



# RHHS MESSENGER

Richmond Hill High School  
November 2008

## Principal's Comments

Hello Parents/Guardians, Students, and Community Partners.

It is amazing how quickly this semester is flying by. I want to thank you for your attendance at our first Parents' Night that was held on October 23rd. I hope the information received was informative and positive as your child continues on his/her educational journey.

November 4th was the first Post-Secondary Pathways Fair at RHHS. It gave our families and students an opportunity to explore and meet representatives from universities, colleges and apprenticeship programs. They were here from 7:00—9:00 p.m. and answered questions for our community. In the large gymnasium various colleges, and universities set up display booths and their representatives distributed course calendars and brochures. Thank you for joining us in supporting your student's future.

Our school's first dance was held on October 30th and was entitled "Blackout". We had approximately 380 students who participated. This semester we have 31 clubs here at Richmond Hill High School.

Our students have bought into this year's theme of getting involved. They have embraced the opportunity to represent our school community and be the positive ambassadors we all know they are. It is wonderful to see our students active and learning from both the written lessons and the lessons learned outside the classroom. Congratulations on getting involved. Never lose your focus on *student achievement*.

Parents/Guardians and students continue working with our teachers to make this year your most rewarding yet.

J. Glezakos



## Learning to 18

### Reporting your child's absence

Bill 52, *An Act to Amend the Education Act Respecting Pupil Learning to the Age of 18 and Equivalent Learning*, provides for an expanded range of opportunities to support students and also requires that the responsibility for absent students must be addressed to ensure continuity of their learning.

You must complete the Notification of Expected Return to School Form if your child will not be returning from vacation within the first 30 days of school in September and every subsequent 15 days after that.

Please note that you must contact the school within 15 days to inform the school of continuing absence and to ensure that your child's name remains on the register. Your child will be removed from the register if you do not contact the school within 15 days to inform the school of continued absence.

If you do not complete the *Notification of Expected Return to School Form*, your child may be required to attend school at an alternate location where space is available, given the current accommodation issues in the Board and the Ministry of Education's requirements for class size caps.

### Immunization

If your child received a notice that requires immunization shots, please see your doctor immediately. The Health Department will direct us to suspend students who are not immunized by the deadline.

## Business

The Grade 11 Law class has been busy this term with the beginning of our Guest Speakers Series. Thank you to our Community StreetBeat Officer P.C. Sebastian for delivering our first presentation on Rights on Arrest. We will be welcoming Criminal Defence lawyer Paul Slansky, York Region Probation and Parole Officers, and Captain Gardiner from the Metro East Detention Centre over the next month as the Guest Speaker Series continues. November's activities will culminate with our visit to the University Avenue Superior Courts on November 24<sup>th</sup>.

The Business Department will be offering an integrated curriculum trip to the Elgin Mills Theatre for the viewing of "Flash of Genius". Students from the four different business and law classes will be able to enjoy a dramatic example of entrepreneurship, business ethics and tort law in action.

## BDI3C and BMI3C

The Marketing and Entrepreneurship classes are busy working in the *Little Shop in the Wall*, our own RHHS school store. This is just in time for Halloween. Come and check it out. ***We vend, you spend!***

We work hard and we play hard! Learn through playing! The students have participated in many hands-on in class activities such as: Build a product from straws, Taste Tests, M&M's sampling, International feast, surveys, presentations, Venture of the Month contests, Duck factory competition and many more. Watch for our annual Egg Drop competition coming up soon...

November is Guest Speaker's month for Entrepreneurs. The students will learn from real life experiences on how to make money by being your own boss. Dragon's Den, our own Innovation/Invention project is coming up in December.

Trips, Trips Trips.... Loblaws was a great experience to learn advertising in the food industry and observe some shoppers in action!

## Drama

The Drama department is exploding with activity this autumn. All drama students in grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 will attend the Pulitzer Prize-winning play *A Raisin In the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry. This acclaimed production by Soulpepper Theatre Company in Toronto's Distillery District, has been garnering rave reviews and our students will attend a matinee performance on Thursday, November 13<sup>th</sup>.

Once again the Improv Team is booting up for another stellar season. Under the direction of Ms. Mackay, the team rehearses regularly and has already taken part in an invitational meet at Thornlea High School. The official competitive season begins in early November. Come out, enjoy the fun and be a part of "The Rock".

The current grade 11 drama class is rehearsing for their original show on the topic of bullying which they will tour to the elementary feeder schools. On Wednesday November 5<sup>th</sup> the grade 7 and 8 students of Silver Pines Public School, Trillium Woods Public School and Moraine Hills Public School will see the play and on November 7<sup>th</sup> our students will share their work with the grade 7 and 8 classes of H.G. Bernard Public School. The grade 11 class will also perform their show for the grade 9 students here at RHHS.

