

FEBRUARY 2014 NEWSLETTER

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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE ~ A. MACLACHLAN

Greetings parents and guardians! We have had a very industrious and exciting first term: preparing your children's Individual Education Plans, defining our School Improvement Plan with emphasis on Literacy, Numeracy, School Safety, Technology and Experiential Learning and in participating in the many activities and initiatives that are described in the articles below.

We have expanded our School Breakfast Program- all students have access to Milk, Juice, Fruit, Granola, Bagels and Cheese on a daily basis. The new brain science shows real evidence that a good breakfast helps brain power and we want to ensure that all our students start the day right.

We are continuing our 4 R's campaign of Respect, Responsibility, Relationship and Restraint to build a safe, caring, extended family atmosphere here at York Humber.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and find it informative. The Website is also available to you for information.

If you have any questions or concerns or need further explanation on anything at all, please do not hesitate to call the school.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES PROGRAM ~ G. Goldenberg



This past month, staff and students from the York Humber HS Developmental Disabilities program went on a field trip to Central Etobicoke. The YHHS group boarded a school bus in the morning and headed down the road, en route to experiencing different types of learning activities. They had a great time baking in the kitchen, building and taking knobs apart, sorting papers and stuffing envelopes. In addition to all the stimulating and engaging opportunities we already offer, the DD department is working diligently to

create even more varied options of experiential learning opportunities in our classrooms. In light of expanding experiential learning opportunities for all learners, DD staff and students have also been collaborating and coming together in developing and implementing something new and exciting for the students of York Humber High School to enjoy! Stay tuned...

FOCUS ON SUCCESS ~ K. Beach

York Humber's new Focus on Success (FOS) Program is off to a great start! We provide social-emotional and academic support to students in need of additional encouragement, direction, focus, and help, on an as-needed basis. We are very proud of our students over the last five months, who are learning important life and interpersonal skills to better advocate for their own needs, and to respect themselves and others.



We've implemented a new lates program to help students build their time management skills and develop better attendance habits. Students now track when and why they are not on time for school in daily log books in their classrooms, and have meetings with FOS staff to identify and solve the problems that are keeping them from being in school on time. Please continue to encourage your son or daughter to go to bed early (and turn off all electronic devices!), and to attend classes every day, on time. The first twenty minutes of class are the most critical for receiving instructions and directions from teachers, and when students are late for school, they are late for important learning! We have a great team in the FOS program, spearheaded by our Child Youth Worker (CYW) Ms. Wilmot. She provides support and coaching for students going through challenging times, be it relationship issues, concerns about employment or housing, navigating through conflicts, or personal/mental health issues. She is currently mentoring two CYW's in training this spring, who

are great assets to our school. Ms. Wilmot has also partnered with the TDSB Equity Department this winter to host a series of workshops for students on Healthy Relationships.

Our goal this spring is to expand the FOS program to provide increased support for students in transition. New students join us throughout the year, and we look forward to helping them feel safe, connected, and engaged as learners at York Humber.

As always, if you have concerns or questions, please contact us! If you call the school's main line at (416) 394-3280 and ask for the Focus on Success Program, they will connect you with a staff member who would be happy to speak with you about your child, their needs, and how we can support their achievement both in and out of class.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND COOPERATIVE EDUCATION SUCCESSES AT YHHS ~ H. Montagnese

Students enrolled in the semester 2 Green Industries course were offered the opportunity to visit the Toronto Wind Turbine and participate in a workshop to learn more about renewable energy options. This group also had the chance to visit the Ashbridge's Bay Waste Water Treatment facility where they learned about what happens to water that leaves our homes before making its way to back to Lake Ontario.

Grades 9 and 10 students had the chance to participate in a Take Your Kids to Work field trip to explore the possible employment options in the future. The group visited the Eaton Chelsea Hotel where they learned about the many different occupations that exist in the hospitality industry. They also visited IKEA where they had lunch, discovered that while it is a home furnishing store, IKEA has a variety of occupations: daycare worker, kitchen helper, construction worker, etc.

