

[Our Faith](#)

[School Information](#)

[School Connections](#)

[Student Success](#)

[Pathways](#)

[Mental Wellness](#)

[FAQs](#)



NOTRE  DAME
CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

Grade 9 Handbook

[CLICK HERE TO
GET STARTED](#)



NOTRE DAME PRAYER

We are ND
 Lord, we thank you for the blessing
 Of belonging to the Notre Dame family.
 Whether as students or alumni, faculty or staff,
 Parents or friends of Our Lady's high school.
 We are ND
 What a gift this is!

Help us to live the calling
 That comes with this gift:
 The call to excellence,
 The call to service,
 The call to faith,
 The call to integrity,
 The call to humility
 Help us to be different
 And make a difference.

Allow us to bravely meet the challenges
 We may face when we are caring for others.
 Give us the grace to be more like Mary, our Mother:
 Tender, strong and true.
 Increase in our hearts love for Our Lady,
 And the desire to be her faithful sons and daughters.

Amen

(Lennon, Chuck. "We are ND" The Notre Dame Book of Prayer, ed. Heidi Schlumpf. Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 2010.Xii. Print)

Welcome and congratulations,

You are now a part of the Notre Dame community. It is with joy and enthusiasm that we celebrate your presence at ND. We recognize every person who enters this community as a Child of God sent to share a beauty and goodness the world has yet to see. You come to us as a blessing, with gifts to be revealed and shared to make the world a better place.



In your next four or five years at ND you will have the opportunity to use your freedom to take part in creative and engaging academic opportunities, Social Justice projects, leadership development, clubs and athletic teams and events. ND is a place for you to discover your passion for life and your inner beauty as a person capable of love. The Notre Dame community is a place where all are welcome. We take the call to be a safe and caring environment seriously, expecting students to be respectful of all people who walk our hallways and live in our community. We care for the environment and take responsibility for our actions.

I urge you to make the decision to share your gifts in a positive way. Know that teachers, support staff and administrators are all here to support you and help you realize your dreams. Notre Dame is a place where dreams grow and caring adults walk with you to help you realize and achieve success. If you are struggling in any way please reach out to the caring adult in the building who can help you; you are never alone!

We welcome you and anticipate great things. Welcome to the Notre Dame Way!

- Principal Roberts



Hey Grade 9's!

Welcome to Notre Dame!

I was so excited (along with ND Prefects) at grade 9 orientation this year to welcome you and make you feel a part of the ND community.

As you may already know, I am new to this community as well, so I am excited to start my journey at ND with the Class of 2025. Please tune in to our ND.ca YouTube channel for our morning prayer and announcements and find out all the amazing things that ND has to offer!



The ND chapel is a place that is open for quiet reflection or to pray and my office newly called the 'ND Fish Tank' is located directly across from the chapel. I look forward to seeing you at your grade 9 retreat days, liturgies, and all social justice initiatives you get involved with.

I encourage you to be easy on yourself, knowing we have all been through so much during this pandemic. Take one day at a time and know that you have an amazing group of teachers and staff here to support you. **YOU ARE NEVER ALONE!** I am here to support you.

REMEMBER: "DO NOT BE AFRAID; ONLY HAVE FAITH." (Mark 6:50)

I promote authentic Catholic Leadership and challenge you to step out of your comfort zone to help each other in school community in simple ways....

- When we open the door for someone...
- When we smile behind the mask..
- When we step out of our comfort zone to help others...
- When we join a club, sports team and demonstrate leadership ...

Welcome to Notre Dame, I am excited to see what the future holds for you!!

Chaplain Dunn



A Discerning Believer



A Self-Directed,
Responsible, Lifelong
Learner



A Reflective, Creative
and Holistic Thinker



An Effective
Communicator

Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School strives to nurture the development of the whole student - mind, body and spirit. At the core of all our teachings is the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations as we encourage and nourish our students to be discerning believers, effective communicators, collaborative contributors, self-directed, responsible lifelong learners, caring family members and responsible citizens.



A Collaborative
Contributor



A Caring Family
Member



A Responsible Citizen

Important School Information

The Notre Dame School Website
<https://ntdm.hcdsb.org>

InsideND: The School Newspaper
www.insidend.ca



Twitter: @NotreDameHCDSB



Instagram: @insidend.ca



How to report a student absence



Pay for an item with School Cash Online



Student Online Access



Search our School Library

Click icons above to access the links



My School Day

Quick Start for Students and Parents

Fall 2021



1. Download the app

You can find the app - **it's free to download!** - on the App Store (iOS) or Google Play (Android) on your phone by

- Searching in the store for "My School Day"
- Going to <https://myschoolday.app/download> in the browser on your phone
- Using the QR or snap codes below



Make sure to allow it to receive notifications when asked - the school will use them to send out important reminders, information and alerts.

2. Select your school

The first time you start the app you will need to select your school. Choose a province, school district, and finally your school from the lists provided, and tap "confirm". *This only needs to be done once.*

3. Follow channels.

Channels let the school administration and teachers send out information specific to your classes and activities, so you get only those notifications for your classes and those of interest to the entire school. To subscribe to channels:

- Tap the menu icon **☰** at the top right
- Tap "Follow Channels" in the menu
- Tap the checkbox for the channels you are interested in
- Tap on the "Done" button.

Remember to check back regularly for new channels that your teachers may have added.

4. Enter your classes

Tap on the classes icon **📅** in the tab bar. Enter your class names and select colours. You can also enter morning, lunch, and after school activities.

5. Access school and class links and files

The school and teachers will add links and files that provide resources to the school community such as course materials for remote learning, health advisories, and other school, district, and provincial information. To access these school-wide and channel-specific resources:

- Tap the menu icon **☰** at the top right
- Select "Files and Links" from the menu.

Remember to check back regularly for new resources that your teachers may have added.



"BE ON TIME
IF YOU CAN'T BE THERE
EARLY."

- Robin Sharma

Notre Dame Daily Schedule

Warning bell 8:10 – 8:20

Grade 9	
8:20 – 8:25	Anthem, morning prayer and announcements
8:25 – 10:55	PERIOD 1
10:55 – 11:00	transition time
11:00 – 11:40	LUNCH
11:40 – 2:10	PERIOD 2

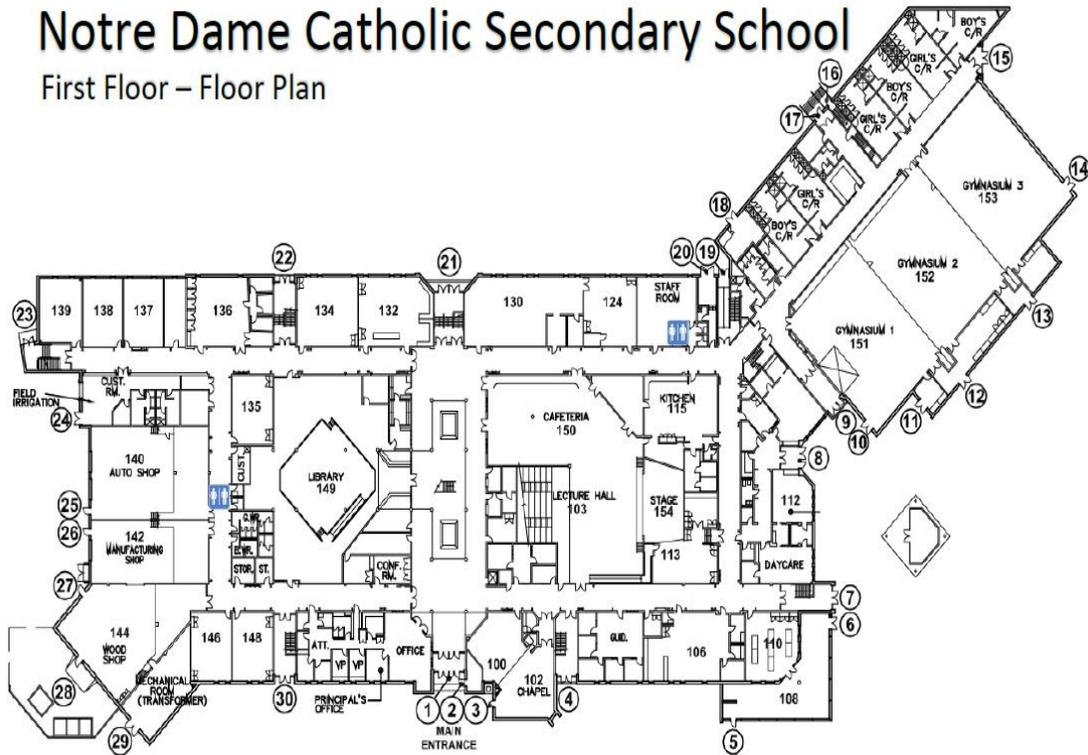
Grade 10	
8:20 – 8:25	Anthem, morning prayer and announcements
8:25 – 10:55	PERIOD 1
11:00 – 11:50	PERIOD 2A
11:50 – 12:30	LUNCH
12:30 – 2:10	PERIOD 2B
2:10	dismissal

Grade 11	
8:20 – 8:25	Anthem, morning prayer and announcements
8:25 – 10:55	PERIOD 1
11:00 – 12:40	PERIOD 2A
12:40 – 1:20	LUNCH
1:20 – 2:10	PERIOD 2B
2:10	dismissal

