



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.

I am excited to start this journey at ND with the Class of 2026. Please tune in to our INSIDENDTV YouTube channel to find out all the amazing things that ND has to offer!

The ND chapel is a place that is open for quiet reflection and my office - 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. If you are interested in getting involved with the ND community, have musical talents to share, need someone to talk to, need a laugh in your day, struggling with your faith...please come by and see me.

I encourage you to be easy on yourself and to reach out if you need a friend. Knowing we have all been through so much the ND community is a source of great support. 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 (even if you are not Catholic) 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 at a stranger
- When we step out of our comfort zone to help others
- When we join a club, sports team and demonstrate leadership using our God given talents!

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

“EDUCATION IS OUR PASSPORT TO THE FUTURE, FOR TOMORROW BELONGS TO THE PEOPLE WHO PREPARE FOR IT TODAY.”

- MALCOLM X



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

- Robin Sharma

Notre Dame Daily Schedule



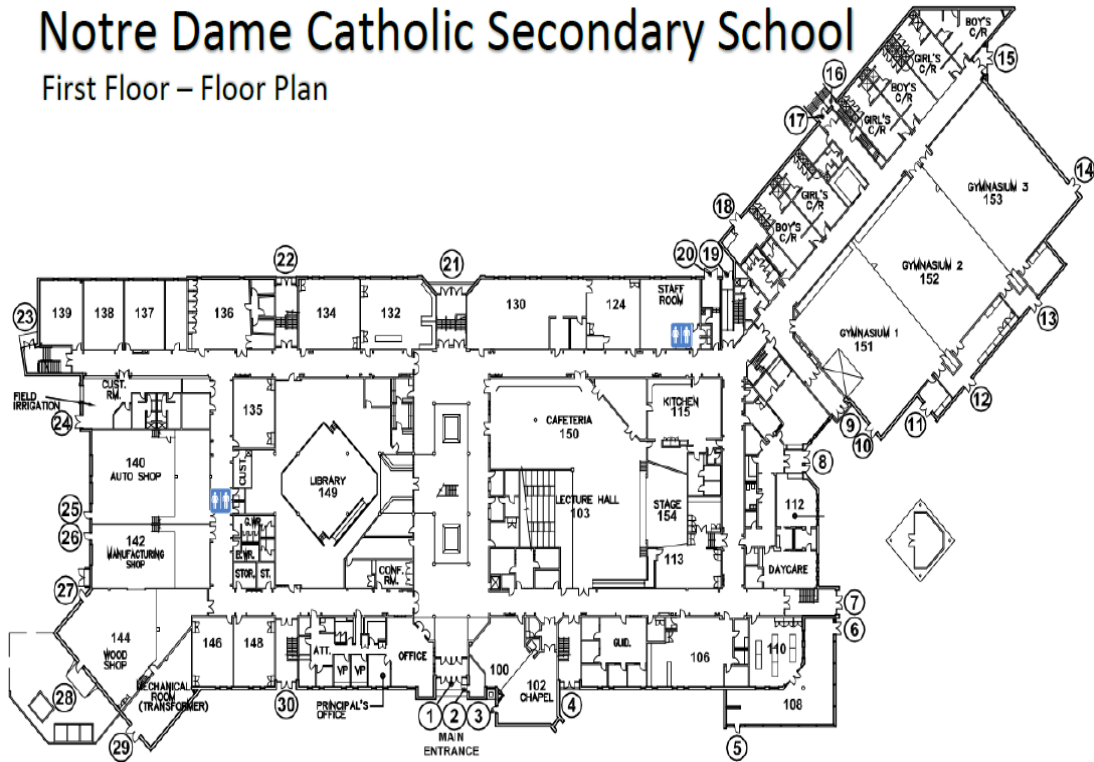
NOTRE DAME

Daily Schedule

8:20am - 9:40am	Period 1 Prayer/Anthem/Announcements
9:45am - 11:00am	Period 2
11:05am - 1:00pm	Period 3
11:05am - 11:45am	Period 3A Lunch Grades 9 & 11 (Class 11:45am - 1:00pm)
12:20pm - 1:00pm	Period 3B Lunch Grades 10 & 12 (Class 11:05am - 12:20pm)
1:05pm - 2:20pm	Period 4

