



Westdale Secondary Community Newsletter

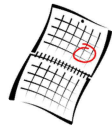
March 2026

Greetings

As we have settled into semester 2 and are approaching the preliminary reporting period, our staff are continuing to create and revise instruction and assessment practices to support student learning and achievement. As you will see in this newsletter, there were many opportunities for students and staff to connect, learn, and celebrate with one another. We are looking forward to supporting and recognizing continued learning and growth over the coming months!

Sincerely,
Brian Goodram, Principal

Important Calendar Dates



Date:	Event(s):	Audience:
Monday March 2nd Tuesday March 3rd	Healthy Peer and Relations Survey	Grades 9-12
Tuesday March 3rd	Lockdown Drill (approximately 9:30am)	All
Thursday March 5th Monday March 9th	Vaccination Clinic (Day 1 of 2; Upper Gym) Vaccination Clinic (Day 2 of 2; Upper Gym)	Students requiring updated Immunizations
Friday March 6th	PA Day (no school for students)	All
Friday March 13th	Course Options for 2026-27 School Year Due Preliminary Reports sent home (email)	All returning students All
March 16th to 20th	March Break (no school)	All
Thursday March 26th	Family-Teacher Interviews (5-7pm)	All (by appointment)

Shout Outs / Good News



Welcome to Westdale!

We are pleased to welcome Ms. Ciaramella (Art and Civics/Careers) and Mr. Broomer (Automotive Technology) to our teaching staff this semester. As well, our instructional leadership team (department heads) welcomes Ms. Moore as the (Acting) Assistant Head of Arts this semester.

Celebrating Students:

Thank you to the Art department for their continued work in celebrating student work and learning. As you can see in the first floor west cross-hall display, we have many talented artists at Westdale! This display, updated regularly, is a wonderful showcase for students, staff and visitors as they come into the school and contributes to our work in making the school reflective of the students we serve.



DECA:

Westdale's DECA team travelled to Toronto last month for a provincial competition. DECA prepares high school students for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality and management, through business case studies and role-play scenarios. The team from Westdale competed with 6,500 other peers from across Ontario. Members of the team include Jacob S., Ruby L., Gustav S., Yoel H., Nahian C., and Namila S. Thank you to Ms. Elliott for her time supporting the club.



Coffee House:

Thank you to Mr. Dobbin for his ongoing support of "Coffee House" at Westdale. Once every couple of months, a number of students gather in the Library/Learning Commons to listen to original and cover music performances from their peers. The courage that the student performers show and the support of the audience is wonderful to see. This gathering is one example of the community that exists at Westdale. We look forward to the next Coffee House later this month!



Valentine's Dance:

Last month, a group of students, including students from our Comprehensive classes attended Ancaster High School for the annual Valentine's Dance. Through this event, students were able to dance and celebrate with their peers, develop new relationships, and practice social skills. Thank you to our Comprehensive Class teachers, our Learning Resource teachers and our amazing Educational Assistant team for their support of this event. The student excitement before the event was palpable and as you can see from the photo below, the group had a great time!



Celebrating Black Excellence:

On Family Day weekend, a group of 6 Westdale students attended the 30th annual Reverend John C. Holland Awards at Liuna Station to celebrate and acknowledge their Black excellence alongside peers, family and community. Congratulations to Aya A. (Sankofa Pearl Scholarship, Sankofa Unify Pillar Award), Nina B.R. (Empower Award, Sankofa Unify Pillar Award), Sheila L. (Connect Award), Lauryn M. (Connect Award), Neriah O-A. (Empower Award), and Tomi O. (Unify Award) on their achievements and for representing the best of Westdale! The students, alongside their HWDSB peers, were recognized in the Hamilton Spectator as well this past weekend. Thank you to Mr. Abraham for his ongoing mentorship, leadership and advocacy of our Westdale students. Mr. Abraham and his Grad Coach colleagues in HWDSB are continuing to make impactful and lasting change in the lives of a countless number of students, as shared in the student acceptance speeches and in conversations with families at the event!



Girls Volleyball Championships:

Last week, both the Junior and Senior Girls Volleyball teams competed for the City Championships at Ancaster High School. In the Junior championship, the Warriors were victorious in a straight set win over Waterdown. Congratulations to Coaches Ms. Costanzo and Ms. Greene-Stanley on a phenomenal season, capped off with this championship. The team heads off to the SOSSA (Southern Ontario) Championship this week. In the Senior championship, the Warriors fell a little short in their championship efforts after a hard-fought 4-set match versus Westmount. Congratulations to Head Coach Mr. Christie on an undefeated regular season and for guiding a spirited and classy group of student-athletes. Pictured below are the Jr. Volleyball Champions. Way to go Warriors!