Grade 12	
8:20 – 8:25	Anthem, morning prayer and announcements
8:25 – 10:55	PERIOD 1
11:00 – 1:30	PERIOD 2
1:30 – 2:10	LUNCH
2:10	dismissal

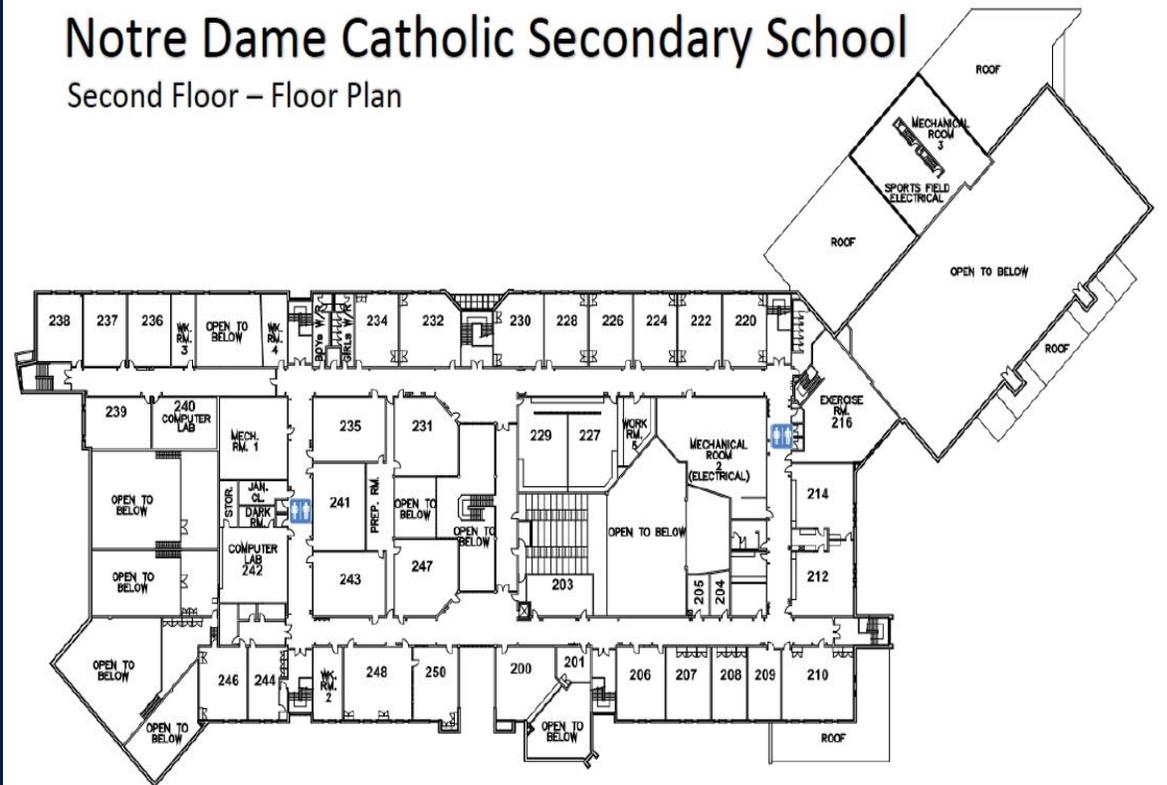
Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School

First Floor – Floor Plan



Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School

Second Floor – Floor Plan

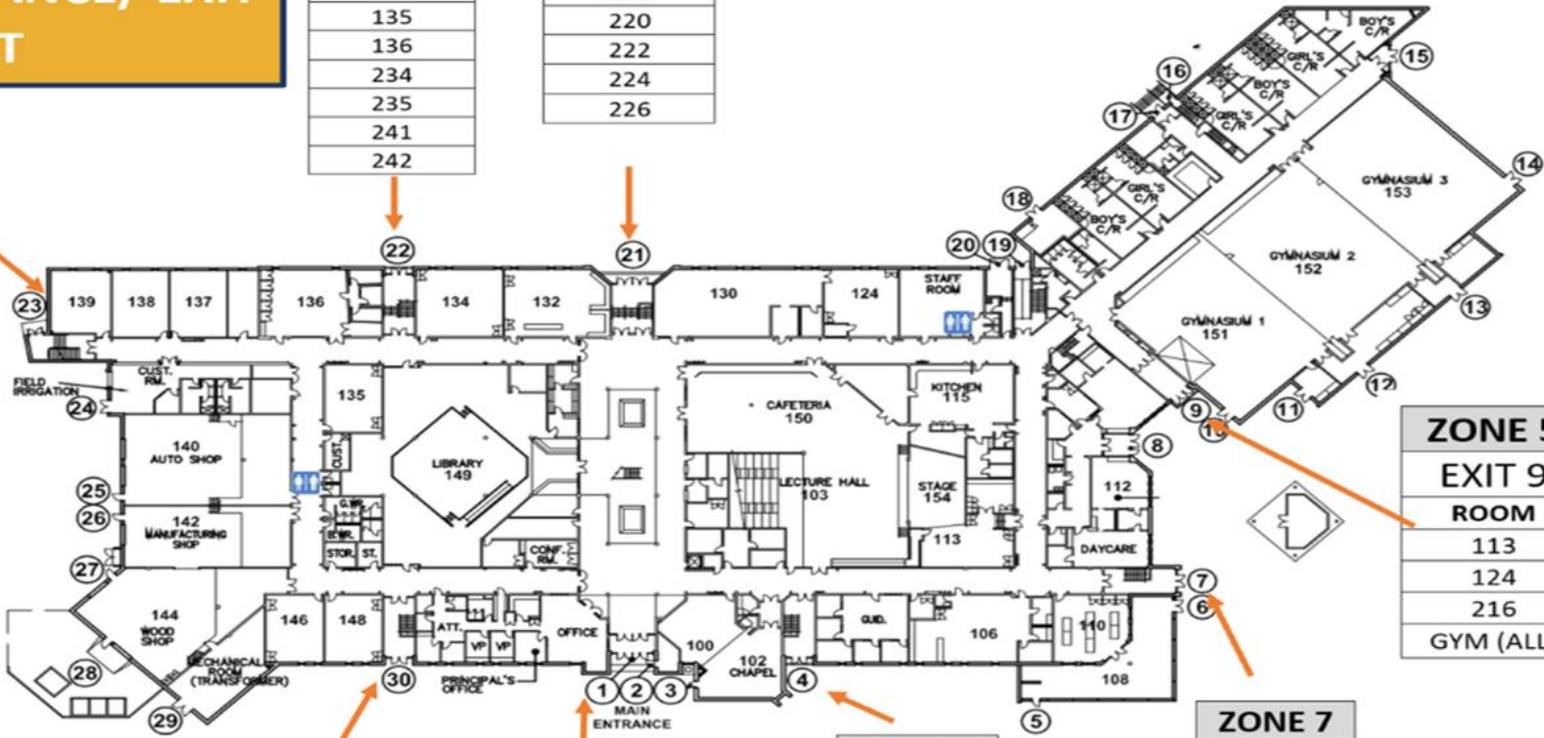


NOTRE DAME C.S.S. STUDENT ENTRANCE/ EXIT CHART

ZONE 2	
EXIT 23	
ROOM	
137	
138	
139	
236	
237	
238	
239	
240	

ZONE 3	
EXIT 22	
ROOM	
132	
134	
135	
136	
234	
235	
241	
242	

ZONE 4	
EXIT 21	
ROOM	
130	
220	
222	
224	
226	



ZONE 1	
EXIT 30	
ROOM	
140	
142	
144	
146	
148	
243	
244	
248	
MOUNTAINEERING	

ZONE 6	
EXIT 1	
ROOM	
100	
228	
229	
230	
231	
232	

ZONE 8	
EXIT 4	
ROOM	
200	
201	
203	
206	
207	
247	
250	

ZONE 7	
EXIT 7	
ROOM	
106	
108	
204	
208	
209	
210	
212	
214	

ZONE 5	
EXIT 9	
ROOM	
113	
124	
216	
GYM (ALL)	

Library

The Notre Dame Library is **OPEN** to students this year.

STUDENTS CAN access the Notre Dame Library webpage can be found here:

<https://hcdsb.insignails.com/LibrarySSO/Home?LibraryID=ntdm>

Notre Dame website → Scroll down to box → Search our School Library

** You must **login** to access online resources/databases using your **firstname.lastname.3digits@students.hcgsb.org** email and **current password**.

Example: jane.doe.123@students.hcgsb.org



What you will find if you access the ND Library online:

Gale -- a database to access published articles in thousands of magazines, academic journals and newspapers. Also, in Gale are critical essays, primary sources, biographies and books. *Please use the Notre Dame Library webpage.*

Ebscohost -- a database to access thousands of published articles in news sources, magazines and journals. There is strong Canadian content and current event coverage. *Please use the Notre Dame Library webpage.*

Library Catalogue – many current and relevant books covering a wide range of topics such as, health, biology, history, geography, current events, science, sociology, psychology, religion, etc. *Please use the Notre Dame Library webpage.*

If you need—

- ✓ research assistance for any project/paper
- ✓ help with documenting your sources (MLA, APA, Chicago) to avoid plagiarism
- ✓ your computer account fixed/re-set
- ✓ a book for reading or research

Please email **Ms. Messinger**, Librarian at -- messingerm@my.ntdm.ca or @hcgsb.org

Points of Contact

Starting high school is such an exciting and important milestone in YOUR life. As students, you need to know that you have a lot of people in the school to help support you, guide you and assist you in being your very best self. It is important to know that you are never alone on your high school journey. Within our school, there are a number of supports that are available to students to support academic, social and emotional student success. Please note, that every student is assigned a guidance counsellor and administrator who are available to address concerns and provide assistance.