Finally, the grade 12 drama students have just begun rehearsals for their full length production of A.R. Gurney's popular play *The Dining Room*. This is a smart, funny and engaging play about a vanishing species: the upper-middle-class WASP. Join us for *The Dining Room* at 7:30 on Thursday, December 4<sup>th</sup> and Friday, December 5<sup>th</sup>.

## English

The fall of 2008 marks a period of growth and celebration for the RHHS English department. We offer a warm welcome to our new English teacher Ms. Pugliese, our student teachers Ms. Borg, Ms. Romeo, and Ms. Subramanian, and our returning teachers Mr. John and Ms. Conlin. We also wish to congratulate Mr. Scire on his appointment as Assistant Head of English.



In addition, there are numerous student achievements that we would like to acknowledge. Esther Phua will be recognized at the Ontario Turning Points Conference for her first place finish out of ten thousand applicants in the

National Turning Points Essay Contest. We also received fantastic results from last semester's AP English exams. Nearly fifty per cent of participating students achieved perfect scores on two separate internationally recognized AP English exams; and this year we have our largest AP English enrolment ever: over fifty students.

Our literacy results were also outstanding. Students achieved a ninety-one per cent success rate on the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test and we have already started our Literacy celebrations this fall. Some of our Literacy initiatives include the Turning Points Essay Contest, the Richmond Hill Public Library Short Story Contest, the Marion Drysdale Creative Writing Contest for Poetry and Short Fiction, and the RHHS Literature Club/Writers' Guild under the leadership of our creative writing teacher Mr. O'Brien. Currently, students in the RHHS Writers' Guild are working on publishing a collection of their creative writing.

The English department is sponsoring several field trips this year as extensions to our academic English program. Mr. Scire's Media Studies class will have a private screening of the new James Bond film Quantum of Solace, as part of an introductory assignment in their Popular Culture Unit. An ABEL videoconference seminar is being planned with noted Canadian author Richard Scarsbrook. This event will allow students an invaluable opportunity to ask important questions about the writing profession in Canada. We are also planning a trip to the Stratford Festival and several research seminars at the University of Toronto and York University for the spring semester. If you have any questions regarding the English program at RHHS please feel free to contact the English department at any time.

### Mathematics

New this year, the mathematics department administered diagnostic assessments during the first week of classes to identify potential students who may experience difficulty, and in consultation with parents/guardians and the guidance department, explore the possibility of a course level change. Near the end of the semester, teachers will be making a recommendation for the next year's mathematics course. It is imperative that students and parents/guardians have conversations with the teacher if they do not agree with the recommendation. Taking a course at a different level does not close doors as there are alternative pathways to reach the ultimate destination. Appropriate placement and having that conversation with the teacher is important for student success.

Students are reminded that extra help is available each morning from 8:00 to 8:40 a.m. and after school from 3:40 to 4:30 p.m. A mathematics teacher and senior student volunteers are available to assist students on a drop-in basis. Students needing help can also speak with their teacher to make an appointment at an agreed-upon time.

Math contests are up and running. Students have already been registered for the Canadian Open Math Challenge which will be written on Wednesday, November 19. Students should listen closely during the morning announcements for future sign-ups of math contests. We look forward to another year of outstanding results! Students showing passion and strong problem solving skills are also invited to attend the weekly meetings of the Math Club on Mondays after school in room 2026.

It has indeed been a busy start to the school year. The math department welcomes back Mrs. Marsella from maternity leave and welcomes Ms. Hu into the department.

### Moderns

It is with regret that we are bidding farewell and safe home to our exchange students from Europe. Aline Servais returned to Belgium on Oct. 11 after her two month stay. Martin Desbrieres will fly back to France on Nov. 1 and Hugo Timon and Brendan Tricault will leave the day after. We'll have the pleasure of Javier Otero's company until Nov. 14, when he'll return to Spain. The teachers and students of RHHS and the larger Richmond Hill community have all benefited from your time among us, and we hope you'll be able to return before long.

Information has now arrived for the Summer Work Student Exchange for students who will be 16 or 17 years of age this summer. Please see Mme Bolton for details.

The forms and information for the international exchanges should arrive before the winter break.

The grade ten classes very much enjoyed a performance of the highlights of the opera Carmen presented by **Opera York** at the Markham Theatre and many have expressed an interest in seeing the entire opera. Fortunately, they will not have to wait long: the complete opera will be presented on Nov. 13 and 14, again at the Markham Theatre.

