



February 1, 2021

**IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:**

- Black History Month - Feb 1-28
- World Hijab Day - Feb. 1
- 100<sup>th</sup> Day of School - Feb. 11
- Spirit Day - Wear Hearts or Red, Pink and White or 100 of Something - Feb. 11
- Chinese New Year - Feb 12-17
- PA Day - Feb. 12
- Family Day holiday - Feb. 15
- Kindness Awareness Week - Feb. 17-21
- Term 1 Reports and Kindergarten Communication of Learning go home - Feb. 18-19
- Pink Shirt Day - Feb. 24

**Contact us at:**

Phone: 905-682-9284

Email: [wes@dsbn.org](mailto:wes@dsbn.org)**NEWSLETTER****A MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE**

On behalf of the staff at Westdale, we want to thank all our families for your support. We know that it can be a challenge to have your child log in each day and participate in the learning. The staff is truly grateful for your perseverance and amazing efforts. We are also so proud of our students. They are working hard! We love seeing our students connecting with us in our virtual classrooms every day. This is truly a family effort!

I also would like to send a "Shout Out" to our amazing staff and all of the ways they are engaging our Wildcats in their virtual classrooms, while also providing support with technology issues as they come up.

It is important that we ensure we are maintaining balance with our families. Please ensure you take some time to care for your physical and emotional health and well-being. What can you do as a family to balance these needs? Take a family walk, play with your dog in the backyard, build a snowman, or perhaps bake some special treats. Sending uplifting messages can also improve our own mood. When we share our gratitude, it helps us feel more positive, build strong friendships, and deal with challenges. Tell someone why they are important to you.

If you would like to send a "Shout Out" to someone in our Westdale community, please send us an email to [westdale@dsbn.org](mailto:westdale@dsbn.org) and we will share your

thanks or congratulations with them!

With Term 1 Report Cards and the Kindergarten Communication of Learning coming home in February, this is a great opportunity to reflect on your child's progress and set some goals for the remainder of the year. If you have any questions, comments, and or concerns, your child's teacher. Please see the important information in regard to our Term 1 report cards and the Term 1 Kindergarten Communication of Learning.

Stay safe and healthy Wildcats!

**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 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.

## TERM 1 REPORT CARD UPDATE

### Elementary Provincial Report Card (Grades 1-8) and the Kindergarten: Communication of Learning

Due to the extension of remote learning, the Elementary Provincial Report Card (Grades 1-8) and the Kindergarten: Communication of Learning will be issued over two days between February 18-19. Families can expect to receive additional information about the Report Card distribution process from their school administrator, once further information about the return to "in-person learning" becomes available.

Report cards give a summary of student achievement at the end of each term. Teachers use their professional judgement and consider factors such as consistency, recent improvement and amount of evidence in order to determine students' grades or marks. Teachers and students work together to gather evidence of their learning over time from observations, conversations and student products.

This year, the Ontario Ministry of Education updated [the math curriculum](#) for Grades 1 to 8 which started in September 2020. The new mathematics curriculum is part of a [four-year math strategy](#) designed to:

- improve student performance in math
- help students solve everyday math problems
- increase students' employability to attain the jobs of the future

## UPDATES TO ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION IN MATHEMATICS (GRADES 1-8)

To foster a cohesive approach to both instruction and assessment across the elementary mathematics curriculum, achievement in mathematics will be reported in the Elementary Report Card as one overall letter grade (Grades 1-6) or percentage mark (Grades 7-8), with supporting comments. Comments will describe significant strengths demonstrated by the student, and identify next steps for improvement. Teachers may also describe a student's growth in learning.

The Ministry has provided more information about the new math curriculum for parents on the following website: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/new-math-curriculum-grades-1-8>. If you have any questions, please make arrangements to speak with your child's teacher.

## PINK SHIRT DAY

Anti-Bullying Day, also known as Pink Shirt Day, is recognized on the last Wednesday in February in Canada. On February 24, we encourage all members of the Westdale community to wear something pink to symbolize that we at Westdale will not tolerate bullying.

### What is bullying?

Bullying is aggressive behaviour that is typically repeated over time. It is meant to cause harm, fear or distress or create a negative environment at school for another person. Bullying occurs in a situation where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.

### Is conflict the same as bullying?

People may sometimes confuse conflict with bullying, but they are different. Conflict occurs between two or more people who have a disagreement, a difference of opinion or different views. Conflict between students does not always mean its bullying. Children learn at a young age to understand that others can have a different perspective than their own, but developing the ability to gain perspective takes time and the process continues into early adulthood (Stepping Stones: A Resource on Youth Development, page 26). (The above information is taken from [www.ontario.ca/page/bullying-we-can-all-help-stop-it](http://www.ontario.ca/page/bullying-we-can-all-help-stop-it))



## GRADE 1 FRENCH IMMERSION REGISTRATION

The French Immersion program (offered at French Immersion sites) is open to all Year 2 Kindergarten students. If you want your child to develop a high proficiency and fluency in Canada's two official languages, French Immersion has a great deal to offer. [Check out this video about our program!](#)

Registration is now open and will close February 16th, 2021. For more information about French Immersion in the District School Board of Niagara visit [www.dsbni.org/fi](http://www.dsbni.org/fi).