Administrators (Principals and Vice-Principals) are responsible for ensuring safe and secure schools. They are available to assist students and parents with regards to school policies and school related problems.

Classroom Teachers provide academic instruction and support a student's daily learning experiences and are available to assist students needing extra help. Classroom teachers are an excellent first point of contact if you have questions or concerns.

Custodians can help you navigate your way to your locker or around the school. They also keep the school clean and functioning.

Educational Assistants (EA) provide one-to one support and academic assistance in the classroom and school community.

ELL teachers are available to provide English help to International Students throughout the duration of their stay in secondary school.

Guidance Counsellors are available to help students with planning their educational pathways, personal career plans and course selections. They are also available to assist students with personal concerns and can refer students to other professionals for specific assistance, if need be.

Librarian assists students, staff and parents with developing information literacy skills and research skills.

School Chaplain promotes the spiritual and human development of all members of our school community. Chaplain offers support and guidance with regards to school concerns and personal problems

Secretaries help with making appointments with administration and guidance counsellors. They also help with implementation of school procedures (lates, absences, communications)

Social Worker & Child/Youth Counsellor provide individual support and services to students with personal concerns that require professional guidance and support

Special Education Teachers monitor and assist students who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Students, parents and the Special Education teacher will collaborate with classroom teachers and other school staff to support a student's individual learning needs.

Student Success Teachers are an additional support to students who might be struggling at school. They work with students to help them be more successful in achieving their educational goals to ensure students earn the credits necessary to graduate.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS



Mr. N. Roberts
School Principal



Mr. M. Ilczyszyn
Vice Principal (A-L)



Mrs. S. Typer
Vice Principal (M-Z)

SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELORS



Mrs. G. Beltrano
Last Names Beginning A-G

Be sure to visit the Student Services Class inside D2L for regular updates
[Click here to go to D2L](#)



Mrs. A. Little
Last Names Beginning H-N



Mr. G. Montesi
Last Names Beginning O-Z

To schedule a virtual appointment with your Guidance Counsellor, please contact the Guidance Secretary, Mrs. McManus by phone 905 335 1544 (x1015)

PowerSchool Student Access Portal – Accessing your School Records

1. Go to <https://hcdsb.powerschool.com/> and click **Student Sign In**.

Student Sign In

Students - Click the button to sign in. You will be redirected to the Student sign in page.

Student Sign In

2. Enter your student email address (**@students.hcgsb.org**)

Sign in

studentname@students.hcgsb.org

Can't access your account?

Next

3. If a popup appears, enter your **@students.hcgsb.org** email as the **Username** (same as the above step) and your normal network **Password**.

Username studentname@students.hcgsb.org

Password

Sign In

Cancel

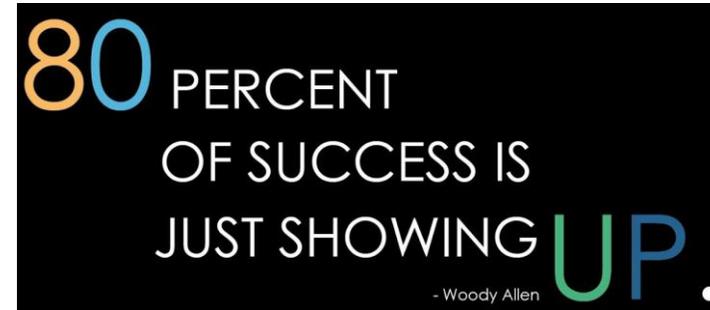
Use the PowerSchool Student Access Portal to view your current year timetable, your daily attendance, as well as your grades as you accumulate credits in high school.

<https://hcgsb.powerschool.com/> and click student Sign in.

Child and Youth Counselling, Social Work & Attendance Counselling

Ms. Nicole Pietrojusti – Child and Youth Counsellor
Ms. Claire Peace – School Social Worker

- Notre Dame values the “whole child”
- A multidisciplinary approach to supporting student success and emotional and social wellbeing
- The school attendance counselling mantra is “Every School Day Matters”



“Sometimes things happen in life that we aren't meant to carry alone. A brain under stress cannot learn – reach out and tap into resources. You are never alone” -Ms. Peace

Student Online Access



What is D2L?

- D2L (Desire 2 Learn) is a learning management system where students can access class notes and submit work
- There are compatible features with Google Apps for Education and Office 365
- This will give students access to MyBluePrint

How to access D2L?

You can visit the Notre Dame website and click on student online access or go directly to:

- <https://hcdsb.elearningontario.ca/d2l/home>
- Your login is: `firstname[dot]lastname[dot]3digitsassigned@students.hcdsb.org` [You can get this from any teacher or staff member] ie. Your password is the same password you enter for your school account

Example: `jane.doe.123@students.hcdsb.org`



What is Notre Dame Microsoft Office 365?

- All Notre Dame students can access the Microsoft Office Suite via the cloud.
- There are word processor, spreadsheet and presentation tools
- There is online storage of files that can be accessed anywhere any time.

How do I access my Notre Dame Microsoft Office 365 Account?

Quick link: <http://office365.hcdsb.org>

- Your Login is `firstname[dot]lastname[dot]3digitsassigned@students.hcdsb.org` [You can get this from any teacher or staff member]
- Your password is the same password you enter for your school account

Example: `jane.doe.123@students.hcdsb.org`

Student Online Access



What is Notre Dame Google Apps?

- Every teacher and student has a free Notre Dame Google account
- There are free word processor, spreadsheet and presentation tools
- There is free online storage of files that can be accessed anywhere, any time.
- You can use Blogger or create websites for presentations.

How do I access my Notre Dame Google Account?

1. Go to a school computer at Notre Dame and login
2. Press Ctrl + Alt + Del, and select change password (This new password is the password you'll use for school computers and your Notre Dame Google Apps account) – Only have to do this step on the first login.
3. Quick link: www.google.ca
4. Your Login is `firstname[dot]lastname[dot]3digitsassigned@my.ntdm.ca` [You can get this from any teacher or staff member]
5. Your password is the same password you enter for your school account

Google Example: `jane.doe.123@my.ntdm.ca`

Learning Skills are a Critical Component to Student Success!

Responsibility

- The student:
 - fulfills responsibilities and commitments within the learning environment;
 - completes and submits class work, homework, and assignments according to agreed-upon timelines;
 - takes responsibility for and manages own behaviour

Independent Work

- The student:
 - independently monitors, assesses and revises plans to complete tasks and meet goals;
 - uses class time appropriately to complete tasks;
 - follows instructions with minimal supervision

Organization

- The student:
 - devises and follows a plan and process for completing work and tasks;
 - establishes priorities and manages time to complete tasks and achieve goals;
 - identifies, gathers, evaluates, and uses information, technology, and resources to complete tasks.

“Learning how to learn is one of the most important skills in life.”
- Norma Fauziyah

Collaboration

- The student:
 - accepts various roles and an equitable share of work in a group; • responds positively to the ideas, opinions, values and traditions of others;
 - builds healthy peer-to-peer relationships through personal and media-assisted interactions;
 - works with others to resolve conflicts and build consensus to achieve group goals;
 - shares information, resources, and expertise and promotes critical thinking to solve problems and make decisions.

Self Regulation

- The student:
 - sets own individual goals and monitors progress towards achieving them;
 - seeks clarification or assistance when needed;
 - assesses and reflects critically on own strengths, needs, and interests;
 - identifies learning opportunities, choices, and strategies to meet personal needs and achieve goals;
 - perseveres and makes an effort when responding to challenges.

Initiative

- The student:
 - looks for and acts on new ideas and opportunities for learning;
 - demonstrates the capacity for innovation and a willingness to take risks;
 - demonstrates curiosity and interest in learning;
 - approaches new tasks with a positive attitude;
 - recognizes and advocates appropriately for the rights of self and others.



SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE

Best Tips for Creating a Study/Work Schedule when working at Home

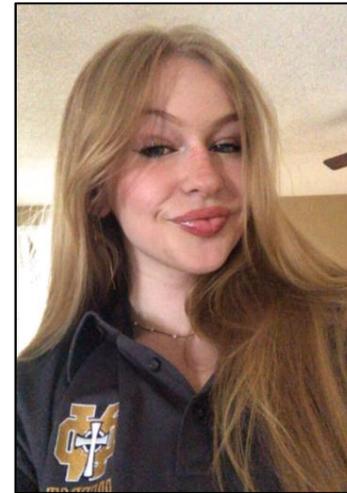
When working from home, it can be hard to get into a routine and develop habits that can help you in the long run. What I found helped me the most with organizing my study schedule and personal schedule, was getting an agenda. It seems so simple, yet it makes so much more of a difference. By dedicating certain times of the day to studying/homework, life will be so much easier as you will feel accomplished and ahead of everything when you start checking off your daily activities and completing work you needed to get done.



Virtual Learning Strategies - How to Learn Best from Home

Switching to online learning was a huge adjustment for me because I found I was constantly getting distracted and was always feeling unmotivated. What helped me the most was finding a quiet space where I could go do my work for a few hours at a time and not feel distracted. It is important that you are diligent and stay motivated as there is no one else to do that for you. A big distraction for me at home was my phone. Turning off your phone for a few hours and putting it away, can automatically make you that much more successful at finishing your work and being on task. I know it is scary coming into a new chapter of your life but if you try your best and stay on top of things, I can assure you that you will have the best time of your life while being successful!