The tutoring programmes are well underway and showing spectacular results. If you are currently taking French and wish to have a tutoring session, please see any French teacher for a list of the grade ten students who have volunteered to tutor. (The sessions are free of charge!)

**Visit us on  
the web!  
[http://  
www.richmondhill.hs.  
yrdsb.edu.on.ca/](http://www.richmondhill.hs.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/)**

## Physical Education

The Physical Education Department has started the school year off with a bang from both a curricular and an extracurricular standpoint.

On the curricular side, the Health and Physical Education Department introduced a new racquet sport course this year. The course is being offered both semesters and gives students the opportunity to develop their skills in racquet sports including tennis, paddle ball, squash, badminton and table tennis.

The grade 9 intramural program is back again this year! All grade 9's are welcome to come to the large gym during the second half of their lunch hour to participate in a variety of sports. The grade 12 Fitness Leadership class has been working hard to plan and implement these activities for the grade 9's. So far it has proven to be a fun and active environment for all involved. Come out and enjoy the fun!

On the extracurricular side, the fall sport season is well underway. Our school has entered a team in most fall and winter sports, including junior and senior girls basketball, cricket, cross country, football, golf, junior and senior boys soccer, tennis, junior and senior boys volleyball, and special needs basketball. Thanks to the many staff members who volunteer their time.

The junior girls' basketball team has started up again this year after not having a team in the 2007-2008 school year. The team is developing and has a win under their belts. Watch for this team in the future as promising athletes continue to develop for seasons to come.

The senior girls' basketball team is currently sitting in first place in the north for the Tier II division. The team has yet to have a loss with a 5-0 record.

The cricket team finished the season in second place in the central division with a 2-1 record, losing a close one by a score of 62-61 against Alexander Mackenzie within the playoffs.

The cross country team enjoyed success in their past meets, having many athletes finishing and placing despite inclement weather.

This year's junior boys' football team has had a strong start. Currently the team has a 5-1 record in regular season play, putting them in first place in the standings. The boys look forward to their play-off game on November 7<sup>th</sup>. Go Raiders Go!

The Raiders' Golf team has put together some excellent scores and has showed great sportsmanship.

In soccer action, both junior and senior teams had strong seasons and both marginally missed the play-offs.

In tennis, Sonia Glushkovsky and Liana Cherapaha won the senior girls' doubles in the YRAA and have qualified to compete in OFSAA in the spring. Congratulations girls!

Both junior and senior boys' volleyball teams are currently battling to clinch first place in their divisions. With strong squads at both levels, watch for them to compete against some of the top teams in York Region as play-offs commence!

All in all, Richmond Hill High School athletics are off to a great start.

## Technological Education Communications Technology



This semester year our **Comm Tech** programme is very busy with productions all over the school. Students grade 9 through to 12 have been involved in shooting video productions for class as well as learning and practicing editing video and sound. Some projects students are engaged in include creating commercials, TV ads and producing live news shows. Students have also been working diligently on creating graphic posters, photo editing and multi-media projects. **Mr. Soloway's** class has revamped the TV studio for live TV production and students are enjoying the special effects they have been learning to integrate into their assignments. **Mr. Wineberg's** students are venturing into creating cartoon productions as well as PSA's and commercials for radio and TV.



Later in the semester students will be working on a number of culminating practical activities that will integrate their learning from the semester. We look forward to some stellar "star" productions!

## Visual Arts

The Visual Art Department kick started this semester with a downtown Toronto field trip with the grade 11 digital photography students. Students completed an 'on location' photo shoot while experiencing the sights and sounds of a bustling metropolis. The grade 12 photography and visual arts students also visited MOCCA (Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art) and Max the Mutt Animation School. At the MOCCA our students were guided through the conceptual art exhibit by its curator Camilla Singh. The exhibition is entitled *Dyed Roots, the new emergence of culture*. During their tour of Max the Mutt Animation School students caught a glimpse of post secondary art education. A group of students from the visual arts and geography departments are also getting ready for our New York City trip, November 12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>. We will be visiting galleries and experiencing the 'Big Apple'. For the up coming year the department plans to introduce new courses to further suit the needs of our students. Students should look out for the course descriptions coming out in our new school course calendar. If there are further questions students and/or parents are welcome to contact the department.

