



**April 1, 2021**

**IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:**

- Good Friday - April 2
- World Autism Day (Wear Blue) - April 2
- Easter Monday - April 5
- Student Census for Kindergarten to Grade 6 Begins - April 6
- World Health Day - April 7
- Holocaust Remembrance Day - April 8
- Vesak Day - April 8
- Dress Up Day - April 9
- April Break Begins - April 12
- Ramadan Begins - April 13
- Vaisakhi Sikh New Year - April 14
- Puthandu - April 14
- Solar New Year - April 14
- First Day of Ridván - April 20
- Sri Rama Navami - April 21
- Earth Day - April 22
- Crazy Hair Day - April 23

**Contact us at:**

Phone: 905-682-9284

Email: wes@dsbn.org



**APRIL**

## NEWSLETTER

### A MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE



With the arrival of spring, we always anticipate rain. On rainy mornings, students will be admitted into the school starting at 8:25 where our supervision will take place in the classrooms until our day starts at 8:40. We ask that you do not drop off our children prior to 8:25 as there is no supervision until that time.

As a reminder, our Gr. 1-8 students meet on the back playground for morning entry. Supervision begins at 8:25. Our Kindergarten parents are to wait with their child until 8:40 at their drop off areas in front of the school.

### PARENTS ROLE IN KEEPING SCHOOLS SAFE

Everyone has a role to play in keeping families safe and reduce the spread of COVID-19. It is the responsibility of parents and caregivers to assess their children on a daily basis before sending them to school. We ask parents to use this link: [Ontario Ministry of Education Covid-19 School and Childcare Screening Tool](#) to screen their child(ren) daily. The screening tool will provide direction and information to determine if students should attend school, remain home, or seek medical advice. Additionally, parents must have a person available to pick up their child right away, should they become sick during school. We thank our parents for being diligent with following the screening guidelines and being available to pick up your child when needed! Please make sure you have read through the screening protocol memo issued by Niagara Region Public Health that was sent via email on Tuesday, February 23, 2021.

### PLANNING FOR THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

In order to assist us with making the best decisions possible with respect to class organization and student placements for Westdale Public School for the 2021/2022 school year, we would appreciate if you would let the office know if your family is planning to move in the next few months. Providing us with this information in the spring will also facilitate transportation arrangements for September. We thank you in advance for keeping us informed! School and classroom organization begins at the end of April so sharing this information with us now is very helpful for our planning for next year!

As you are aware from the memo sent out on March 10, we are planning for a regular school year in September 2021. This means in-person learning during regular school day hours, regular classroom schedules, and the return of extra-curricular activities and clubs. This will benefit our students' education and their mental health and well-being.

All students currently enrolled in DSBN schools will be automatically enrolled in their home school for 2021/2022. The elementary virtual school will officially close at the end of June 2021 and will not re-open in the fall. As always, parents with children requiring specialized programming will be able to review their individual circumstances with their home school principal in late August. If required, remote learning options will be available.

We can assure you that safety protocols will be in place in September 2021 as directed by Niagara Region Public Health and the Ministry of Education. Our planning for September 2021 will include contingencies should we need to revert to remote learning.

## CHILDCARE VIABILITY TEST - NIAGARA CHILDCARE REGISTRY

Each year the Niagara Region asks families to complete the viability testing through their online central registry. This is done to determine if sufficient need is demonstrated for a viable childcare program for before and after school to run in areas throughout Niagara. Please read [Letter to Families](#) - the Niagara Region Child Care Registry letter to families. As well as [Instructions to apply](#) for Before and After School Childcare through the [OneHSN](#).

**Please note that families must register or update their child care needs on the Onelist each year for their children in Kindergarten to Grade 6.**

If you require technical support, please contact RBB Support line at 1-888-722-1540 or [support@onehsn.com](mailto:support@onehsn.com)

For all other questions, please contact: Jackie Galloway, Supervisor, Early Year and Childcare Supervisor at [jackie.galloway@niagararegion.ca](mailto:jackie.galloway@niagararegion.ca)

## MY VOICE COUNTS: STUDENT CENSUS SURVEY 2021

Each year the Niagara Region asks families to complete the viability testing through their online central registry. The District School Board of Niagara believes that diversity is a source of strength and innovation. Our schools embrace and appreciate the values, identities and lived experiences of all of our students. The DSBN is committed to ensuring that everyone feels included and has a strong sense of belonging. This is why we're asking students and families to share their voice by completing our **"My Voice Counts"** Student Census Survey.

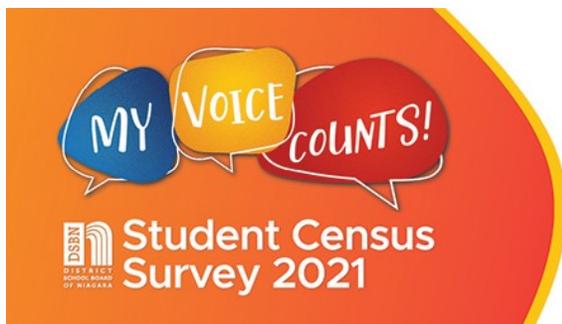
Collecting information through this survey will help us to identify, eliminate, and respond to systemic barriers to student success, create more equitable and inclusive school environments, and, further support student achievement and well-being in targeted and intentional ways.