- Kaedyn Gomes



Greatest challenge in Grade 9

Transitioning into new academic challenges can be hard enough in itself on top of a completely new social environment to adjust to. As overwhelming as it may seem, I promise you we have all been there. Personally, in grade 9, I struggled with opening myself up to new opportunities. As you begin your journey through high school, I'd encourage you to find your place in our school where you feel the most welcome. For me, I was able to find a community of friends through different teams and athletic opportunities. At Notre Dame, we make it our goal to create a positive atmosphere for everyone. Fortunately, one of the best parts of our school is that we offer a wide range of extra-curriculars suited for a variety of interests. Whether that be joining the Debate Team or the Drama Club, there will always be a place waiting for you to make your mark. Getting

involved will be the best thing you can do in your next four years and my challenge for you is to find opportunities that will allow you to express yourself however you please. Best of luck grade 9's, we are all here for you!

Importance of Self-advocacy

Throughout high school, you will come across your fair share of ups and downs just like in any aspect of your life. The most important thing to remember is that you learn and grow from these experiences. An important skill to get you through these ups and downs is self-advocacy. It is your responsibility and right to represent yourself and act in your best interest in your high school years. To be able to succeed and see growth, it takes time to find the routines and patterns that work best for you. Getting yourself in the habit of communicating your needs to staff and students in our school can only make this experience easier for you. You are in control of your own opportunities and making decisions to better your future. Throughout the next 4 years, you will learn the importance of speaking up for yourself and asking for help when it is needed, as help will always be provided at Notre Dame to those who ask. Take charge of the choices being made in your life and it can only go uphill from there.

- Abby Bertin



In-Class Student Advice

As a Grade 9 student, the main thing you should always keep in mind is the importance of respect. Respecting yourself, teachers and your classmates can make your year a lot more enjoyable. A major thing I encourage in the classroom is participation and having a schedule for yourself. Coming from a person who struggles with organization, having a schedule for yourself can help you majorly! Also, be sure to dedicate your time to get a better understanding of course content- whether that's staying after class to get help from a teacher or taking the next step and working on the things you may not understand after school. My key advice in the classroom is to ASK QUESTIONS! And always remember everyone learns differently and at a different pace.

Greatest Challenge in Grade 9

In Grade 9, my biggest challenge was having confidence in and out of the classroom. Coming to high school is definitely a major change! You are surrounded by new people constantly and at the same time are trying to adjust to the new social/environmental change. Being in the classroom can be stressful. I know as a freshman I was afraid of sharing my ideas because I had a ton of fear of answering the question wrong, and or not being understood. My key advice in the classroom is to be confident in your ability and ask questions no matter what. When you are not in the classroom be true to yourself! Don't try to fit the expectations of the people around you. - **Jillian Currie-Bartlett**



Learning in a Quadmester Model - Tips & Advice

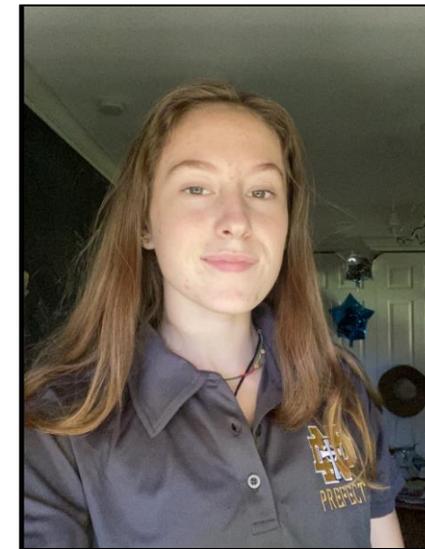
The easiest way to succeed in a quadmester model learning environment is keeping up to date with work. The easiest way to stay up to date is to find a system that helps you keep track of all your assignments, due dates, homework, and everything that must be completed. I used Apple Calendar and put all my due dates and assignments into my calendar. This made the quadmester learning environment a lot easier because I was able to see and complete tasks as the quadmester went on. In summary, the best way to succeed in a quadmester model is to stay up to date with work and take the time necessary to make sure you understand concepts before moving on. - **Darcy Reisberry**

Meeting New People and Making Friends

As a grade 9 student beginning high school, I felt most excited for the opportunity to meet so many new people. Looking back, I'm glad that I saw this new chapter of my life in such a positive way, as it led me to many opportunities to make friends. I would encourage new Notre Dame students to look upon this adventure in a similar way, as the right mindset will open doors for you and make the journey a lot more enjoyable. Although it can be intimidating, I found that the best way to connect with others was by getting myself involved in different areas of the school. In doing so, you'll have the chance to discover what you enjoy the most and surround yourself with people who share those same interests. Most importantly, it's a great way to create some long-lasting friendships.

Top Tips for Organization

I personally believe that organization is one of the most important skills to master in high school. Over time, I have accumulated some tricks that have helped me get organized and stay organized throughout the school year. The number one tip that I would recommend to a new high school student, is to keep an agenda! I like to bring my agenda from class to class, marking down my homework from each one, so that it never goes forgotten by the time I get home. In grade 9, as a student struggling with organization, I found an agenda to be my savior when it came to time management and keeping track of homework. I would also definitely encourage new high school students to keep it simple when it comes to school supplies. In grade 9, I started out with a whole lot of items that I didn't need. Now, heading into my senior year, the items in my bag have narrowed down to two binders, a small pencil case with only the necessities, and a small agenda. This way, it becomes a lot more difficult to get overwhelmed, and much easier to keep track of your belongings and assignments. - **Ella Bowen**





The Value of Being Part of a Community

When I was in Grade 9, I was so nervous about getting involved in all the extracurriculars Notre Dame had to offer. There were so many options and they all catered to different interests. I found myself only trying things that my other friends also wanted to do. This created barriers that I wish I hadn't of had. My advice to you is to get involved in things that interest you even if you must do it alone! You will find that within the community so many people will share your interests, and this will open doors to so many great new connections. Getting involved will help your social skills develop and help you learn more about teamwork. You will find family at Notre Dame, and it will make the transition into high school so much easier and more enjoyable. I am excited for all of you to find your place at Notre Dame and getting involved

in the wonderful clubs and sports we have to offer is a fantastic and effective way to do that!

Meeting New People & Making New Friends

Grade 9 is new for everyone, so even if you feel nervous, I promise everyone else is feeling the same way. Sometimes all it takes to spark a new friendship is saying hi! Throughout my high school years, I tried to say hi to as many people as possible in the hallways. This not only made my day better but also opened the doors for conversations that maybe wouldn't have happened otherwise! Grade 9 is a chance to make new friends and find connections with people from outside of your elementary school. We have all had a hard year and meeting new people is so important for our development as young adults. Sometimes it's scary to put yourself out there but in the end all your peers are in the same boat and will all be excited to talk to you:)

- Ella Nobrega



Virtual Learning Tips and Tricks!

Virtual learning is definitely strange and without a doubt challenging as it is a new environment with many opportunities for distraction. I know from experience that distractions can make learning very difficult. At the beginning of online learning, I would find myself getting distracted by my phone. With nobody around to make sure you are not on your phone; you may think it is alright to see what's new or play a game on your device. This however will distract you from learning and you will miss important parts of the lesson that makes it difficult to do homework and develop knowledge for tests. I highly recommend turning your phone off or putting it out of reach during lessons, so it does not distract you from learning. In addition, when others around you are talking or doing something distracting, it is important not to engage as this may impact your ability to focus and affect your success. To help prevent this, having your own personal area away from everything and everyone in your house will help you a lot. Don't forget to be prepared as well. Although you are online, you still may need paper and pencils to write things down. I suggest you get all the supplies you may need before class starts so you are not running around your house during the period. Staying organized will create good habits and will help you do your best while virtually learning! Doing school through a screen can be very draining and tiring. When you get breaks throughout the class, use them to your advantage and take time away from your screen. Getting something to eat or some fresh air outside can really help you become more focused and stay energetic throughout the class.



- Cormick Smallegange

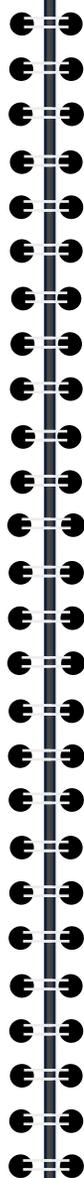


Learning in a Quadmester Model – Tips & Advice

Learning in a quadmester model can be very busy at times, and it is often easy to lose focus during class and when doing homework. Paying attention in class can often be boring and hard to do, which is why you must ensure that you are staying organized, healthy, and asking for breaks when you need them. You should make sure you get enough sleep to enhance your focus in class, as well as make sure you are hydrated – so bring a water bottle to class. Try to leave your phone and devices in your locker or bag so that you do not get distracted. It is also important to get involved in class discussions and activities to make sure you are engaged and learning to your full potential. Asking your teachers for help is also important so that you understand all the material and are not falling behind. Homework and assignments can be stressful too, since they must get done in a shorter amount of time than in regular semesters. When at home doing homework, remember to pace yourself. Use a calendar or agenda to stay organized - knowing when your due dates are is important. Always remember if you need any help, ask. Learning in a quadmester model can be challenging for all of us. Remember that ND teachers, staff, and peers are here if you need us!