## RHHS Debate Club

Last year was a great year for the RHHS Debate Club! Students attended several local, provincial, and national tournaments. Our 2007-2008 debate club president, Pam Cohn, won tenth speaker and ninth team at the North American Championships She was also sent as the captain of Team Ontario to the World's Qualifiers where she won a position on Team Canada. She will be representing Canada at the Pan-American, European, and/or World Championships this year! Alexander Ploshko and Vithushan Jeyakumaran also did very well, making the finals at the Thornhill tournament, and the semi-finals at the York University tournament. Esther Phua and Aashti Vijn also placed in the top ten at the York tournament, and Phillip Kitchen took third in public speaking. Congratulations also go to Pam Cohn and her partner for breaking into the semi-finals at the University of Toronto National Championships, and to Frederick Ding who placed 6<sup>th</sup> at the Junior Provincial Championships. He will be representing Ontario at the National Debating Seminar in Calgary in November. The RHHS debate club looks forward to debating in several local, provincial, and national tournaments again this year. New members are always welcome! We meet every Tuesday after school in room 2023.

Special thanks go to the staff supervisors Mrs. Doganoglu, Mr. Cheng, and Mr. Garner for all their hard work and dedication.

## Ski and Snowboard Club '08 – '09



The Richmond Hill Ski and Snowboard Club is up and running again! A total of nine trips to Blue Mountain on Friday nights are planned for this year. This club is open to any students who are skiers or who would like to give this fun winter sport a try. The main goal of the Ski and Snowboard Club is to provide students with an opportunity to learn to ski or to further develop their skills. Alpine skiing and boarding is an exciting, enjoyable recreational activity providing a great way to exercise, build a healthy lifestyle and meet new people. The club is specifically designed to introduce alpine skiing to as many students as possible. There is no need to buy equipment; ski and snowboard rentals are available at a low cost each trip. The Club is open to any student registered at RHHS who has a valid Student Card. This year the bus will be filled with students from both RHHS and King City S.S. Sharing the bus both reduces the cost and allows RHHS students to meet their ski and boarder buddies – and make new ones – adding to the fun for everyone. All trips travel by Highway Coach with comfortable seats, videos and free pop - helping to make the ride there and back safer and more enjoyable!

Trip information and permission forms are posted outside the Gym Office. Get your forms soon – the busses fill up quickly!

See you on the slopes!

Parents send in your email address to the school!

[richmond.hill.hs.yrdsb.edu.on.ca](mailto:richmond.hill.hs.yrdsb.edu.on.ca)

*Please identify the name of your child in the email.*

## PROMOTING SUCCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS OF ABORIGINAL ANCESTRY

In support of the Ministry of Education's directive, the York Region District School Board is providing an opportunity for students to self-identify their Aboriginal ancestry so that expanded supports can be provided to First Nation, Métis and Inuit children. The process is voluntary and the information gathered will be kept confidential.

The self-identification process will help the Board collect data to determine if students of Aboriginal ancestry, especially those who experience gaps in their education, are receiving the appropriate level of support to achieve their full potential.

Students who are already attending a public school in York Region can register by completing an Aboriginal Self-Identification Form which can be obtained from their school. New students can record their Aboriginal status when they register on their Student Registration Form.

### For further information, please contact any of the following individuals at:

(905) 727-3141 (Aurora/King)  
 (905) 895-7216 (Newmarket/East Gwillimbury)  
 (905) 722-3201 (Georgina)  
 (416) 969-8131 (Toronto/Markham/Richmond Hill/  
 Vaughan/Whitchurch-Stouffville)

Chris McAdam, Sharon List or John Malloy,  
 Superintendents of Education  
 José Fernandes, Administrator,  
 Community and Cultural Services Unit  
 Barry McKillop, Aboriginal Education Liaison Officer  
 Or:

Elizabeth Bigwin, Aboriginal Education Office, Ministry of Education, [Liz.bigwin@ontario.ca](mailto:Liz.bigwin@ontario.ca)

### Is your teenager heading in the right direction? November 20 - 7 to 9 pm

Learn how to improve communication and better understand your teen's career type. Discover how to coach your teen towards the best career fit.

**Space is limited so call today! (refreshments will be served)**

**1.866.290.7208**

10909 Yonge St. Suite 202  
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 (Yonge @ Bernard)

Delivered by the Career & Employment Programs of the York Region District School Board.  
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## Dates to Remember 2008-2009

Nov 6	Report Cards
Nov 10	P. A. Day
Nov 11	Remembrance Day
Nov 14	Full Disclosure Date
Nov 27	Semi-Formal
Nov 28	P.A. Day
Dec 1	School Council Meeting
Dec 1	Immunizations forms are due
Dec 4-5	Evening of One Act Plays
Dec 9	Last Day to Drop a Course
Dec 11	Holiday Serenade
Dec 17	Talent Show
Dec 22-	
Jan 2	Winter Break
Jan 5	School Resumes
Jan 15 - 18	Honour Music Weekend
Jan 21 - 23	Semester 1 Exams Do not book vacations during this time.
Jan 26	Regularly scheduled classes
Jan 27 - 28	Semester 1 Exams
Feb 2	Semester 2 begins