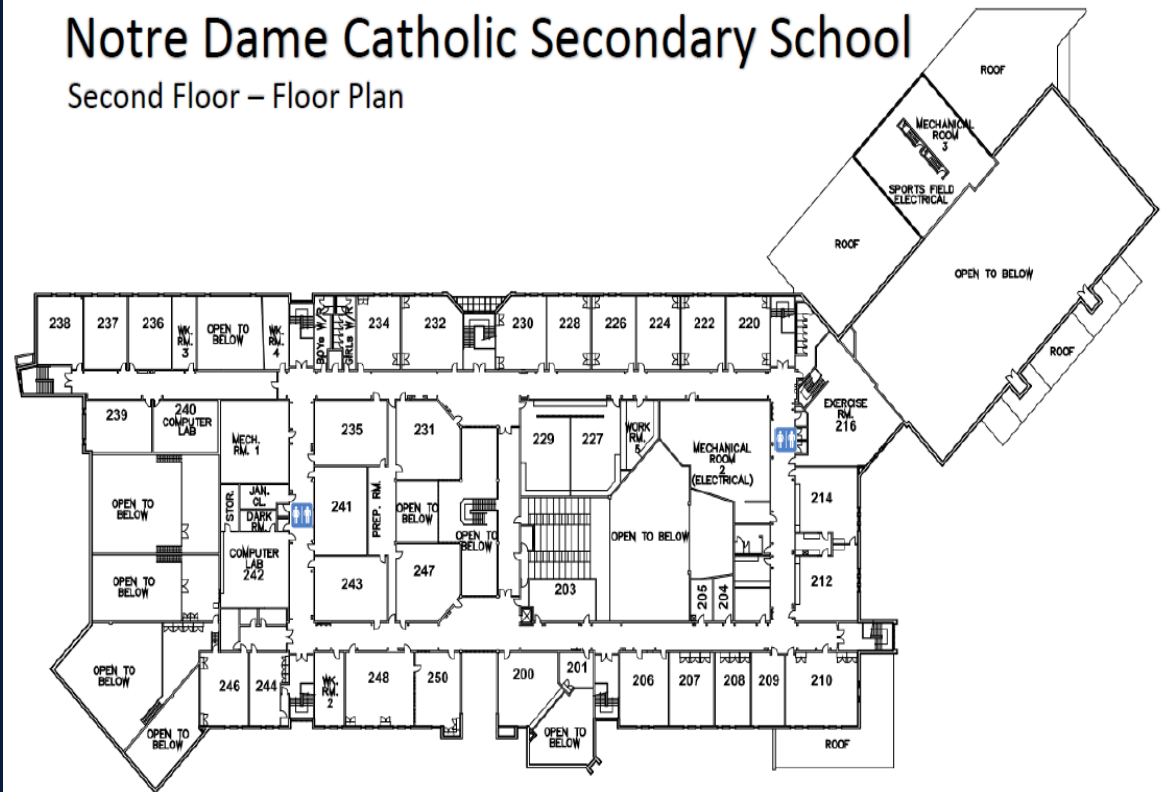
Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School

First Floor – Floor Plan



Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School

Second Floor – Floor Plan

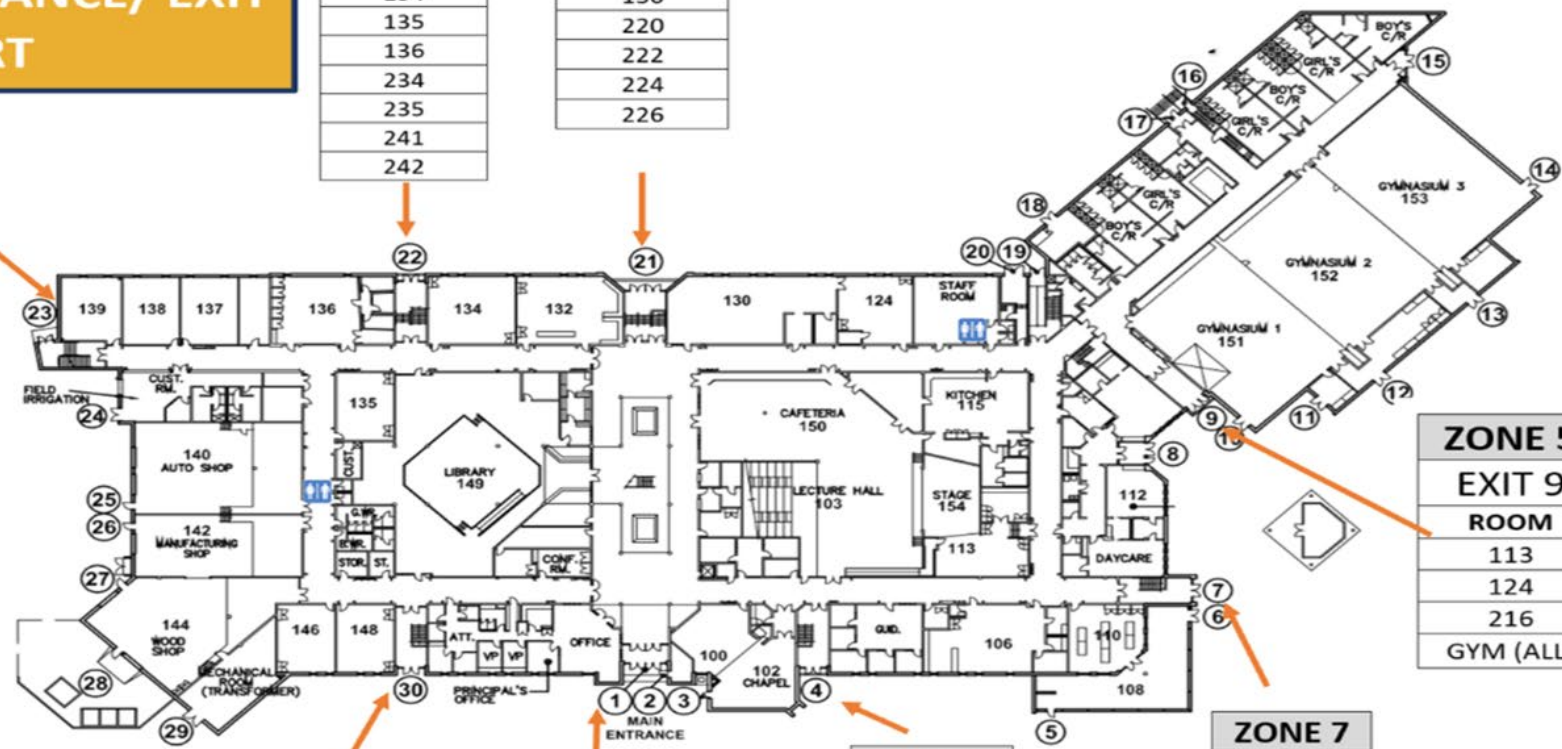


NOTRE DAME C.S.S. STUDENT ENTRANCE/ EXIT CHART

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 5	
EXIT 9	
ROOM	
113	
124	
216	
GYM (ALL)	

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

Library

The Notre Dame Library is a GREAT place to be. Come to the library to do homework, study, research, read, work on group projects or just to connect with your peers. It's a FRIENDLY spot with a wealth of resources. Be sure to stop by the front desk and say hello :)



If you need to access the Notre Dame Library on your device, please click [here](#) OR visit the [Notre Dame website](#)

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.hcdsb.org** email and **current password**.