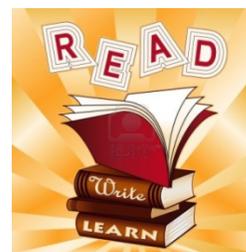


Students in the cooperative education programs have recently completed their placements taking valuable workplace skills with them, having built excellent relationships with employers and developed priceless associations with a new network of people.

Thank you the following community partners who have offered our students the opportunity to learn and grow in a workplace environment:

- Canadian Tire – Caledonia and Eglinton
- Canadian Tire – Stockyards
- Canadian Tire – Weston Road and 401
- Dollarama – Jane and Wilson
- Kelsey's – 1011 The Queensway
- Lento Law Corporation
- Monarch Paint and Wallpaper
- Old Mill Cadillac
- Parkfield Junior Public School
- Pet Valu – Weston Road and 401
- Reverso Manufacturing Inc.
- Rona - Islington
- Roselands Junior Public School
- Sears Canada – Rexdale Warehouse
- Shoppers Drug Mart – Jane and Wilson
- Staples – Lawrence and Dufferin
- Staples – The Queensway
- Staples – Weston Road and 401
- The Dollar Tree – Weston Road and 401
- The Learning Enrichment Foundation
- Thistletown Collegiate Institute – Foods Department
- York Humber High School – DD Staff
- York Humber High School – Educational Assistants

ELS, LITERACY & EQAO ~ J. Khona & M. NiTreaig



This year YHHS is continuing the English Literacy Skills (ELS), a course where the main focus is to help students succeed on the literacy test. English Literacy Skills was made into a literacy prep course to increase student success on the test. The course's main focus is to help students succeed on the literacy test. All students scheduled to take the literacy test took English Literacy Skills in semester 1. The course focuses on the format of the test, expectations, tips and strategies to be successful and practice and mock testing. All students in the course wrote a mock EQAO test at the end of the course.

All students writing the OSSLT this year will feel confident and well prepared because they spent the entire first semester preparing in Ms. Khona's English Literacy Skills (ELS309) course. It also uses released materials and exemplars from previous administrations of the test to help students improve the reading and writing skills required for

success, not only on the test, but in all areas of their academic and working lives. The Literacy Test (EQAO) is on March 27, 2014 from 8:45-3:00 this year. Letters will arrive home soon re: whether students are writing, deferred or exempt from this year's administration of the test. The strategies they had been taught in ELS – these skills and attributes will serve them well throughout their lives.

Also continuing from last year is the English Bridging Course, a modified English Literacy Development (ELD) curriculum created to help fill the gap between credit and non-credit courses for students who have not yet acquired the literacy skill levels required to be successful in the grade 9 essential English (ENG1L) course. We know from last year how much more successful our first group of ELD students were and more prepared for the ENG1L course.

English classes are also undergoing Flynt-Cooter testing for all students. The results are placed in students' IEPs and their OSRs. The goal is to place students more effectively and accurately according to their level, K – non-credit, locally developed or the applied. The annual testing allows teachers to see the progress that students make each year. Additionally the testing illustrates areas of literacy that students need to focus on.

This year at York Humber we are anticipating a better Grade 9 Math and English credit accumulation and EQAO scores based on the above. Last year YHHS had a record number of students pass the EQAO and we hope to continue that success this year. Good luck to all students writing.

NUMERACY AT YHHS ~ J. Voges

A group of enthusiastic students participated in an afterschool program called “The Amazing Math Race” over the course of three afternoons. Quantum Sports and Learning Association facilitated this by combining “real life” math skills with sports. The students competed in a series of sport-based obstacle courses while improving their athletic ability with tips and strategies from the QSLA volunteer team. The math skills they learned or reviewed included: different ways of earning money, credit card repayment options, and prioritizing wants and needs. At the conclusion of the race, each student received a prize whether they won or not.



Students were ecstatic when they received the news that they were attending a Toronto Raptor's basketball game. A huge “THANK YOU” to the QSLA team for making this possible.



HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND GBVP WORKSHOPS ~ J. Khona & S. Wilmot

This year we are continuing our second year of Healthy Relationships workshops facilitated by Kevin Sutton, Chelsea Takalo and Amita Handa, from TDSB Equitable & Inclusive Schools. This year YHHS has had 2 workshops on for students on Healthy Relationships and Sexuality and another 2 are to follow. The workshops included case studies, participation of the audience, media, discussion, questions and answers and role play.



Some of the goals included:

- Definition of Healthy/Unhealthy Relationships
- Understanding “No”
- Reducing sexism & homophobia

- Developing increased respect for personal space & boundaries
- Increasing self-esteem and self-worth among students
- Easing tensions between students

The focus on Healthy Relationships has been successful and we plan on continuing the program next year. This is a long-term school wide initiative that includes student workshops, staff professional development, discussion, home form activities, partnerships with TDSB and community groups and an assembly. The workshops are separated by gender and age, so students feel more comfortable participating.

When students feel safe and comfortable in school, they are more successful. Students have learned what qualities to seek out in a relationship as well as potential warning signs of unhealthy relationships. In addition, various communication strategies were demonstrated to students to assist them in positively and effectively resolving any conflicts they may have within the different contexts of "relationships". We want all students to be successful and respectful of each other and believe this focus will aid in this goal. We hope the students will apply some of the lessons they learned from Healthy Relationships and Sexuality in their everyday lives!



UPDATE FROM THE BEARS DEN ~ G. Millett

Another fine semester of fitness and athletics has come and gone here at YHHS. Our long standing tradition of success has continued as a result of the hard work and dedication of our student athletes. Our students have participated in Cross-Country, volleyball, soccer, basketball leagues as well as after school, before school and lunchtime

programs. We are proud to provide our students with multiple opportunities to be physically engaged in what is going on in the school.

Our first season saw runners attend our annual Cross-Country meet at Morningside Park where individual and team medals were won and ranged from Gold all the way through silver. The cross-country team continues to expand at YHHS and the hardware continues to pile up. Congratulations to all of our runners.



Our girls have experienced a wealth of success this fall and into the winter. They secured gold medals in basketball and indoor soccer respectively. They are repeat champions in soccer and have placed no lower than second in the last 3 years for basketball. Their success can be attributed to their unselfish style of play and their dedication to their teammates.

The boys' volleyball team travelled to Scarborough in the fall and put forth their best effort in their annual tournament. Despite falling short in their matches and finishing fourth they proved that with a bit of practice and some more time to gel it will not be long until YHHS returns to the podium.

Just prior to the holidays students participated in the 7th annual YHHS turkey shoot charity event that had students shooting hoops for a chance at a turkey to take home for the holidays. All students were invited to participate and in the end we were able to send home 4 lucky winners with a turkey for the holidays. Whether they were participating or just there to cheer on their friends all staff and students had a great time.

The New Year saw the boys' basketball team tip off against a staunch opponent in Sir William Osler for the boys' basketball championship. The lead changed hands many times throughout what was later described as "the most exciting game in recent memory" by the officials. In the end the boys were narrowly defeated; however, their efforts were nothing short of heroic.

The new semester will see new sports, initiatives and hopefully some new athletes emerge at YHHS. As always we take great pleasure in providing our students with multiple opportunities to be physical fit and engaged. We continue to strive to ensure graduates of YHHS have a clear understanding of the mind body connection and the importance of leading a healthy active lifestyle

IMPORTANT DATES

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|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Family Day | February 17, 2014 |
| Science Exploration | February 21, 2014 |
| Black History Assembly | February 24, 2014 |
| Board-wide PA Day | March, 7, 2014 |
| March Break | March 10-14, 2014 |
| Parent's Night | March 20, 2014 |
| OSSLT (EQAO Test) | March 27, 2014 |
| Good Friday | April 18, 2014 |
| Easter Monday | April 21, 2014 |
| Report Cards (Sem 2) | April 23, 2014 |
| Victoria Day | May 19, 2014 |
| Elementary School PA Day | June 6, 2014 |
| Secondary School PA Day | June 27, 2014 |



TDSB School Website:

<http://www.tdsb.on.ca> - and click on "find your school"

School Website: www.yorkhumber.com

