

Dear Students,

Monday, February 15th, is **Family Day**. Schools will be closed for in-person and remote learning. On Tuesday, February 16th, the schedule will resume with **Cohort A in-person** ([Secondary Calendar](#)).

Ontario Announcement - March Break Delayed to April

This afternoon, the Ontario government announced that the March break will be delayed until April 12-16 based on the advice of health experts. As a result, school will continue for all students the week of March 15-19.

At this time, we anticipate that the secondary schedule will continue as planned, adjusted for students to be in school March 15-19. More detailed information about the impact on the current and upcoming Quadesters/Octomesters will be shared as soon as possible. You can read the [Ontario government announcement here](#).

COVID-19 Testing

A key component of the strategy to keep schools operating safely is an active testing program. Over the past two weekends, CHEO and Ottawa Public Health hosted COVID-19 test sites at two locations. The locations are chosen based on testing priorities established by OPH, and include all schools in the postal code area. Families in the designated schools receive a letter of invitation. The testing is for students, staff, family members and community members associated with the schools.

The next targeted testing area is in Barrhaven. Families with students in those schools have received a letter with detailed information about the testing. If your parents/guardians receive one of these letters, we encourage you to take advantage of this testing opportunity. The clinics use the rapid test for people without any symptoms. This is less invasive and gives results on the same day. The test for people with symptoms of COVID-19 and/or who have recently been exposed to someone with COVID-19 will be the rapid test along with the lab-based test. Learn more about the testing process in this Ottawa Public Health [FAQ document](#) and watch for information about testing in your community.

Report Cards

Secondary Report Cards will be available on the Report Card Portal on Tuesday, February 16th at 12:00 p.m. To know more about accessing your report card visit the [OCDSB Report Card Portal webpage](#).

Share Your Thoughts

Next week, we will be sending a survey to parents and students in Grades 7-12. This will be your opportunity to tell us about how things are going right now. We'll ask some short survey questions, and then give you the opportunity to tell us about your current experience in your own words. Please watch for the email invitation on Tuesday, February 16. The survey will be open until Friday, February 26. Your feedback will help

us find ways to continue to improve how we do things at the OCDSB, and will help us to plan for next year.

Black History Month

The OCDSB is committed to promoting equity and inclusion in every one of our schools. We believe that honouring and sharing the rich cultural diversity within all of our schools and communities will help to dispel harmful biases and enlighten our understanding of each other.

We encourage you to join us in celebrating Black history, culture, and achievements this month and throughout the year. Learn [more](#) and [listen](#) to Director of Education, Camille Williams-Taylor as she marks Black History Month.

Commencement Ceremonies

Planning for commencement activities this June for graduating students is underway. All options are being considered to help make this June's commencement a meaningful and special celebration. We will be reaching out to graduating students and their parents/guardians to solicit feedback to help shape what these celebrations may look like.

Graduation Photos

Health and safety procedures have been put in place to allow graduating students learning in-person and virtually to take grad photos this spring. Students will be able to take photos with or without a gown or cap, and will be allowed to remove their masks for these photos. More details will be shared through your school regarding upcoming photo sessions.

EVENTS

New Pathways to Excellence Workshops for Secondary Students

The Sankofa Centre of Excellence Graduation Coach Program is committed to advancing the academic success of African, Black and Caribbean students in the OCDSB.

As part of this aim, Sankofa has launched the Pathways to Excellence Series to support students to learn about post-secondary opportunities. From February until May, these free virtual workshops are available to secondary students. You can [learn more and register](#).

5 Great Reasons for a Career in the Trades: An Evening with Parents and Students

On February 25th at 7:00 p.m., the OCDSB will be hosting a virtual event for grade 8-12 students and their parents/guardians with Job Talks Executive Director Dr. Jon Callegher. He will share insights on the field of skilled trades. [Visit our website](#) to learn more.

Toonie Tuesday

On February 23rd, the Education Foundation of Ottawa will be hosting their annual Toonie Tuesday event to raise critical funds for OCDSB families in need. The Education Foundation of Ottawa is an independent charity in support of OCDSB students. This year, EFO has a special surprise. To celebrate Toonie Tuesday, February 23rd, we'll be hosting a **DJ Dance Party with Ottawa's own, DJ Mace!**

You can help. Please encourage those who can to donate [on the Foundation's website](#),

Indigenous Speaker Series with Gabrielle Fayant - February 16th, 2021

The OCDSB Indigenous Speakers Series will present a webinar with Gabrielle Fayant for OCDSB staff and grade 7-12 students on Tuesday, February 16th at 11:30 a.m. Gabrielle is an award-winning woman for her work in her community, her dedication to supporting young people, and amplifying grassroots efforts. [Learn more on our website](#).

Continuing Education Flyer for February 2021

The OCDSB Continuing Education Department features a variety of options for elementary, secondary and adult learners. Check out the interactive OCDSB [Continuing Education Newsletter](#) for February 2021, and have a look at what's taking place this month.

We hope you can find some time to recharge this weekend. Remember, it's important to continue to limit gatherings to those within your household. If you get outside for a skate or walk in the snow, wear a mask and keep a safe distance from others. Remember to do your [daily screening](#).