Staying Motivated

It can be hard for all of us to stay motivated in school during a global pandemic. However, ensuring you are both mentally and physically healthy will allow you to become more motivated when it comes to schoolwork and other aspects of your life. We must remember that no matter how tough it gets, we need to ensure we are trying our best. Taking breaks is an essential part to staying motivated. Breaks are a reward for our hard work, so taking some time out of our busy days to do things we love will help us to stay motivated and get on track. Getting a lot of fresh air will also help keep you motivated. Taking a walk in your neighborhood will give you the fresh air you need to clear your mind and give you some motivation. It is also good to get some exercise, whether you like to dance, run, bike, do yoga, or play sports. Moving around and getting some physical activity in the day will help you to feel better about yourself and more motivated to do your best. Prayer and meditation are also great ways to get some motivation. Taking the time out of your day to spend some time alone helps you to refocus and will give you the energy you need to stay focused. Always remember that if you need motivation, don't be afraid to talk to someone. Sometimes all you need is a talk with a friend or family member. People at ND are always willing to talk if you need it! - **Tiana Kayemba**



Time Management- Class Time and Homework Strategies

Time management is always a struggle for me, especially during the transition from elementary to high school. It is easy to put assignments and homework off until the last minute, but you'll only be hurting yourself in the long run. If you believe you can complete an assignment in an hour and can therefore leave it until the day it's due, you can do it now for an hour and get it done for good. It is extremely important to be aware of your schedule, using an agenda or calendar (physical or electronic) has helped me sort through and organize when assignments in different classes are due and which ones I need to be spending the most time on or working on first. It is important that you get into the rhythm of utilizing class time. Personally, I am most productive in a classroom setting compared to my workspaces at home. Try and learn which space you are most productive in too; it can be a great help. If you are like me in that sense, you should always try to get as much homework done in class as possible given whatever time your teacher provides you. If you put it off and believe you'll have more time later, I can advise you that you'll most likely continue to push it back until the very last minute. By doing this, homework and assignments become more stressful and often impact the quality of learning. Learn what works best for you!



The Value of Being Part of a Community

As a Grade 9 student entering high school, joining the community can (and often is) intimidating. Lucky for you, Notre Dame is an amazing school with lots of extracurricular activities that you can participate in. Whether your interest lies in athletics, STEAM, Drama or helping your peers and community, there is something for everyone at ND. Joining extracurriculars is a great way to meet new people, especially those with similar interests to yours. Making new friends can be hard at first, but it gets easier realizing that a great way to do this is by joining the community and finding those with mutual interests. Being part of the ND community is to be part of something bigger than yourself. Whether you play on a team, or are a part of a club, you will become immersed in the contagious school spirit at Notre Dame. Being in this atmosphere can help you feel safer and more comfortable in this new environment, as well as introduce you to new opportunities that await you in high school. Welcome to the ND community, there is something for everyone! - **Abby Irwin**



Time Management

Right from the start of Grade 9, I have always had a very busy schedule; with sports, a job and leaving time for friends, it made time management seem pretty daunting. Throughout the years I've learned that keeping an updated calendar, whether that be an agenda, online calendar or something else helps keep me from feeling overwhelmed and better equipped to take everything on. Personally, I find planning day to day works best for me. I generally look at what I have for the next few days and plan schoolwork around other events such as practices while also accounting for what is most urgent. For example, if I know I only have an hour for work and have homework due the next day but a huge assignment due the day after, I'll work on that assignment first. Time management, like everything else, is a skill that just needs a bit of

practice, you're not going to be perfect at it the first time around. I think the most important thing to keep in mind is to try and not let yourself get overwhelmed by everything and if you are finding that you are, take a break and revisit your plan. Maybe you will have to skip practice to study for exams or leave that one homework question unanswered to get onto everything else. Learning to prioritize is a skill that you will develop over time.

Preparing for Big Assignments and Tests

One of the biggest stress factors for me was tackling major assignments and tests. However, in learning how to put the time aside to get the work that's needed to be done early, my stress significantly decreased. I have found breaking everything that needs to be done into parts is the easiest way to get all the studying/work done and allow me to feel confident about it. Figuring out how I learn best was huge for me. I learn best by writing things down and repetition, so for tests, I will write notes down and then use cue cards to go over everything. This also helps with the stress, which I think can throw off a lot of people. Having the facts with me all the way until the classroom of a big test helps me not feel like I will just randomly forget facts. With assignments, breaking things down and giving yourself a daily goal is what I like to do. I try to get the majority of an assignment done one or two nights before it's due so that all that is left is just looking over it for small details. These types of things can be super scary, I like to work around things that calm me and make it seem less huge. I also like to study with music as I can plan my study time around the number of songs I have listened to and because it makes it a little less stressful. - **Trin Adams**

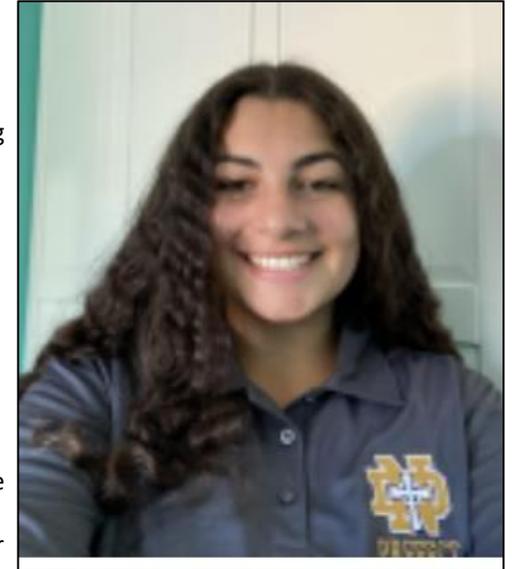
How to Learn Best from Home

At home learning was a big adjustment for everyone, especially because everyone has different learning styles. A few things I learned over the past year and a half of learning from home are mostly tips for concentration. Keeping a clean workspace that only has the things you need is very important and will minimize distractions. Try not to participate in class from bed, it is better to be at a desk or table so you can separate school from your room and being set up properly prepares your brain to be ready to learn. Another good thing to do when learning from home is to make sure you are taking breaks to eat and hydrate. Class times are longer than you are used to and keeping yourself nourished will help improve your learning. Try keeping a glass of water with you throughout the class and getting the occasional snack as well. Online learning is never easy but figuring out what works best for you early in the school year will help you be successful. :)

Top Tips for Organization

Organization is very important, and it is most effective when you start off the school year organized. With different types of learning, at home or in class, there are different ways to be organized. Digital folders are a great way to keep assignments and online notes in one place, organizing by unit or chapter. A physical binder is harder to keep organized with papers that could fall out or get damaged, but for someone who needs to write out notes, it is your best option. When keeping a physical binder color coordination is a great idea. Keeping different units separated by colour is an easy way to find different topics from different chapters. Organization is an important tool that you will use all throughout high school, and even in post-secondary, so it's best to try to master it now.

-**Serena Nagra**





Importance of Building Relationships with Teachers

Throughout high school, I found that building relationships with my teachers was hugely important. Building relationships with teachers allowed many opportunities for getting extra help because my teachers knew I was trying. It also provided another source of advice on my academics. Having relationships with my teachers allowed me to more easily communicate the struggles I was experiencing in class. Furthermore, communicating my academic goals with my teachers allowed them to give more personalized help to achieve my specific goals. It always makes teachers feel good to know that there are students who are working hard behind the scenes to succeed in their classes. On a personal note, many of my teachers are interested in more than just how I am doing academically, they want to know what is happening outside of the classroom (extracurricular activities, teams, etc.). We spend a lot of time with our teachers, and they care about us and want to see us succeed. They appreciate when

students want to make an effort to create relationships with them and try their best in their classes.

Best Study Tips for Working at Home

Learning at home can be a very big jump for many students. There can be many distractions and other circumstances within your own home that can make online learning and studying challenging. One thing that helped me work efficiently and succeed during virtual learning was eliminating any distractions in my workspace. I learned that it is important to have a workspace that is separate from where you sleep, eat and relax. By creating this environment, I was able to easily focus on the task at hand. Another thing that I learned was the importance of taking breaks from long periods of work and studying. By scheduling these breaks into my day, it allowed me to clear my mind and tackle the tasks at hand with much more focus than before. It is also important to have structured time for studying and homework, it is not healthy to be staying up till 2 a.m. to complete homework.

- Catherine Mason



In-Class Student Advice

Now more than ever, it's extremely important to take advantage of your time in class, where you can interact with your peers and teachers face-to-face. Use this opportunity to learn better, by asking questions during a lesson when you need clarification, which proved to be difficult online. Come prepared with all the tools you need, it makes life so much easier then asking around for a spare pencil, calculator, or eraser. Lastly, remember to respect your teachers and peers! It's their class time too, and what may be boring or easy to you, may be interesting or difficult to them. Your teachers are there to help you, listen to them and their advice, and you will be just fine.

Self Advocacy: Importance and Values

Self advocacy is the ability to speak up for yourself. It is extremely important to be able to speak up for what you need and for the things you believe are important. Whether it's noticing a mismarked grade on a test and asking your teacher to look over it again, which can be scary, or asking for extra clarification on a topic you didn't quite understand, advocating for yourself goes a long way. It shows your teachers you want to learn and do well in your course, and shows you are aware of your strengths and weaknesses and want to improve on them. However, it is important when demonstrating self advocacy, you do so respectfully.

