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## Laurier expert alert: Back to school

WATERLOO – Ontario elementary and secondary school students return to class on Tuesday, Sept. 7. University and college students also return to class that week. Classes at Wilfrid Laurier University begin on Thursday, Sept. 9.

Wilfrid Laurier University has many experts available to speak about topics related to returning to school.

[Maria Cantalini-Williams](#), dean of the Faculty of Education, is an expert on innovation in education, early childhood and experiential learning. She is available to discuss the creative strategies and adaptability that will be required to support a successful school year as pandemic restrictions ease, as well as the ways parents can help support a safe and smooth transition back to school. Contact: [mcantalinwilliams@wlu.ca](mailto:mcantalinwilliams@wlu.ca)

[Carolyn FitzGerald](#), assistant professor in Laurier's Faculty of Education, is an expert in mental health in education. She is available to speak about how the pandemic has impacted the mental health of children and youth and what parents can do to help their children. FitzGerald's research focuses on the mental health of pre-service teachers, teachers and school administrators, as well as ways in which educators can offer effective programs to respond to the mental health needs of Ontario's children and youth. FitzGerald is available in September. Contact: [cafitzgerald@wlu.ca](mailto:cafitzgerald@wlu.ca)

[Kelly Gallagher-Mackay](#), assistant professor in the Law and Society program, is an expert on law and educational inequality for children and youth. She has researched schools and child welfare, "streaming" and systemic discrimination, the policy and data infrastructure required to understand equity of access to postsecondary education, and the connections between playground quality, health and poverty in Ontario. She is also available to speak about the impacts of the pandemic on children's education and why some children have fallen behind more than others. Gallagher-Mackay was the lead author on the [COVID-19 Science Advisory Table brief](#) on impacts of education disruption.

Gallagher-Mackay is the author of two books: *Succeeding Together: Schools, Child Welfare and Uncertain Public Responsibility for Abused and Neglected Children* (University of Toronto Press), and *Pushing the Limits: How Schools Can Prepare Our Children Today for Tomorrow's Challenges* (Random House Canada, with Nancy Steinhauer).

Contact: [kgallaghermackay@wlu.ca](mailto:kgallaghermackay@wlu.ca)

[David Johnson](#) is an economics professor in the Lazaridis School of Business and Economics. He has been researching elementary school test results in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia; differences between exam results across schools on provincial examinations and teacher-awarded grades; and teacher salaries and labour relations. Contact: [djohnson@wlu.ca](mailto:djohnson@wlu.ca)

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[Danielle Law](#), associate professor in Laurier's [Youth and Children's Studies](#) and [Psychology](#) programs, is an

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expert on cyberbullying, associated mental health concerns and responsible internet use. Law's research examines how children and adolescents develop cognitively and socio-emotionally as they interact and socialize using technologies. [Read more about her research](#). Contact: [dlaw@wlu.ca](mailto:dlaw@wlu.ca)

[Steve Sider](#) is a professor in the Faculty of Education, coordinator of the [International Education Studies program](#) and director of the [Centre for Leading Research in Education](#), a university research centre focused on issues related to education across the lifespan. He is an expert in school leadership and special education, as well as comparative and international education. He is currently studying how school principals support students with special education needs in Canada, as well as inclusive education practices in both Canada and Ghana. For the past few years, he has also been involved in the [Educator and Leadership Institute](#), designed to build the teaching and leadership capacity in schools in Haiti. [Read more about his research](#). Contact: [ssider@wlu.ca](mailto:ssider@wlu.ca)

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