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

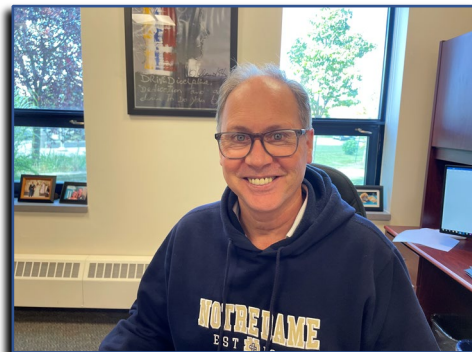
Secretaries help with making appointments with administration and guidance counsellors. They also help with implementation of school procedures (lates, absences, communications)

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. A. Morrow
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-Velianou
Last Names Beginning H-M



Mr. G. Montesi
Last Names Beginning N-Z

If you would like to make an appointment with your guidance counsellor, please come to Student Services during your lunch period or before/after school to schedule an appointment.

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. Emily Armstrong – School Social Worker

- Here at Notre Dame, we value the whole child and believe that every school day matters.
- It is important to have a balance between your social, emotional, spiritual and academic self as these collectively help to create a sense of wellbeing.

80 PERCENT
 OF SUCCESS IS
 JUST SHOWING **UP**.
 - Woody Allen

Sometimes hard things happen in life. If you are struggling, please reach out to your VP or Guidance Counsellor if you think you would benefit from extra support from the CYC or Social Worker.

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

How to set specific, realistic & achievable goals

To set goals that you can achieve, you must be flexible and willing to improve. For example, you might find yourself feeling less disappointed when setting a goal to simply increase how much you read each week, rather than to read two books each month. Once you've set a flexible goal, you can begin taking steps to achieve them. One way that I've found to be super effective in achieving my goals is by writing them out, as well as the steps I'll take to achieve them. In your list of steps, include things that will keep you motivated, and what you might do if you go off track.

Another great way to ensure that you are on the right path is by setting measurable milestones. If your goal is to read more each month, set milestones for every quarter of a book that you finish. Through this, you are able to track

your progress easily and stay motivated. Be specific in the milestones you set but be lenient with yourself. As you go through your steps, things will almost always change, so be prepared to assess your progress and adjust accordingly. If you are finding it difficult to read 30 minutes each day, try 20 minutes, and further adjust as needed.

To keep yourself motivated while you are working towards your goal, you can share it with someone. This can be a friend, family member, or anyone you'd like! Sharing your goals can keep you accountable and can push you to do better.

Overall, the most important thing is to be patient with yourself. We all learn and grow at different rates, and the result remains despite how many changes you endure on your journey!

- Nicole Furmanczyk



Balancing life and school

High school is a big jump from elementary school and it can be overwhelming when being first introduced to it; with the amount of school work and activities going on, as well as your life outside of school, everything all at once can feel like it's too much to handle sometimes. Something that really helped me adapt to and balance high school life with my own was making a schedule for the week, writing down (on my phone) my activities at home and at school. This way, I made sure I wasn't overloading myself with too many activities during the day. For instance, on Wednesdays I lead Drama Club after school, so, in order to not stress myself out, I made sure I booked Wednesdays off from work so I wouldn't worry about being late. Another thing I do, during Culminating season, is make another schedule to lay out the work I have to do, when it's due, when I have time to work on it, etc. As a visual learner, it is really helpful to

have everything laid out in front of me, it calms me down and makes me realize that I have lots of time to finish schoolwork, even outside of school. Good luck this year, grade nines, you're going to rock it!

- Rachel Perrino

Managing time after school specifically (homework, etc.)

To stay organized and prevent procrastination throughout the year, I advise scheduling time for schoolwork without interruptions (such as phones). Personally, I prioritize my work by setting out time for homework and assignments after school. By doing this, I avoid cramming for deadlines, make good use of my time, and produce better work overall. I also recommend focusing on one assignment at a time, multitasking can lead to poor quality work and unproductively in time. In order to stay on track and reduce school stress, balancing and managing time after school is important for high school students as they will be taking on more classes, assignments, tests, etc.

- Thaya-Maria Galbraith-Wilson





Why good attendance and arriving on time is important

High school courses usually move faster than in elementary school, making it important to strive towards having a good attendance record and arriving on-time for your classes. Missing multiple classes can create a snowball effect, where it becomes harder and harder to catch up on your workload the more classes you miss and might ultimately cause you to fall behind in your studies. Arriving on time to your classes gives you the opportunity to speak with your teachers about any questions or clarification you may need on homework or assignments. Punctuality also allows you to prepare yourself for a new lesson, giving you the time to get your binder out and textbook open. High school periods are only 75 minutes - you will miss important information trying to get ready once class has started! - **Melissa Clarke**

The Importance of Participating in Class

For me, participating in class is important because it expands your knowledge of what you are learning, simply by just telling your point of view or discussing concepts and ideas. I find that when I participate in class, I understand the content thoroughly enough to explain innovative ideas to my classmates as well as finding that I can retain the information gathered throughout the class easier by talking about it aloud. Doing this helps build teamwork abilities and plays a huge part in strengthening critical thinking skills, which are crucial for everyday life. Most active learning strategies emphasize collaboration, which encourages risk-taking and calls for student preparation. It increases involvement within the classroom which can benefit, not only yourself but other classmates who are hesitant to talk during class or those who do not pay attention enough too, creating and stimulating creative thinking. - **Nikita Sulic**



Tips for Organizing your Binder

As a high school student, it is your responsibility to keep track of 4 courses and material for each for the semester. To help you succeed, keeping a binder organized in a way that best suits you can prepare you for every class.

