caregivers at our Meet the Teacher night on September 19th. "Together We Learn" at Westney!

Yours in Education,

Mrs. Robertson & Mr. Harney

Principal Vice-Principal

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.

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.

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.

Instrumental Music



Instrument Use and Information from Mrs. Sawyer

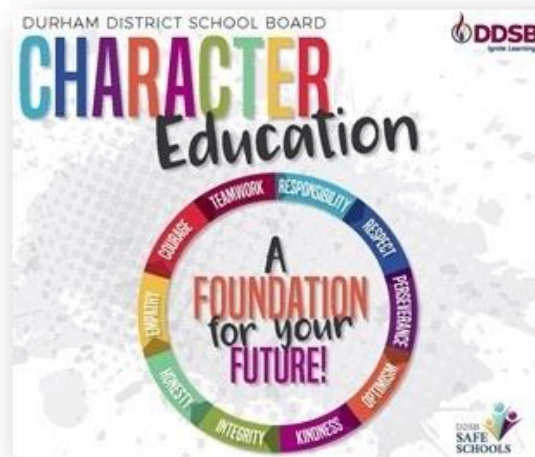
Students will have the opportunity to sign out their instruments for at-home practice. Sign-out happens in the music room after school and instruments should be returned the following day before school begins. Please ensure that instruments are treated with care and are returned promptly the next day. Students will also have the opportunity to purchase their own mouthpiece for safety and sanitary purposes. Information about pricing will be coming home within the next few weeks. Students who play reed instruments (clarinet and saxophone) will require a reed in order to play their instrument. Students will be provided with 2 reeds at no cost. Each reed after that is \$2 per reed. Thanks so much!

Terry Fox Run



Westney Heights is hosting our Terry Fox Run on the afternoon of Friday, September 20th. Students will be running the course that makes it way across our blacktop and all around the soccer field area. Each family is requested to donate a "Tcoonie for Terry" to support the Terry Fox Foundation and cancer research. We will be accepting donations through Cash Online or cash donations to support efforts to prevent and treat all forms of cancer.

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**-

Pizza Lunch, Lunch Lady and Healthy Hunger



This year we will continue with pizza lunches and Lunch Lady orders at Westney. Pizza will likely work on a bi-weekly basis and more details will follow. We are very thankful for our SCC and volunteer involvement in this lunch for our students. Please be on the look out for more details about upcoming dates.

Lunch Lady is an outside company that delivers hot lunches to our school. There are new owners this year and a flyer will be sent out outlining their offerings. Feel free to visit their website: [Lunch Lady](#)

New this year we will be trying a new lunch service called "Healthy Hunger". We are looking to offer this lunch option every **Friday** for any families who wish to participate. There will be a variety of local restaurant options available for our students. More details will follow in the coming weeks.

School Community Council

SCC Meeting—Thurs. Sept. 26 @ 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:

Sept. 27, 5:30pm

Wed. Oct. 30, 5:30pm

Nov. 28, 5:30pm

Jan. 30, 5:30pm

Feb. 27, 5:30pm

Mar. 26, 5:30pm

May 28, 5:30pm

Membership of the SCC May Include:

- School Principal or Vice Principal—non-voting member
- One teacher—voting member
- One community member—voting member
- One support staff member—voting member
- A minimum of 6 and maximum of 11 parents/guardians of students enrolled at Westney Heights P.S. —voting members
- 2 rotating representatives from student council—non voting member

Non-Voting Members

- Non-voting members are individuals who want to participate in the SCC, but recognize that they are not able to commit to attending most meetings.

SCC Executive Committee

- These positions include the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.
- Positions require a strong commitment to attend each meeting.
- The Executive will be elected at the first SCC meeting after the elections / acclamations. If you have any questions about the SCC or its role, please contact *Mr. Harney* or *Mrs. Robertson*.

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School Volunteers



Volunteers at Westney Heights

There are many programs and events in our school that rely on community volunteers. We are so happy to have an active volunteer group at Westney Heights. Some of the ways volunteers help are: Additional supervision on field trips Driving to sports events Helping at special events such as the Terry Fox Run Reading with students Preparing our Health Snack program Scientist in the Schools Classroom special events All of our volunteers who will spend time with students require a volunteer police check. We understand that this may be different expectation than in the past. If you are interested in being a volunteer at Westney Heights, please inform the office to receive a personalized volunteer check letter. This letter can be brought to any police station and the cost of the volunteer check is reduced.