The survey is voluntary, although we strongly encourage all students and families to complete it. The more responses we receive, the more effective the DSBN can be in supporting students moving forward. **The survey will take approximately 10 minutes and is entirely confidential.**

We are asking families of students in **Kindergarten to Grade 6** to complete the online **"My Voice Counts"** Student Census Survey, at home, for each student in their household, between **April 6-30**. Families will receive easy step-by-step instructions on how to access the survey by April 6<sup>th</sup>. To access the survey, you will use your child's secure DSBN username and password.

If you have any questions or need support in completing the survey, please reach out to your school principal or visit our website at: [www.dsbni.org/myvoicecounts](http://www.dsbni.org/myvoicecounts) where you will find our Frequently Asked Questions page and other helpful information. The survey will be available in English, Arabic, Simplified Chinese, Korean, Hungarian, Spanish and Vietnamese. More information to follow.

Thank you for supporting this important work. Your support in sharing your child's voice will help shape the future of the DSBN.



**Your experience matters.**

**Learn More!**

**Grades 7-12**  
Mar 22 - Apr 1

**Grades K-6**  
Apr 6 - 30

## WORLD AUTISM DAY, FRIDAY, APRIL 2

April 2nd, 2021 will mark a historic day in Canada for the autism community. For the ninth year, Canadians will officially recognize World Autism Awareness Day. We encourage all our families to "Light it Up Blue" by wearing blue to recognize this day.



## KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION FOR THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR



Hi! I'm Barkley. Your child's Kindergarten sidekick.

I'm here to tell you that it's time to register for Kindergarten!

Normally I'd invite you inside one of our Kindergarten classrooms so you and your child could look around with me, but to keep each other safe, we have to wait to do that another time. What I can do is help you find all the information you need to register your child for Kindergarten at the DSBN! I put it on <https://www.dsbm.org/earlylearners/kickstart/home> for you. It has important information like:

- How to register your child online
- A video about a typical day in Kindergarten
- A Kindergarten classroom 360° virtual tour
- An e-book about how I overcame my first day fears



Register today at [dsbn.org/kindergarten](https://www.dsbm.org/kindergarten). I can't wait to meet you and your child at school!

## SOCIAL WORKER SUPPORT

- *Do you have questions about your child's mental health and well-being, such as anxiety, behaviour or self-harm?*
- *Do you need support in accessing supports in the community?*
- *Do you need advice for setting goals to help with regular school attendance?*
- *Do you have any questions or are looking for support regarding a certain aspect of parenting?*

If these are some questions that you have, please speak with your child's teacher or Mr. Scott. Sylvie Leibbrandt is a DSBN Social Worker that works with families in St. Catharines schools, including Westdale, to provide an additional layer of support to help our students and families achieve success. She is an invaluable member of our Westdale team and is looking forward to connecting with families.



# Niagara Region Public Health School Health Newsletter For Parents

## COVID-19 Updates

For information regarding schools and COVID-19, including screening, symptoms, prevention and protection measures, visit <https://www.niagararegion.ca/health/covid-19/reopen/schools.aspx>

If you have general COVID-19 questions, you can also speak with health care professional seven days a week 9:15am to 4:15pm 905-688-8248 or 1-888-505-6074, press 7

## Vaccine Rollout

For more information on distribution and eligibility please visit [Niagara Public Health COVID-19 Vaccination](#)

## April is Oral Health Month!

Public Health recommends that children's teeth should be brushed twice daily for two minutes with a pea sized amount of fluoride toothpaste to prevent cavities.

Children under the age of three should have their teeth brushed by an adult, using a rice grain sized portion of fluoride toothpaste until the child can spit out.

Parents and caregivers with children under six years should apply the toothpaste to the toothbrush and supervise to ensure proper brushing.

For more information, visit [https://www.niagararegion.ca/living/health\\_wellness/dental/prevent-cavities.aspx](https://www.niagararegion.ca/living/health_wellness/dental/prevent-cavities.aspx).

## School Dental Screening Updates

Due to COVID-19, public health dental staff have not been able to provide school dental screenings in the 2020-2021 school year.

If your child is experiencing dental pain or discomfort, please connect with our dental program through the [Niagara Region Public Health dental website](#) or call the Dental Health Line at 905-688-8248 or 1-888-505-6074 ext. 7399

## Spring into Spring

This April, join schools across Ontario to welcome spring by encouraging your families to celebrate walking and wheeling in their community. You can combine this with other environmental celebrations such as Earth Day. For activity ideas including messages you can share on social media and in your newsletter, visit [Ontario Active School Travel](#).



## Niagara Parents Facebook Live events

Checkout [Niagara Parents Facebook page](#) for live streaming events and videos!