## 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 DSBNI! I put it on <https://www.dsbni.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 [dsbni.org/kindergarten](http://dsbni.org/kindergarten). I can't wait to meet you and your child at school!

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## PD DAY

On Friday, February 12, all DSBNI schools will be closed for a PA Day in which teachers will be engaged in professional learning activities

## DSBN ACADEMY: VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE COMING SOON

Learn about the DSBN Academy at the Virtual Open House on **Monday, February 8, 2021 at 6:00PM!** Join us to find out:

- How this unique program prepares students to attend, and succeed at, college and university
- What extra opportunities are offered and how your child can benefit
- If the DSBN Academy is a good fit for your child

The DSBN Academy is a Grade 6-12 public school designed to support and empower students to be the first in their family to graduate from college or university. Staff and students are committed to the belief that, with hard work, all students can achieve their dreams.

From January 11-29, Grade 5 and 6 students will participate in a Virtual Roadshow during class time to learn more about the DSBN Academy and everything it has to offer. More information about Registration and the Virtual Open House will be shared in January 2021.

**Online registration opens on JANUARY 7, 2021 at [ACADEMY.DSBN.ORG/APPLY](https://academy.dsbnschools.org/apply). Registration will close on FEBRUARY 15, 2021. Limited spots available.**

### WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY TO DSBN ACADEMY?

- Student must live within the Niagara Region
- Student is entering Grade 6, 7 or 8 in September 2021
- Student would be the first in their family to graduate from a college or university program
- If a sibling has attended post-secondary but the parent(s)/guardian(s) have not, the student is still considered a First Generation Student
- Student is achieving current grade level expectations or just below
- Student has demonstrated the potential for achieving "good" or "excellent" learning skills
- Student is willing to attend a school that may be out of their community with free transportation provided
- Student understands there are mandatory after-school academic supports and *ENCORE* programs
- After-school *ENCORE* options include: Mixed sports, Board games, Photography, Yoga, Makerspace, Choir, Reading, and many more!

Families understand that the DSBN Academy is a single track pathway beginning in Grade 9 (academic level only)

### IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:

[Derek.Harley@dsbn.org](mailto:Derek.Harley@dsbn.org) - Elementary Principal



The graphic features a green background with a blue and white 3D cube icon. The word "Explore" is written in large white letters at the top. Below it, "DSBN Academy" is written in white. At the bottom, a blue banner contains the text "Virtual Open House February 8, 2021 at 6:00PM" and the website "academy.dsbnschools.org".

**INCLEMENT WEATHER MESSAGE FOR FAMILIES**

There are times in Niagara when weather conditions are so poor that we must cancel student transportation, and/or close schools to preserve the safety of students and staff.

The decision to cancel transportation and/or close schools is not taken lightly; a variety of factors are considered when making this choice. To learn more about how these decisions are made, please go to <https://www.dsbnet.org/inclementweather>.

**Transportation Cancellations:**

Information about transportation delays and cancellations are posted to <https://portal.nsts.ca/Cancellations.aspx>. When transportation is cancelled, information is shared before 6:00 am on the day of the cancellation. There are times when transportation is cancelled, but schools remain open. If, on those days you feel it is best for your child to stay home, please report your child's absence <https://dsbn.org/safearrival/> so we can make sure they are safe at home.

**School Closures:**

**When the decision to close schools is made, it refers to all schools: both in-person and virtual schools.** School closure information is shared before 6:00 am on the day of the school closure. You will find it on dsbn.org, all school websites, DSBN social media, and local media share the news widely as well.

**Student Work on School Closure and Transportation Cancellation Days:**

**For elementary students** - On days where transportation is cancelled and/or schools are closed, please visit your child's school website and click on the "Learn From Home" button. There you will find optional asynchronous learning resources.

**For secondary students** – Students will be able to access online materials for their courses. If it is a culminating activity day, special arrangements will be made and communicated to students centrally.

**ATTENDANCE**

Just a reminder that if your child is going to be away from school it is important for you to let us know. Please call Safe Arrival school messenger system at 1-866-606-5567 to report your child's absence.

**LATES**

We are still having issues with students arriving to school late each day. More often than not it is within a few short minutes of the entry bell. With the impact of Covid this raises concerns for everyone's safety as students who normally do not come into contact are now doing so in the office area. We would ask that you please do your best to have your child(ren) arrive to Westdale on time each morning. We have staff out on the yard to greet students every day starting at 8:25 a.m. Thank you for your consideration.