Some tips include:

- Using dividers to separate all your courses in one large binder - you will always have what you need for every class and won't forget any material
- OR... If it suits you better, keep a binder for each subject with dividers for each unit. This makes material easy to find later in the course and breaks up content into manageable portions.
- Keeping work that needs to be done in the front pocket of a binder acts as a reminder for you to complete it.
- Whenever possible, always keep physical copies of notes and material in a binder as opposed to online. Although the pandemic has forced us to embrace technology in our education, having a physical copy of the material that you can highlight increases your ability to digest the information.

These are just a few ideas that I find helpful when managing my own binders, however, it is important to find a way that works best for you and your habits to help you succeed in all your classes at Notre Dame.

- **Sam Judd**



Why having good class attendance (and arriving on time is important)

One of the most important parts of high school is showing up to class and showing up to class on time. Your teachers will start class right when the bell rings and information for your class will be taught. It does not matter to them if you are there or not, they will start class. In high school all the information you gain in class is useful and you will need, and that is why being in class and being there on time is important. The more you are in class and the more you participate will show in your marks and you will receive better grades. Finally, the more you are in class the better habits you will gain and it will only benefit you. - **Spencer King**



Making the most of class time (e.g. maintaining focus and using work period wisely)

There are many distractions that arise in a classroom, whether it's your friends, your phone or simply daydreaming. Trust me—we've all been there, but it is important to stay focused. As a student, I know that it's easier said than done, which is why I am here to give you some tips on how to do so. You may not realize it now, but your phone is and will be very distracting in a classroom setting. Do yourself a favor and once class starts turn your cellphone completely off and place it out of sight. Once something is out of sight, it's out of mind which will benefit you in your class time. I equally recommend setting yourself a goal in that specific class. Setting goals gives you long-term vision and short-term motivation. It will give you the drive and determination needed in order to concentrate on your learning. - **Fabiola Siani**

How to set specific, realistic & achievable goals

Setting goals throughout the school year should look more like a daily checklist than unachievable goals. Setting too high expectations for oneself can lead to increased tension, anxiety & stress. A better alternative to this is gradually completing everyday tasks that sum up to a goal. For example, studying for one hour every day to achieve that 80%. Instead of heavily studying for that test the night before, put in that hour and test yourself here and there.

- **Emma Galbraith-Wilson**



Getting involved in extracurriculars

As students of Notre Dame, we are super lucky to have the opportunity to be a part of so many extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities are a great way to meet new people in your new school while also having fun and doing something that interests you. With a wide variety of sports teams and also so many clubs, there really is something for everyone here at Notre Dame. Sports, art, technology, video games, books, leadership and so many more categories are offered in these extracurriculars. I really suggest you take advantage of the extracurriculars provided to you and get involved with the school by doing something that interests you. Whether it is something you are already good at or something new you want to try, getting involved in extracurriculars allows you to be more connected to Notre Dame's community, develop new friendships and skills, and can build memories that last a lifetime. - **Cormick Smallegange**



Organizing your time overall: how to keep a proper to-do list & agenda.

One of my personal favourite ways to stay organized is keeping a paper agenda, although an online planner works better for some (my favourite is Google calendar), that I revise and update daily. I make it fun by using a bunch of different coloured pens (or online you can change the color of the font) for my different tasks so I am always sure to know what I have to prioritize on that specific day. By doing this it is less overwhelming to look at and it is all in one place as opposed to writing it down on a scrap piece of paper that will probably disappear. Once I get assigned a new task I immediately write it down in my agenda so it will not get lost in the jumble of my brain and I will remember to do it. Staying organized is something that you need to keep up with everyday, but if you set aside just a bit of time to organize yourself, you will feel less stressed and on top of your goals!

- **Abigail Kay**



The Mental/Physical Health Connection

Hey Grade 9's!

Throughout your ups and downs in high school and for the rest of your life, you have to remember the importance of maintaining both your mental and physical health. The good thing is, they are connected!

Changing small habits in your diet, such as lowering the sugary snacks you eat in a day, can help you towards eating healthier and improving your mental and physical health. Exercising helps you improve your physical health. It releases endorphins, improving your mental health and making you feel happier. Walking and biking are great ways to start exercising. There are also great at-home workouts you can find online. If you need some extra motivation, try exercising with a friend.

Practicing things like meditation, expressing your gratitude, and getting enough sleep also allow you to feel better about yourself, and encourage you to keep yourself physically healthy.

Remember your mental and physical health are very important, so if you are practicing these healthy habits, you will do well and have a great time in high school! Good luck!