Milk Bags



Why milk bags are used to make mats:

They are durable, colourful, and do not biodegrade. Therefore, these mats are dual purpose and provide needed beds for those less fortunate than ourselves plus they keep thousands of milk bags out of our landfills.

The milk bag mats are distributed both locally and internationally. This summer 27 woven mats were distributed at a park in Oshawa where there has been a significant increase in homelessness.

Story to share:

The driver who picks up and delivers the completed woven mats to the warehouse in Mississauga for distribution internationally had an opportunity to travel to Liberia. While he was there he met a woman who was eager to show him her new home and her woven mat, her only household possession. She was so proud to show it off and explained to him how much it meant to her that people in Canada had made it for her.

Thank You Westney Heights families for your continued caring and sharing of your clean outer milk bags. You can continue to drop them off in the office.

Dates of Significance



September:

- **September 9 Ashura** (Islam)
- **September 29 Navratri** (Hinduism)
- **September 29 Rosh Hashanah** (Judaism)

September 7- **Ukrainian Heritage Day**

The first official Ukrainian immigrants, Vasyl Eleniak and Ivan Pylypiw, arrived in Canada on September 7, 1891. Soon afterwards, Ukrainian immigrants began arriving in Ontario in larger numbers and today Ontario is home to more than 336,000 Ukrainian Canadians. There are over 1.2 million Canadians of Ukrainian descent across the country.

Many Ukrainians fled their homeland to find freedom from oppression and a better life in Canada. Both Ontario and Canada, by way of the *Holodomor Memorial Day Act, 2009* and the *Ukrainian Famine and Genocide ("Holodomor") Memorial Day Act (Canada)*, have recognized the genocide by famine that occurred in Ukraine from 1932 to 1933 under the Soviet Communist regime of Joseph Stalin. On August 24, 1991, the Ukrainian parliament declared Ukraine as an independent democratic state from the Soviet Union. Canada was the first nation in the Western world to recognize Ukraine's independence.

Ontarians of Ukrainian descent have left and continue to leave a historic mark on our province. Their contributions span communities across Ontario and are reflected in our economic, political, social and cultural life. Ukrainian Canadians have played an important role in the development of Ontario into one of the most desirable places in the world to live and have contributed to making Canada the great country that it is today. It is important to recognize and celebrate these contributions.

<https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-39/session-2/bill-155>

September 8- **International Literacy Day (UN)**

2019 Theme: Literacy and Multilingualism

International Literacy Day 2019 will focus on '**Literacy and Multilingualism.**' Despite progress made, literacy challenges persist, distributed unevenly across countries and populations. Embracing linguistic diversity in education and literacy development is central to addressing these literacy challenges and to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

On the occasion of International Literacy Day 2019, the main characteristics of multilingualism in today's globalized and digitalized world will be discussed, together with their implications for literacy in policies and practice in order to achieve greater inclusion in multilingual contexts.

Source: <https://www.un.org/en/events/literacyday/>

September 21- **International Day of Peace (UN)**

2019 Theme: "Climate Action for Peace"

The theme draws attention to the importance of combatting climate change as a way to protect and promote peace throughout the world.

Climate change causes clear threats to international peace and security. Natural disasters displace three times as many people as conflicts, forcing millions to leave their homes and seek safety elsewhere. The salinization of water and crops is endangering food security, and the impact on public health is escalating. The growing tensions over resources and mass movements of people are affecting every country on every continent.

On 23 September, the United Nations is convening a Climate Action Summit with concrete and realistic plans to accelerate action to implement the Paris Agreement. The Summit will focus on the heart of the problem – the sectors that create the most emissions and the areas where building resilience could make the biggest difference – as well as provide leaders and partners the opportunity to demonstrate real climate action and showcase their ambition.

In the lead up to the International Day of Peace on 21 September, the United Nations calls upon all to take action to tackle climate change. Every human is part of the solution - from turning off the lights to taking public transport, to organizing an awareness raising campaign in your community. Share your ideas and activities with us through #PeaceDay and #ClimateAction.