- Charleigh Goldberg





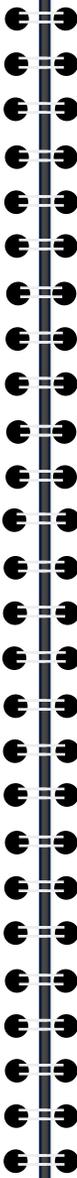
Virtual Learning Tips and Tricks

Although virtual learning is something some of us do not enjoy, there are a few strategies that you can implement to make the experience better for yourself. The most important tip I can suggest is not to do your classes in your bed. Although it can be very tempting, it makes it harder for you to focus on lessons being taught and can lead to other distractions such as going on your phone, or even sleeping. To combat this, you should set yourself up in a quiet place to do your studying. For me, this was either at my bedroom desk or my dining room. Another tip I can suggest is to not wait until the last minute to do your assignments. Once again, this is a very easy habit to fall into, due to the abundance of free time that virtual learning offers, and that it's very easy to just ask your friends for answers. The reason this doesn't work is that the

quadmester model means that teachers need to consolidate course content in a condensed time frame, so the workload can be fast and intense if you are not actively engaged in the learning process. I suggest that you start working on projects as soon as they are assigned to avoid falling behind. This doesn't mean that you need to finish an assignment all in one day, but just chipping away at it every day will get you done and ready for the next assignment.

Preparing for Big Assignments and Tests

As a Grade 9 going into high school, the large number of tests and projects can be very intimidating at first, but with these mitigation strategies, you will see that they are nothing to be worried about, and they just need a little extra preparation. For most classes, your teacher will most likely give you a unit outline beforehand, telling you what days your tests are on and what days are you'll be doing what lesson. Use this to your advantage, so that if you know you'll need to miss a day, you can catch up. You can also use a notebook and summarize the key points of every lesson so that you are consolidating learning as you go along. Finally, please don't be afraid to ask your teachers questions when you're confused. I know it can be very difficult in a classroom with students you've never met before, as was the case with me in Grade 9, and the teachers understand that. Most teachers are willing to talk with you outside of school in a private place, and especially in these times, your teacher will most likely be more than willing to do a Microsoft Teams call with you or reply to your questions via email. Just remember, the teachers are there to help you, and the five minutes of nervousness you may have asking your questions is worth that extra five or ten percent you may get just from having a question answered. - **Mario Attalla**



Meeting New People & Making New Friends

When I was starting grade 9, I was very nervous on my first day because none of my friends were in my first period class. As the day went by, I realized that everyone is nervous on the first day of high school because it is a new environment, and everyone wants to make a good first impression. I later found the courage to ask to sit beside someone on my second day of school. After a bit of conversation, I learned that the only way to make new friends was to be myself and talk about things I enjoy or topics that everyone has in common. Joining clubs and sports teams is an amazing way to make a connection with your peers, teachers and coaches as you may see them in the hallways or future classes. Although COVID-19 might make it difficult to meet new people, remember that in the future, there will be many opportunities for you to reach out to others during your years in high school!

Virtual Learning Tips and Tricks

Moving to virtual learning was a very big adjustment for me as I get easily distracted. I had to adjust my learning strategies tremendously in order to not fall behind. I discovered that having a planner was very useful for me because I was able to write my homework, assignments, and tests down that were approaching. I was very nervous about answering and asking questions online, but as time went by, I became more comfortable with it as I learned that I am not the only one feeling nervous. The teachers were very understanding if you didn't understand how to hand something in or do something, and they would go over it with you until you understood what to do to help you be successful - so don't be afraid to ask questions and speak up! During online classes I became distracted with my phone and texting my friends and recognized that this wasn't doing me any good. Putting my phone on do not disturb or putting it in a different room helped me concentrate more and get my work done without being distracted. Everyone has different strategies for learning online and I encourage you to do what works for you for your Grade 9 year!

- **Emily Osowsky**



Staying Motivated

During these trying times in the pandemic, it has become increasingly difficult to stay motivated with our education. From my own experiences, I can stay motivated in school by setting achievable goals that offer me confidence when I complete them. These goals can be as simple as studying for 30 minutes every night for a week. The confidence from achieving these goals allows me to set more difficult objectives for myself and end goals to work towards. Setting goals gives you a sense of direction and purpose in school, allowing you to stay motivated. Another strategy I use is writing down a list of tasks I need to complete for the day, then

physically crossing them off when they are done. This provides a physical sense of accomplishment that motivates me to keep applying myself and complete the rest of the tasks on the list. Additionally, taking part in activities outside of school such as sports, art and work offer necessary breaks from school that allow me to return to my studies with a better attitude and greater focus. These breaks help me regain perspective on my education and find the motivation to continue to work hard. Ultimately, the keys to maintaining motivation in school are to set goals for yourself and take breaks in order to feel accomplished and not become overwhelmed. - **Daniel Mason**



My name is Logan McNinch, a fellow student and a prefect for the 2021 school year. I want to first welcome you to the amazing Notre Dame community. Grade 9 is a big year for everyone and COVID now makes it even more stressful for everyone. Going into Grade 9, there are many challenges you may face but all with solutions and great outreaches. In Grade 9, I found the greatest challenge was staying on task and staying focused during school hours as well as after school hours. The first day is the worst for this as you are seeing all your friends again finally while trying to find classes and lockers. That is why we Prefects are here. You will see us in the halls in the morning and we will always be able to give you a hand. Throughout this school year, new challenges may crop up as you experience changes in workload, responsibility and free time. This is an exciting time, but one that requires self-discipline and priorities. This is especially important with the quadmester model, as you may have a heavier workload and you need to make sure you stay on top of your work, as it just makes life more challenging if you fall behind. My biggest piece of advice is STAY ORGANIZED! It will make it way easier to stay on task and know what needs to be done and when. There is lots of time to have fun and enjoy high school but stay on top of school while doing so! - **Logan McNinch**

Why participate in class?

I understand how intimidating it can be to get engaged in class during your first year of high school. When I first came to Notre Dame, I feared asking questions or participating in class; I was already nervous about being surrounded by students who I didn't yet know, and I didn't want to make myself look bad in front of them. However, I cannot stress this enough; asking questions during class and engaging in class discussions will benefit you so much, both academically and socially. Although it was hard at first, it was by sharing my thoughts on different topics in class and asking questions that I developed some of my strongest friendships, and that my love for learning really started to grow. Asking for clarification and being confident in the course material can make learning seem much less intimidating. I know how overwhelming it can be to learn new concepts, but when you approach school with a collaborative mindset and a sense of initiative, I can tell you with confidence that you will start looking forward to learning instead of fearing it. Engaging in learning is how you can begin to build a sense of community in the classroom, helping you to build new relationships, feel more comfortable asking for help when you need it (your teachers are here to help you!) and ultimately leading you to a successful school year.

Preparing for Big Assignments and Tests

Although high school may seem difficult, I promise that if you study in a way that helps you feel confident, you will be able to recognize your skills and will succeed in class. When preparing for large assignments and/or tests, remember the importance of asking for clarification. It's always better to understand the material you are learning than to let your unanswered questions sit in the back of your mind. However, preparing for tests/assignments often happens differently depending on the subject. For math, I believe that practice makes perfect. Science-related subjects also require lots of practice, because like in math, it is important to develop your problem-solving skills to approach questions efficiently. I suggest that if you have an upcoming test, try to complete review questions that you have the most trouble with, so you can better comprehend them. Now is the time to ask questions you have and to make sure you have a solid understanding of studied concepts; your teachers will always be there to help you. For assignments/tests in writing-heavy subjects (i.e., English, geography, history) make sure you review feedback on previous tasks to understand your strengths and weaknesses. You may want to have a conversation with your teacher about past assignments to understand what you could change in your next project to reach your full potential. Practice analyzing different subject matter and, once again, always make sure to ask for clarification if you are confused with any material. - **Sophie Barbieri**





Top Tips for Organization

Throughout my years at Notre Dame, I have learned that staying organized is integral to being a successful high school student. One thing that has helped me stay organized is using an agenda/planner. Writing down my homework, assignments, test dates and extracurriculars on paper instead of on a phone or trying to remember makes me less stressed and therefore helps me stay focused. Additionally, it is critical that you continue to use your agenda throughout the whole school year because it will help you create great habits that will keep you organized in your next years of high school. Another way to stay organized is keeping notes in a binder with dividers. Units can be separated into different sections of the

binder, which helps keep lessons and notes tidy. Discovering organizational strategies that work for you and putting in the extra effort to stick to them will make your years in high school less stressful and more enjoyable!

Why Participate in Class?

Participating in class and having the confidence to ask questions in front of my peers was something that I struggled with in my earlier years of high school and sometimes I still have trouble with it now. However, I have learned that participating has so many benefits. Firstly, it will make the class much more engaging for you and you will get the clarification you need right away when you ask questions. If you are not asking questions when you are confused, you will become stressed which will not make your experience in class enjoyable. Next, participating will help your other classmates feel more comfortable to speak up. When you have a question, it is likely another student has the same question as you but may be too shy to ask for clarification. By moving out of your comfort zone, you not only help yourself, but also your classmates. Finally, participating and asking questions helps the teachers a great deal. When you ask questions, the teacher can learn from them and alter their lesson so that when they teach it again, students will understand the content even more. Being engaged is so important in your development as a student and as a person. A class where everyone is involved is always better than a class where everyone is silent. Remember to be confident and spread kindness to your peers so that they can be confident as well! - **Adrienne Griffin**



Academic Support Online Resources



TVO

More than 10,000 articles, videos, and games from TVO current affairs, documentaries and TVOKids.