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**

Mental Health Tips

During my years at Notre Dame I have found many strategies to help me cope with mental health in stressful times. One of such strategies that impacted me was having a safe adult in the school that I could trust, whom I always knew would never hesitate to help me. At Notre Dame, that said adult could be a teacher, guidance counselor, principal or any faculty member that students feel comfortable going to. These adults really are here to help you. I understand how overwhelming it can be starting somewhere new, and all the grade nines should know they have a safe place here to express their concerns and stresses. My best advice to grade 9 is learning how to advocate for themselves. Try not to worry so much about making mistakes— we all do. Know you are supported. Learn from personal experiences and be sure to use your voice respectfully to stand up for yourself and for what is right. This is important for self growth. - **Jaimie Simmons**



How to review notes/concepts

The strategy I use most for reviewing notes and concepts is to create summary sheets of the most important information that I need to know. One of the most effective ways to retain information is to rewrite it, which causes you to form connections between material learned in class and the information in your notes. When you rewrite and summarize notes, it helps you to see concepts from different perspectives and fully understand the material. Once I create my summary sheets, I then create acronyms to help myself remember certain difficult concepts. I also use the strategy of rereading my notes right before I go to bed, so the information I reviewed is the first thing put into my long term memory once I fall asleep. All of these strategies help me to retain the information I need to do well on assessments. - **Anuj Snider**



Tips for organizing your binder

One tip for organizing your binder for school is having separate binders for separate classes. For example, you don't want to have your English notes mixed with science notes, because if you go and study for a test you won't know where your notes are. I have 4 different binders with a notebook in each binder, which I use for homework or rough work, keeping everything for one course in one place. Another way I organize my own binder is buying divider sheets; these help separate each unit in each course so for every quiz/test within one unit it's all compacted in one section. Dividers have tabs at the top of them that you can write on. I suggest labeling each divider by unit (e.g. "Unit 1: Short Fiction," etc).

- Bella Tartaglia

Managing time after school specifically

Hello Grade 9s! Here are some tips on managing your time after school. The most important thing is to not procrastinate when it comes to schoolwork or studying. While you may want to come home and relax after a busy day, you will probably find it less stressful if you get your work done earlier rather than later. You'll also be able to enjoy your evening more once you have finished your work. This is the same for studying; start studying in advance and you will be less stressed about upcoming tests and also more prepared for them.

Some students have activities and things to do outside of school, but these students might find that they enjoy themselves more if they finish what they need to get done before these activities (if they can), rather than being stressed because they have left their schoolwork to the last-minute.



- Ben Jones

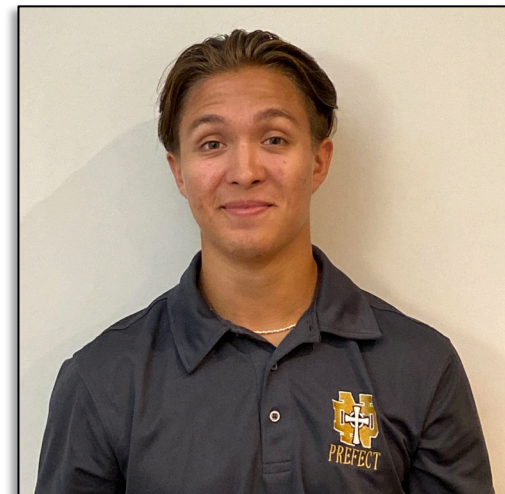
Balancing school with extracurriculars

A huge part of your highschool life will be actually balancing your life with your school work. And no matter how busy you may be, there is always a way for you to fit your school work to your daily life.

For example, I am a part time manager at my job, I am working with my co-op, I play 3 different sports, and I have family and friends to spend time with. And you may be wondering, "how are you able to fit all of that over a course of 7 days?" Well, it just comes down to a lot of organization and personal planning. First off, using an agenda / calendar or your phone reminders will help significantly in creating a schedule.

The schedule could consist of: 20 minutes of homework, before work or my sport, 10-15 during my break, 15 minutes after I'm done with my activity. Or you could do your homework while Facetimeing a friend, watching your shows, and even during the car ride to your activities. Slowly chipping away at your homework or studying for your test over a week will help decrease workload and allow you to do many more activities throughout your week.

- Carlos Ortega-Zarate



Mental and physical health connection

Hello Grade 9s! Here are some tips on managing your time after school. The most important thing is to not procrastinate when it comes to schoolwork or studying. While you may want to come home and relax after a busy day, you will probably find it less stressful if you get your work done earlier rather than later. You'll also be able to enjoy your evening more once you have finished your work. This is the same for studying; start studying in advance and you will be less stressed about upcoming tests and also more prepared for them.

- Jocelyn Coleman



How to Review Notes/Concepts.

Now that you are entering your first year of high school, you will soon receive your first assignments, tests, and exams of your high school career. In order to be successful in these ungraded and graded tasks, reviewing and studying are extremely important tools which will help you throughout your time at Notre Dame. As you progress through high school, you will soon find different studying strategies that work best for you. Personally, I have found that I learn best by writing and reviewing notes. This means that before tests or quizzes, I look over any lessons which could be on the test and write the most important/pertinent information on a piece of paper. I then look over the paper multiple times before the test along with any other past assessments which relate to the content on the test. I also like to have someone quiz me on the content to help prepare me for the test's questions. - **George Bartlett**

Making the most of class time (e.g. maintaining focus and using work periods wisely)

Making the most out of class time is one of the most helpful habits in order to keep up with school work and make time for responsibilities outside of school. In order to focus as much as possible I always try at the very least to keep my phone out of view so that I am not distracted by it. I also try my best to put myself in a situation where I can work independently if I need to. Talking with friends for 5 or 10 minutes is great to relieve stress and take a break from what you are doing, but it's important that you eventually get back to work. At the end of the day try to remember that being at school is the best possible time to work and I would much rather use my time well at school and save time for after school activities. - **Logan Thorpe**



Advice for a grade 9 student

When you first come into high school, you might feel intimidated since you don't know what to expect. I am here to tell you not to be scared. High school is a great opportunity to meet new people. Also, make sure to use your class time wisely. By using the class time wisely you alleviate some of the stress of outstanding overdue assignments and you feel accomplished. Next, make sure that you participate in class. This is very important because it can improve your self-confidence, like it did for me. Finally, extracurricular activities are good for building confidence and community, so get yourself out there. All this growth takes time, so be patient with yourself! - **Jordan Clarke**



Managing time after school specifically (homework, etc.)