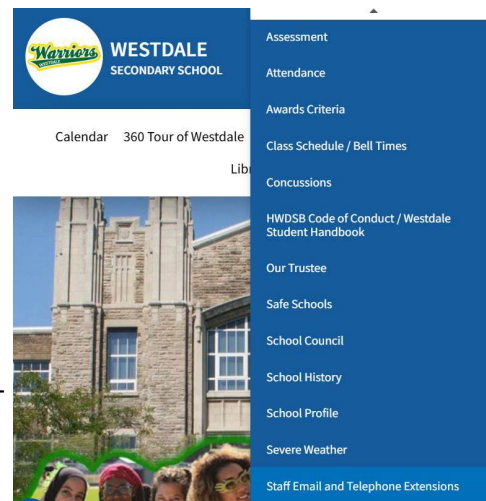


Other News



Family-Teacher Night:

As shared on the calendar, we will be hosting our semester 2 Family-Teacher Night on March 26th. Additional information for sign-up (through the Parent Interview platform) will be shared soon. We look forward to connecting with many of our families on this date. Given the size of our school population, we recognize that not all families will be able to secure an interview with every teacher. With that being said, home-school communication should not be limited to a singular event and we know that ongoing two-way communication is important in supporting student achievement and well-being. Our complete staff list, including phone and email contact information, is shared on our school website: <https://hwdsb.on.ca/westdale/> in the "About" drop down menu. Please note that both our Board and school website will be transitioning to a new web server in the next couple of months. This new website will provide users with a more streamlined and user-friendly platform (e.g., better viewing on phones and tablets) to make Board/school communication more accessible for families.



School Council PRO Grant Event: Warrior Fest!

Mark your calendars! Warrior Fest is coming to Westdale on Thursday May 28th, from 5:30 to 8:30pm. It's a chance for the whole school community to connect through music, food, activities and information sharing. It's going to be an exciting evening of *community, collaboration and connection!* In preparation for the event, Westdale School Council is looking for raffle donation items (examples include tickets for sports games, concerts, theatre or other experiences; gift cards, or other goods, products or services). Follow Westdale's School Council social media (using the QR Codes shared right) or contact westdaleSC@hwdsb.on.ca with any questions, suggestions or donation items.



Secure Schools Drills:

Throughout the school year, we perform a variety of drills so students and staff are prepared, in case of an emergency. Each school, as mandated, performs the following annual safety drills:

- 6 Fire drills (3/semester). Two of these drills are announced to students and staff beforehand.
- 2 Lockdown drills. Purpose: for a safety threat within the building or on school property
- 1 Hold and Secure drill. Purpose: for a safety threat outside of the building (e.g., in the community)
- 1 Shelter in Place drill. Purpose: for an external environmental related concern (e.g., extreme weather event)
- 1 bomb threat drill

All known drills (e.g., March 3rd Lockdown drill) are communicated to parents/guardians beforehand (via School Messenger). Students and staff are informed beforehand as well so the rationale, process, and expectations can be reviewed prior to practicing the response. Additional information regarding HWDSB's Secure Schools responses can be found within the Board's website: <https://hwdsb.info/secureschools>

Ramadan and Religious Accommodations:

Ramadan Mubarak to our Westdale students, staff, and families who are observing Ramadan from February 17th to March 19th! In HWDSB and at Westdale, we recognize, support, and honour the various lived experiences, cultures, and celebrations of all Westdale families. As such, we are committed to taking reasonable steps to accommodate students. More information about HWDSB's Religious Accommodation Procedure can be found on the Boards website: www.hwdsb.on.ca, in the "Policies" section.

Student Parking / Exiting the Building:

As a reminder, there is no student parking permitted in the school lot. Additionally, as of this semester, we are asking students to exit the building through doors other than the ramp (accessible) door at the end of the school day. This will help to alleviate pedestrian traffic in the area where accessible vehicles pick up students receiving personalized transportation.

WESTDALE CATCH UP VACCINE CLINIC

THURSDAY, MARCH 5

MONDAY, MARCH 9

IN THE UPPER GYM

- Check your personal vaccine records at **[Hamilton.ca/vaccines](https://hamilton.ca/vaccines)**
- You may have received a reminder letter in the mail

How do I prepare for clinic day?

- Wear a short-sleeved shirt and eat breakfast the day of the clinic
- Bring your yellow vaccine card if you have one

What happens if I don't get the vaccines?

- These vaccines protect against serious illnesses
- You may be suspended if you don't have the required vaccines