TVO ILC

TVO ILC invites students to join the free online TVO ILC Open House, where they can keep up with their studies or deepen their understanding through an open preview of all 144 Grade 9 to 12 courses.

GALE

Integrating reference content, biographies, primary sources, multimedia, critical essays, news, academic journals and more for research purposes. GALE is accessible via our school library site.

EBSCOhost

A powerful online reference system accessible via our school library site. It provides a variety of full text databases with leading published research worldwide.

Academic Support Online Resources

Mathies

The mathies.ca website houses Ontario Ministry of Education developed resources to support mathematics learning from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

TVO Mathify

Free, one-on-one online support provided by Ontario Certified Teachers is available to help students improve their math skills. Now accessible from Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Sunday from 3:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Build math understanding and confidence with the help of a math tutor!

University of Waterloo Centre for Education in Mathematics

A rich resource that provides a multitude of choice including problem of the week, interactive activities, and enrichment challenges.

OERB

The Ontario Education Resource Bank (OERB) offers a number of digital activities and interactive learning resources Kindergarten to Grade 12 for publicly funded schools.

Username: Haltonrcstudent
Pasword: oerbs

Ontario Secondary School Diploma Academic Planner

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5 (optional)
1	RELIGION	RELIGION	RELIGION	RELIGION	
2	ENGLISH	ENGLISH	ENGLISH	ENGLISH	
3	MATHEMATICS	MATHEMATICS	MATHEMATICS		
4	SCIENCE	SCIENCE			
5	GEOGRAPHY	HISTORY			
6	FRENCH	CIVICS/CAREERS			
7					
8					
	TOTAL = 8	TOTAL = 8	TOTAL = 8	TOTAL =	TOTAL = 30

In addition to the above, the following compulsory requirements must be taken in order to receive an Ontario Secondary School Diploma:

- 1 Art
- 1 Health and Physical Education
- 1 of English additional language, Social Science or Canadian & World Studies or Career Education or Co-op Education
- 1 of Health and Physical Education, Music, Art, Drama, Dance or Business/Entrepreneurial Studies or Co-op Education
- 1 of Science (Grade 11 or 12) or Technology or Co-op Education

The 4 Steps Inquiry Model and Pathways Planning

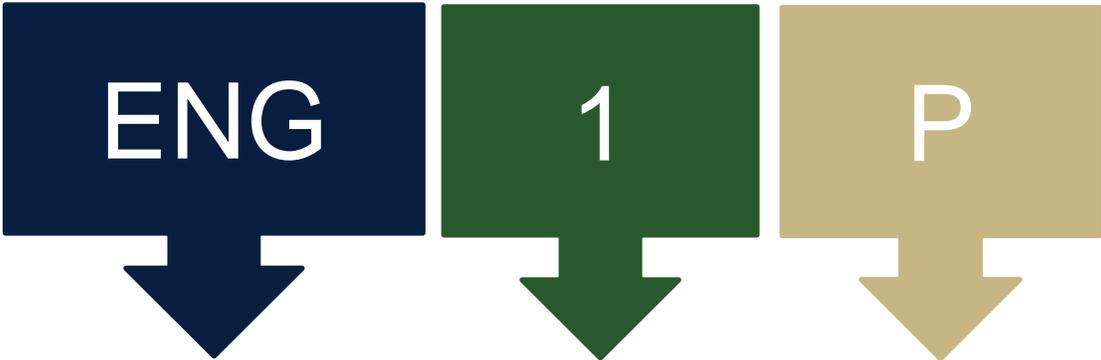


IMPORTANT: The number one question to ask as you plan your pathways is **WHO AM I** – what are my strengths? What am I passionate about? Very rarely are you bad at something you love simply because you put in the work to be better. Why? Because it doesn't FEEL like work when you are doing it!

Understanding Course Codes

The first five characters of the course code indicate the subject, grade level, and course type. They are based on the Common Course Codes used in all secondary schools in Ontario.

How to Decipher a Course Code (example: ENG1P)



The first three letters identify the subject with the first letter represents the course's department are:

- A = Arts
- B = Business
- C = Canadian and World Studies
- E = English
- F = French
- G = Guidance and Career Education
- H = Humanities and Social Sciences
- K = Alternative, Non-Credit Courses
- L = International Languages
- M = Mathematics
- P = Physical Education
- S = Sciences
- T = Technology

The number represents the GRADE as follows:

- 1 = Grade 9
- 2 = Grade 10
- 3 = Grade 11
- 4 = Grade 12

This letter identifies the course type:

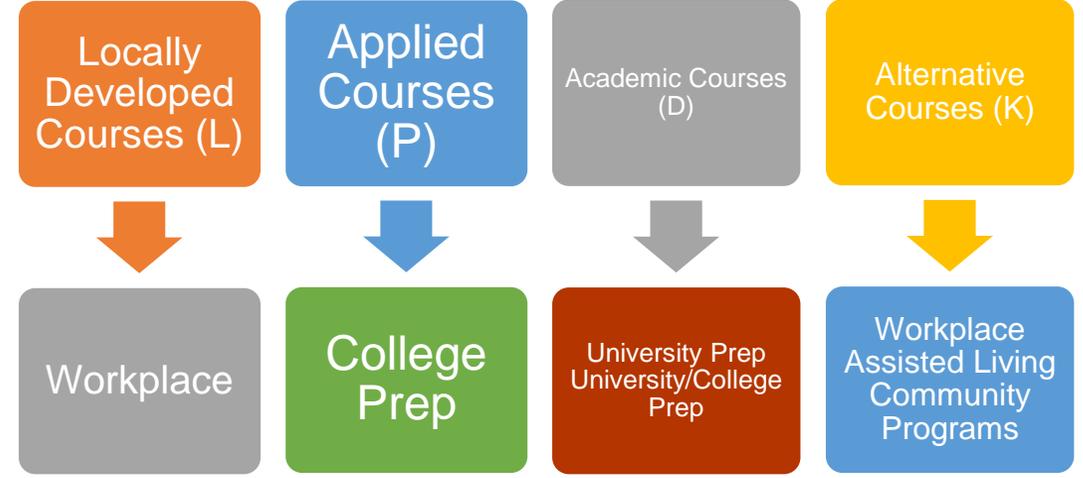
Grade 9/10

- W = Gr 9 Destreamed
- D = Academic
- P = Applied
- L = Locally Developed
- O = Open

Grade 11/12

- E = Essential
- U = University
- C = College
- M = University / College
- O = Open

General Pathways





- Universities offer degree and honour degree programs.
- Colleges offer certificate, diploma advanced diploma and degree programs.
- All degree programs require ENG4U and 5 other 4U or 4M credits (including the prerequisites for that program).
- Use OUInfo and myBlueprint to check University program prerequisites. <http://www.ontariouniversitiesinfo.ca>
- Use OCAS and myBlueprint to check College program prerequisites. <http://www.ontariocolleges.ca/home>

Your Pathway

Reaching any goal requires a plan.

There are many choices you need to make that will lead you to your destination. Follow these four steps to help you begin your planning.

You can download our Pathways Planner to help you!

Step 1: Know Yourself

- What kind of learner am I?
- How do I learn best?
- What do I like to do?
- Check out <http://www.myblueprint.ca/hcdsb>

Step 2: Explore Opportunities

- What interests me?
- What is available?
- SHSM, cooperative learning, OYAP, volunteering?
- Check out <http://www.schooltocareer.ca>

Step 3: Choose a Direction

- What direction do you want to go in?
- Check out the following links for pathways websites:
 - <http://www.electronicinfo.ca>
 - <http://www.ontariocolleges.ca/home>
 - <http://www.apprenticesearch.com>
 - <http://www.hiec.on.ca>
 - <http://jobspeopledo.com>

Step 4: Build a Pathway

- What courses do I take to get where I want to be?
- Apprenticeship, workplace, college, university?
- <https://studentsuccess.hcdsb.org/sample-page/your-pathway/>



Pathways & Student Success

Halton Catholic District School Board



The **myBlueprint Education Planner** is an interactive online tool available to all HCDSB students from Grades 7-12.

myBlueprint helps empower students to make informed decisions about their future. Students are able to discover their learning and personality styles, interests, and various pathway and career options to consider.

[Login to HCDSB's myBlueprint Education Planner here!](#)



[Understanding the Importance of Self Care](#)

[Reaching Out to Others](#)

[My Back to School Checklist During CoVid-19](#)

[Coping with Stress during the 2019-nCoV
Outbreak](#)

Mental Health Resources

[COVID-19 Youth Mental Health Resource Hub](#)

An online hub of CoVID-19 youth-focused resources from Jack.org, Kids Help Phone and School Mental Health Ontario

[Kids Help Phone](#)

Access to 24/7 counselling by phone or text, and find information on various mental health topics

[The Reach Out Centre for Kids - ROCK](#)

ROCK is an accredited, multi-service organization that aims to improve the lives and relationships of children who are having social, emotional and/or behavioural concerns.

[Mental Health & Wellness HCDSB Resource](#)

HCDSB leadership team has compiled a list of tips and resources to help you feel safe during this time of uncertainty.