The workload of school and other activities we have in our daily lives can sometimes get overwhelming, affecting how we manage time to get these important activities done. Managing time helps to reduce the stress that might be felt out of school. Some tips that are helpful are to have an agenda with times and dates of every important thing that is present in the day. This will help to alleviate the worries as it is planned out and now it is your job to stay focused. Managing time is very important. Having time for everything we do in an evening can be hard, especially with distractions, so setting aside these distractions like your phone or family interruptions and focusing on homework will help you stay motivated and therefore have better time management in the long run. It is very important that you manage time wisely after school as it is possible to overwhelm yourself with everything going on around you. - **Kyra Smith**





Balancing Life and School

The transition from elementary to high school can feel overwhelming, but luckily there are ways to balance your hobbies with schoolwork. By far the most important tip I can offer is to avoid procrastination. Most teachers will tell you when tests are a week before you write them. By studying early and preparing beforehand, you can get everything done early before your work shift, or before going out with friends. For me, this means doing my homework as soon as I come back from school, so that it's done before going out. Finding a study group with your friends can also be useful, as it can make doing homework more enjoyable, and you can always go out after your schoolwork is done, allowing you to kill two birds with one stone. Overall, there's no need to stress out, and by acting proactively you can find a time for everything to be done.

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**



Organizing your time overall: how to keep a proper to-do list & agenda

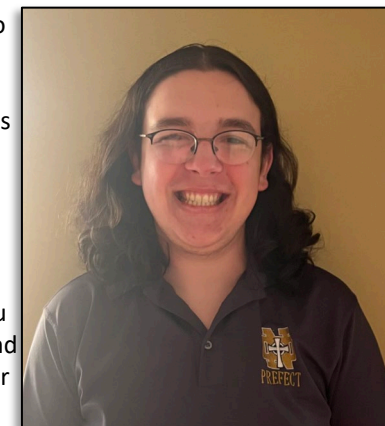
Throughout high school, it is important to stay organized. To do this an agenda is very helpful, whether it be a physical agenda or on your phone (i.e. phone calendar, google calendar). In this agenda, you should write everything you need to know, like teachers emails, assignment dates, test dates, and even things which occupy your time outside of school like sports and your job. Seeing all the activities you have allows you to properly prepare for them. In this agenda, you can also write some to-do lists where you can write the homework which needs to be completed, or a test you may need to study for. There is a larger work load in highschool and keeping track of all your work will help you spread your time equally between your four courses and not overwhelm yourself. Your agenda is very helpful to understand what you have to complete for the day and really helps not overwhelm yourself with the school work.

- **Charolette Breen**

Getting involved in extracurriculars

Hey Grade 9's! The biggest piece of advice I have to share with you is to start joining extracurriculars early on in your high school career! At Notre Dame, we have so many excellent subcommunities for you to join! From an extensive list of sports teams to clubs catering to interests in the arts and technology. We have everything from football and ultimate frisbee to STEAM and drama club! If you're looking to make a difference in your school community, try going out for groups such as student council or join the social justice group. Regardless of which extracurricular you join, they all boost your academic performance and expand your social circle early on in the first chapter of high school. You build connections with more students and teachers, learn new skills, and improve your time management. I wish you lots of luck in your first year at Notre Dame, and don't forget to have fun!

- **Matthew Pichocki**





Tips for mental health in stressful times

Mental health is an important part of our overall well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. Mental recovery is giving ourselves relief from stress by using short periods of time away from work to reduce our body's stress. This can include taking short breaks, doing breathing exercises, or switching tasks when you're feeling mentally or physically exhausted. When I feel stressed or overwhelmed, I take care of my mental health by spending time with people, doing activities I enjoy, staying active, relaxing, or spending time with my pet. Going to talk to teachers is also another good option since they are very understanding and want to help students. It's also important to ask for help when you

need it and this can be from teachers, family, friends, and prefects. It can be awkward to ask for help which is why we Prefects are always here to support you all on your first high school experience, so don't be afraid to give us a shout! - **Ethan Grant**



Tips for organizing your binder

Hey ND grade 9s! My name is Kendra and I'm in grade 12 this school year. For me, having an organized binder is one of the best ways to keep up and stay focused in your courses. One of my main tips is to have a different binder for each course, or, grouping like courses together. This helps to get you in the proper headspace to learn a specific topic. To keep organized within that subject, I like to use binder dividers. They are great when separating units. Another thing I like to do is keep my homework papers separate from the actual lessons. This might help you when flipping through lessons when reviewing and making it easier by not having to sort through other papers to find them. As a visual learner, using highlighters or coloured pens helps me to understand the material when going

through a lesson, and I like to use coloured sticky notes to mark important lectures.

Good luck and hope you have a great year! - **Kendra Hudson**



The importance of participating in class

In grade 9, many students fear participating in class because they don't want to be the only ones contributing to discussions. However, it only takes one student for the atmosphere of the classroom to change. Once you start participating in a class, a sense of community starts to be built, and you feel a lot more comfortable around your peers. From my experience, being comfortable in class makes learning so much more engaging and easy, because you do not feel shy to ask questions about different topics or ask other students for help. It also helps build a better relationship with your teachers, which is super important for your success both academically and emotionally.