Source: <https://www.un.org/en/events/peaceday/>

September 25 - **Franco-Ontarian Day (Ontario)**

Effective April 26, 2010, the Franco-Ontarian Day Act adopted by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario proclaims September 25 of each year as Franco-Ontarian Day. This Day will, every year, officially recognize the contribution of Ontario's Francophone community to the cultural, historical, social, economic and political life of the province. September 25 will commemorate the anniversary of the first raising of the Franco-Ontarian Flag in 1975.

September 23-27 - **Ally Week**

Ally Week is a national [youth-led](#) effort encouraging students to be allies with the LGBT ([lesbian](#), [gay](#), [bisexual](#) and [transgender](#)) members of their community in standing against [bullying](#), [harassment](#) and name-calling. It takes place in [K-12 schools](#) and colleges. It was created by Joe Montana and other youth members of the Gay Lesbian & Straight Education Network [GLSEN](#) National JumpStart Student Leadership Team. It is done in the same spirit as [Day of Silence](#) to educate on anti-LGBT+ harassment issues.

The goal of Ally Week is to diminish stereotypes and exclusion while highlighting that peer support for LGBT+ students is stronger than the students themselves may have thought existed. In a survey of 240 undergraduates regarding what peer support they felt LGBT+ students had, research found that their personal attitudes were significantly more positive than they thought their friends and fellow students held. Allies are identified as supporters but not necessarily members of a marginalized group.

During Ally Week people are encouraged to sign an ally pledge "taking a stand for a safe and harassment-free school for all students", and that they will not use anti-LGBT+ language and slurs, they will intervene if possible to stop bullying and harassment and support safer schools efforts.

The word Ally is a verb as well as a noun. Action is a very important part of being an Ally, and the way in which support is shown for various members of the LGBT community can differ. It is important to seek information and have conversations to support your work.

September 23 also marks Bi-visibility Day.

Source: <https://www.glsen.org/allyweek>

Lessons: <https://www.glsen.org/educate/resources/lesson-plans>

Also, for more information on **starting a GSA in your school**, please contact the Equity Department and/or see: <https://egale.ca/portfolio/mygsa/>

September 30– Orange Shirt Day (First Nations Canada)

Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Chief Ghislain Picard is encouraging people across the country to mark Orange Shirt Day each year on September 30, as a day to recognize the experience of former students of Indian Residential Schools and affirm a collective commitment to ensure that every child matters. Orange Shirt Day is an outcome of the St. Joseph Mission Residential School Commemoration Project and Reunion events that took place in Williams Lake, BC in May 2013. It stems from a story told by former residential school student, Phyllis Webstad, who had her new orange shirt, bought by her grandmother, taken from her as a six-year old girl. She spoke powerfully of how it seemed to her that nobody cared and, in this personal way, it speaks to the many harms experienced by children in the residential schools. The AFN asks all Canadians to join First Nations in wearing an orange shirt on September 30th in the spirit of healing and reconciliation.

Source: <http://www.orangeshirtday.org/>

September Upcoming Dates and Events



- 3 First Day of School
- 19 School Open house for Meet the Teacher (Classes open from 6-7pm)
- 20 Terry Fox Run
- 23-27 Ally Week and Safety Week
- 30 Orange Shirt Day
Picture Day (1/2 of the school)

Birds, Beavers & Butterflies Nature Festival

Thickson's Woods Nature Reserve

18th Annual



Birds, Beavers & Butterflies Nature Festival



More Festival Fun!

Silent auction
Yummy bake sale
Refreshments for purchase
Nature art & gifts



Join the Experts!

Astronomy/Solar observing
Bugs and botany ID
Bird banding
Beekeeping
Geology
Guided nature walks



Learn about nature from the experts!

Enjoy exciting activities - fun for all the family!

Saturday, September 21 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Adults \$5 Kids \$2 Families \$10 (Cash only)

Please note that for the protection of wildlife, dogs are not allowed in the nature reserve.

(Please lug-a-mug / water bottle.)

Special Events!

Hammer with Home Depot

Wildlife Shows at 10:00 a.m. Noon and 2:00 p.m. vMax the Magnificent 11:00 a.m.

For Kids 2 to 92! All proceeds support Thickson's Woods Nature Reserve.

Face painting Wishing tree Directions: from Hwy 401 in Whitby, take Thickson Road south to the Waterfront Trail. Follow the signs.

Hawk Watch Info: 905-433-7875 or www.thicksonswoods.com E-mail: nature@thicksonswoods.com
Lunchtime Nature Concert

Contact Us



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[@Westney_Heights](#)

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