[School Mental Health Ontario - Students](#)

SMHO provides consistent access to high-quality, evidence-based mental health information, supports and services. This site helps students know how to care for their own mental health, seek help when problems arise, and maintain a strong sense of identity, belonging, confidence and hope even in challenging circumstances.

SELF-CARE 101

Self-care is an important part of wellness. Take time and discover what helps you to feel good and recharge.



EAT We all need to refuel. But sometimes when we're stressed, our habits can change – maybe we eat junk food, or don't feel like eating at all. It is important to focus on eating foods that will provide you with the nutrients you need.

- **Tip:** Have a healthy snack nearby so you can refuel and avoid getting "hungry."

HYDRATE Try to increase your water intake and decrease your caffeine intake. Caffeine has been shown to create a stress reaction in your body and might cause you to feel nervous, irritable or restless.

- **Tip:** Drink a glass of water or milk before bed (but not too much!) rather than a caffeinated drink. This should also help you sleep.



MOVE Being physically active has many positive effects on your health. It increases your energy, enhances your immune system, reduces insomnia, stimulates brain growth and has been shown to decrease feelings of sadness.

- **Tip:** This doesn't need to take much time. You can get these benefits of being physically active from just a 30-minute walk. Stuck inside? Check out YouTube for brief yoga routines, at-home workouts or track your steps, and challenge a friend!

ENJOY Take time to discover things you enjoy. Do things that make you feel good as often as you can. It may not be what others find fun, and that's okay! We're all different.

- **Tip:** Maybe there's a book you want to read, a show or movie you've been meaning to watch, a skill you've been interested in, or something new!

SLEEP Getting a healthy number of hours each night helps you to better deal with the stresses of everyday life.

- **Tip:** While you're at home, try to set up a sleep routine that you can stick to. Plan to go to bed and wake up at the same time every day. For some other helpful ideas check out: 'Up all night? Get a better sleep with these tips'

WHY SELF-CARE?

Self-care is like saving up for a rainy day! It's about nurturing yourself so that when difficult situations happen, you will have the energy and strategies to help you get through it! It can feel hard to practice all of the self-care tips that we know are important, pick a few to focus on, congratulate yourself on what you're able to accomplish and continue to set goals for yourself.

- **TIP:** Try this quiz to find out if you're practising enough self-care

For more ideas to help you recharge, check out Kids Help Phone's self-care checklist!



PAUSE Make sure to take time for yourself during the day, to listen to music, take a few deep breaths, meditate, write in the gratitude journal.

- **Tip:** There are lots of different apps and sites out there for breathing exercises or check out: 'How to calm down when you're stressed'

REFLECT Take time to think about what's important to you. It can be easy to get caught up in the negative messages, instead look for kindness and positivity. This can come in different forms like people doing good things for others or positive posts on social media.

- **Tip:** Practicing gratitude on a regular basis can improve our sense of well-being and happiness! Journal about gratitude: every night, write down three good things about your day. They don't have to be major (i.e. a great lunch, talking to a friend, finishing a task).

REPEAT Did you know that trying a new skill, habit, or routine for 21 days in a row will increase the likelihood of maintaining this new practice?

- **Tip:** Try having a partner to hold you accountable during the first few weeks; this strategy has been shown to enhance your success rate of maintaining your new practice.

CONNECT Strong social connections are one of the most powerful influences on our mood and mental health. Spending time with friends and family help to increase your levels of happiness.

- **Tip:** Getting involved in something bigger than yourself or doing nice things for others can give you a mental health boost. If you can't see the people you care about every day, send them a text or make a phone call; it will make their day and yours!

RECOGNIZE Be mindful of your thoughts and feelings, both positive and negative, as part of your self-care. Finding a healthy outlet to process your emotions and positive self-talk, although always important, is super important during stressful times.

- **Tip:** When thinking, ask yourself? Is this helpful/true? If not, challenge yourself to find a positive/true alternative. Remember to speak kindly to yourself, everyone has good and bad days. Don't be too hard on yourself!

If you or someone you know is in crisis, call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest emergency department.

You can also reach out to Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868 or by texting CONNECT to 686868.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need to wear a mask at school? What about my teachers?

- Yes, medical masks will be worn by all teachers and other school staff. All HCDSB students are required to wear non-medical masks/ face coverings at school unless an exemption has been approved.
- For more information, see attached: [Use of Non-Medical Masks or Face Coverings in Schools – Tip Sheet](#)

Do I need to be in school uniform when I am at school?

- Students are to be in full uniform at all times while at school. Uniform includes collared shirt, Notre Dame hoodie, pants/shorts and entirely black shoes.
- When learning at home, students are not required to be in uniform but must dress appropriately.

Will we be able to put our personal belongings in our lockers?

- Students WILL have access to lockers this year. Students will be provided with a lock and will keep personal items/knapsacks in locker. Social-distancing of 2m and no congregating. Do share your locker or combination with others.

Will I be able to purchase food in the cafeteria?

- Students will have access to cafeteria during staggered lunches. Food will be able to be purchased from the servery in the coming weeks.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I bring a water bottle into my classroom with me?

- Students and staff are permitted to bring reusable water bottles and refill them at designated refill stations in our school. For the health and safety of our students and school community, the use of water fountains for drinking will not be permitted at this time.

Will I enter the school each day through the main school entrance?

- A map with entrances outlined can be found in school information section. Students will be permitted access to the school after 8:05 a.m. and should go through the exit closest to their locker and then proceed directly to their locker, then classroom. No congregating by lockers or anywhere in the halls.

Where do I access my timetable?

- Student timetables can be accessed on the Student Information System found at <https://hcdsb.powerschool.com/public/>
- Please note you will need your @students email address and password to access your schedule.

I had an IEP in Grade 8. What happens with it in High School

- Your IEP will follow you into high school
- You will work with an assigned Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT)
- Your SERT will be in contact with you early in the year to help ensure you are setup for success
- Resource Room is Room 204 at Notre Dame.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is the Library open to students?

- The library is OPEN for student use. Library can be accessed on your lunch or whilst supervised by classroom teacher.
- If you need assistance from our librarian, Ms. Messenger, email her at messingerm@hcdsb.org

Can I bring my own laptop to school to complete my class work?

- Yes, if you have a laptop at home, you are welcome to bring it to school to access curriculum and complete assignments.

If I am a virtual learner, am I expected to be online during the whole class?

- You are expected to attend all classes in real time.

What if I am feeling sick and have cold or flu-like symptoms at school?

- A student showing cold or flu-like symptoms at school will be required to go home immediately. If they are unable to return home immediately, they will isolate in a designated room/space until their departure.

Frequently Asked Questions

What should I do if I am going to be absent from school?

- If you know that you are going to be away (appointment), be sure to let your teacher know ahead of time so that you are able to get your work in advance and stay on top of things. If the absence is unexpected, check out your online classroom to see what you have missed and communicate with teacher any questions/concerns.
- All student absences need to be called in/approved by parents.

Do I need to bring my own school supplies to school?

- Yes, you are responsible for bringing your own school supplies (e.g., pencils, pens, paper, binders) to class daily.
- Your classroom teachers will let you know what specific course supplies are required in the first few days of class.

Will there be extracurriculars this year? Is it worth getting involved?

- Extracurricular activities will be starting up again at Notre Dame.
- One of the best ways to feel part of this new school community is to participate in the school's extra-curricular events/activities (e.g., join a team or a club). All high schools have a wide variety of extra-curriculars to meet the interests and abilities of ALL their students.
- Keep an eye on our Notre Dame website, school announcements and social media channels so that you don't miss out on opportunities to get involved

Who do I go to if I am being bullied at school?

- Bullying is taken very seriously at Notre Dame. Everyone deserves to come to school and feel safe. If you are being bullied or threatened in any way, please speak to an adult. There are many adults in the building that you can reach out to (ie. classroom teacher, educational assistant, secretary, guidance counsellor). The adult will help ensure that you are connected with an appropriate person in the building to support you. Your safety matters – be sure to seek support early.

Top Ten Tips from our Wise & Respected Departing Grade 12's

The Notre Dame Way

1. Get INVOLVED in the school community, outside of the classroom is where some of your best memories will be made!
2. Show up as your BEST SELF every single day, you deserve your best!
3. Extend your social circles. Try to meet new people and make new friends.
4. Take risks and challenge yourself. Stepping outside your comfort zone is where the real growth happens.
5. School Spirit ROCKS! Have fun and share your ND pride!
6. Recognize that some of life's biggest lessons come in failure, embrace it and learn from it.
7. Pursue activities that truly interest YOU. This is your life and your journey, embrace it and do what YOU love.
8. Take advantage of your learning opportunities and make strong relationships with your teachers/staff. They want nothing more than for their students to be successful.
9. Be KIND, always.
10. Be true to yourself. Your character matters. Be intentional in all that you do and all that you say.



In the Hebrew Scriptures God used a rainbow as a covenant with His people:

This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. — Genesis 9: 12-13

A Covenant represents the intimate relationship God has with humanity. We are bound together and belong to each other to the point that we are incomplete when not in relationship.

Having no beginning or end the Circle represents eternity. It is also used in Christian art to signify holiness and heaven because of its perfect symmetry.

The rainbow crosswalk in our schools is a powerful sign celebrating God's covenant with humanity to embrace and love all unconditionally. The image of the circle in the posters remind us that we are children of the Kingdom, we are Children of God. Catholic schools are communities rooted in faith and only complete when all our students, staff and visitors are welcomed and treated with dignity and celebrated as gifts.

It is with open arms that we embrace and celebrate all!