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**



Managing time after school (when it comes to homework, etc)

Now that you will have four classes, for each you will likely be given homework. So you will have to find the time to balance it out after school -

- ✓ In some cases it will be overwhelming, set a plan and/or schedule ahead of time. Ex: I will do math first, science, religion, then lastly geography. Maybe start with the easier assessment so that it could build confidence to start working on the other assessments.
- ✓ Don't focus too much on a course and as a result have no more time for the others, that's when you get stressed and overwhelmed. Try to dedicate 45 minutes

to an hour a day for each course and try to fit a 15 to 20 minute break in there.

- ✓ You will have priorities at some point, like a big assignment or test so you may have the feeling to prioritize that over everything else. Put some time and effort and when you have some extra time and would like to do more, then do more.
- ✓ In addition to the previous point, you may not have as much work for a day so you might as well spend however much time you want on a course, not too little. Try to go back to incomplete homework if you can.
- ✓ Work in a comfortable and distraction-free environment, so that you can manage your time better and get stuff done without distractions.
- ✓ Though completion is important, it is important to have some effort shown in all your courses. Like if you have homework in all your courses and you don't feel like you can complete it all, do as much as you can for each and make sure you at least have gone through the material and know what to do
- ✓ Avoid procrastination, the hardest part is getting started and feeling motivated especially if it's something you are looking forward to. However, once you are motivated to start the assessment everything will move much more smoothly and you will feel much better knowing that you have put in the work. In the end, this can help build a better work ethic which can be really beneficial moving forward - **Samson Karczmarczyk**



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

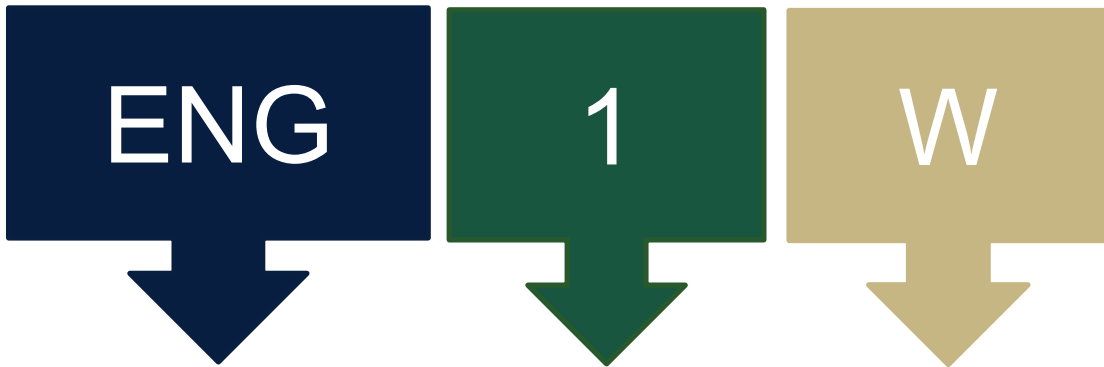


IMPORTANT: The number one question to ask as you plan your pathways is **WHO AM I** – what are my strengths? What am I passionate about? Very rarely are you bad at something you love simply because you put in the work to be better. Why? Because it doesn't FEEL like work when you are doing it!

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: ENG1W)



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

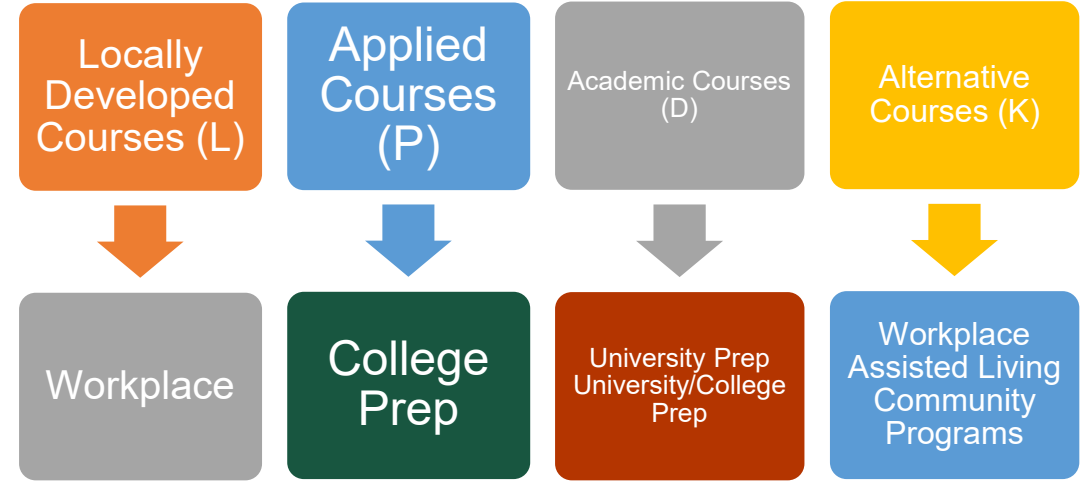
The number represents the GRADE as follows:

- 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 OUIInfo 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 <https://www.haltonpathways.ca/>

Step 3: Choose a Direction

- What direction do you want to go in?
- Check out the following links for pathways websites:
 - <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!](#)



SMARTPHONE APPS for Wellness



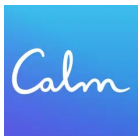
MINDSHIFT



HEADSPACE



IBREATHE



CALM

Mental Health Resources

[HCDSB Secondary Student Mental Health Kit](#)

A compilation of mental health resources and tools curated for HCDSB secondary students

[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 be in school uniform when I am at school?

- Students are to be always in full uniform, while at school. Uniform includes collared shirt, Notre Dame hoodie, pants/shorts and black shoes. Wearing the uniform correctly helps us identify Notre Dame students easily as we attempt to ensure the safety of all in our school community
- Hats are not permitted to be worn in the building

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

- Students have access to their own personal locker. Students will be provided with a lock and will be expected to keep personal items/knapsacks in their locker. Do NOT share your locker or lock combination with others.
- Knapsacks are not permitted in classrooms.
- If you lose your lock, you can purchase a new lock at the main office for a fee of \$10.

Will I be able to purchase food in the cafeteria?

- Students will have access to cafeteria during their scheduled lunch. Food will be able to be purchased from the servery in the coming weeks.

Can I have my parents sign me out to attend a school game or to study for a test?

- No. If you are signed out, you must leave the school grounds.
- If students are in the building, they are expected to be in their assigned class

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.

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.

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 240 at Notre Dame.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is the Library open to students?

- The library is OPEN for student use. The library is accessible before school, at lunch, on a spare or library work period as well as after school.
- 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.
- PLEASE NOTE: You are responsible for your own belongings.

Is there an all-gender bathroom available to students at Notre Dame?

- Yes. All students are welcome to use the all-gender bathroom that is located inside the attendance office.

Is there a lost and found at Notre Dame?

- The lost and found is in the cafeteria. High value items (jewellery, technology, etc.) may be held in the main office.
- Please remember you are responsible for your own things, and we do not encourage you to bring items of value that you would not want to misplace.

Frequently Asked Questions

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

- All student absences need to be called in/approved by parents.**
- Parents can enter student absences on the School Messenger app or via online [here](#)
- If you know that you are going to be away (appointment), be sure to let your teacher know ahead of time so that you can 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.

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 running at Notre Dame this year
- 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).
- 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 right away.

Sound advice from some of the Notre Dame staff

- ✓ "Don't think of school as something that you have to do, but rather something that you GET to do. Don't take it for granted." - **Mme Tayler**
- ✓ "Don't be afraid to say "Hello" to someone first, they just might become your best friend!" - **Miss. Elzbieciak**
- ✓ "Get involved in the building, art shows, 30 plus teams, Best Buddies, yearbook etc. 4 years fly by, don't wait to get involved!" – **Mr. Ferguson**
- ✓ "Communicate with your teachers early and often and ask as many questions as you can!" – **Mrs. Francis**
- ✓ "Trust your gut. If it feels wrong, it's wrong. If it feels right, it is right." - **Mme Saliba**
- ✓ "Be kind...always lead with kindness, you never know what kind of day someone might be having" - **Ms. Facca**
- ✓ Two favourite quotes from **Mr. Leyland**: "You get what you give. What you put into things is what you get out of them." - JLo and "Good, better, best. Never let it rest. 'Til your good is better and your better is best." - St. Jerome
- ✓ Make sure to get involved in one after school activity. The skills and relationships that you make during this activity can be the reason to come to school" - **Ms. Pietroiusti**
- ✓ "One rule...Respect! Be respectful and be humble! It's a privilege to be here. Have a good year!" - **Rui Tavares**

Sound advice from some of the Notre Dame staff

- ✓ "Treat everyone with dignity and respect. We are all special and different, respect their views and opinions even if they are different. Enjoy getting to know new people, smile and say hello!" - **Mrs. Butrym**
- ✓ "Be brave... say hello to each other and smile! We can create a space where we can all shine! Build each other up and don't take things too seriously! Have fun!" - **Mrs. Robinson**
- ✓ "If you build it... they will come! Build your own field of dreams in the next 4 years!!" - **Mr. Nason**
- ✓ "Always open the door that is closed as you will never know what you find on the other side and the opportunities/experiences that are waiting for you." - **Ms. Milicevic**
- ✓ "Believe in yourself and your abilities. Your power lies in your choices and the things that you do each day to show up as your best self. You matter and you are your biggest investment. Invest wisely." – **Ms. L. Sneyd**
- ✓ "As a former student and graduate of Notre Dame, I can say with confidence that the next four years will be some of the most memorable years of your life. Embrace every moment - the new friendships, new experiences, and new opportunities. Be persistent - try your best, fail, make mistakes, but try again. Always believe in yourself and your potential. Give all of your dreams a chance to live. " – **Mr. Coleiro**
- ✓ "Be nice... if you have nothing nice to say, don't say anything at all! Stop by the library and say hello!" - **Mrs. D'Souza**
- ✓ "Try your best and be kind. We can help with everything else." – **Mrs. Little-Velianou**

Extracurriculars at Notre Dame

One consistent piece of advice is the importance of getting involved in extracurriculars and your school community early. Below is a list of some of the teams and clubs that have run in the past (not guaranteed to run). Be sure to keep an eye out on InsideND and your ears on the announcements to ensure you don't miss out on any opportunities.

Clubs		Athletics	
Student Council	STEAM	Football	Field Hockey
Prefects	Best Buddies	Cross Country	Track and Field
Drama Club	Open Door (GSA)	Golf	Swimming
Horticulture Club	Construction	Basketball	Volleyball
Manufacturing Club	Electric Car	Hockey	Curling
Eco Club	Social Justice	Badminton	Tennis
Student Senate	Peer to Peer Tutoring	Soccer	Baseball
School Reach	Art Club	Slow Pitch Softball	Lacrosse
Anime Club	Book Club	Rugby	Ultimate Frisbee
Video Game / E-Sports	Board Game Club	Touch Football	Skiing / Snowboarding
HOSA	Mock Trial		
Yearbook Club	DECA		
InsideND	Debate Club		
Culinary Club	Tech Crew		
Chess	Music		

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!

