



Entering Secondary School

A Transition Guide for Grade 8 Students and Parents/Guardians

"What does the Lord ask of you?" Micah 6:8



At HCDSB, we are committed to providing you with an exceptional Catholic education that nurtures both your mind and spirit.

Welcome students to the next chapter in your journey of Achieving, Believing, Belonging, and Becoming at the Halton Catholic District School Board. In their pastoral letter on Catholic education, *Renewing the Promise*, the bishops of Ontario paint a portrait of a Catholic school system that “accompanies, builds relationships, forms joyful disciples, encourages engagement, and instils hope.” Making this vision a reality, is at the heart of all we do.

ACHIEVING: Set your goals high! As you pursue excellence, remember that you are capable of great things. Our dedicated teachers and staff are here to support you every step of the way. Whether it is in the classroom, on the field, or through extracurricular activities, strive to achieve your best.

BELIEVING: We encourage you to explore your faith, regardless of tradition, while fostering compassion in both learning and service to the community. We are committed to creating a welcoming environment that respects and honours the dignity of every individual, embracing a diversity of beliefs and perspectives.

BELONGING: You are an integral part of a vibrant community where compassion, acceptance, and connection flourish. Our schools work closely with families and the wider community to create an environment where everyone feels safe, valued and included.

BECOMING: Our schools provide a safe and supportive environment where you can flourish. We are focused on your growth and helping you develop into compassionate leaders and responsible citizens. Embrace the opportunities that will equip you with the skills and knowledge for success, both during your time in school and in the future!

Our success is built on strong partnerships—with parents, staff, pastors, and the broader community. Together, we create a positive and enriching experience for all. Your journey through secondary school is a shared endeavour, and we are here to walk alongside you.

As you begin this exciting chapter, know that you are part of a community that believes in your potential. Embrace the challenges, celebrate the victories, and keep your faith alive. We look forward to witnessing your growth and accomplishments.

Sincerely,

JOHN KLEIN

Director of Education

Achieving Believing Belonging Becoming

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"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen"

2 Peter 3:18

OUR MISSION

The Halton Catholic District School Board, in partnership with home and Church, is an inclusive and equitable learning community, dedicated to providing excellence in Catholic education by developing Christ-centred individuals enabled to transform society.

OUR VISION

The Halton Catholic District School Board is an inclusive and equitable model learning community, widely recognized as distinctively Catholic, providing exceptional education, while nurturing the call to love and to serve as a people of faith, living out God's plan.

OUR VALUES

At the Halton Catholic District School Board, **we value:**

Our Catholic Faith and aspire to be models of Christ through our actions of love, forgiveness, compassion, and acceptance.

The Whole Child and create conditions that support the spiritual, intellectual, physical and emotional well-being of all students so that they may fulfill their God-given potential.

Excellence in Learning and provide opportunities that meet the needs and aspirations of all learners in a supportive, creative and innovative learning environment.

Relationships and Partnerships and recognize that our success is reflective of the healthy and vibrant partnership of staff, parents, pastors, and members of our broader community.

The Importance of Contributing to Our Communities and respect diversity, celebrate multiculturalism, honour individual rights, and embrace the social values of collective responsibility and the common good.

ONTARIO CATHOLIC SCHOOL GRADUATE EXPECTATIONS (OCSGE)

<https://iceont.ca/resources/ocsge/>

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Halton, as we know it today, is rich in the history and modern traditions of many First Nations and the Métis. From the lands of the Anishinaabe to the Attawandaron, the Haudenosaunee, and the Métis, these lands surrounding the Great Lakes are steeped in Indigenous history.

As we gather today on these treaty lands, our Catholic Social Teaching call us into solidarity with Indigenous brothers and sisters to honour and respect the four directions, lands, waters, plants, animals and ancestors who walked before us. All these wonderful elements of creation exist, gifted to us by our Creator God. We acknowledge and thank the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation for being stewards of this traditional territory.

Catholic Education: **Achieving, Believing,** **Belonging** and **Becoming**

Catholic schools accompany families in the teaching and learning of God, self and the community. Students participate in one Religious Education course every year and have the opportunity in Grade 11 to learn about a number of other faith traditions. All four courses are rooted in a Christian anthropology and seek to better understand what it means to be human.

Chaplaincy Leaders are caring and compassionate staff who support the faith formation of the secondary school community. Committed to enhancing the Catholic culture of the school, they are also called to minister to all members of their community, of any faith or none, and of every family. Chaplaincy Leaders provide opportunities for prayer, social justice outreach, retreats, confidential counselling, and spiritual guidance.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- Grade 9** Discipleship and Culture
- Grade 10** Christ and Culture
- Grade 11** Faith and Culture: World Religions
- Grade 12** Church and Culture

"Come, follow me."

Matthew 4:19



WHAT DOES THE
LORD
REQUIRE OF YOU?

DO JUSTICE,
LOVE KINDNESS

AND TO
WALK HUMBLY
WITH YOUR **GOD.**

Micah 6:8

ARTWORK BY SARAH EDWARDS, STUDENT AT CHRIST THE KING CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

Indigenous Self-Identification

WHAT IS SELF-IDENTIFICATION?

As mandated by the Ministry of Education, it is the policy of the HCDSB to provide students with the opportunity for voluntary self-identification as First Nation, Métis, or Inuit. The board is committed to supporting the achievement and well-being of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students, and the education of staff and students on Indigenous Peoples, colonialism, and anti-Indigenous racism.



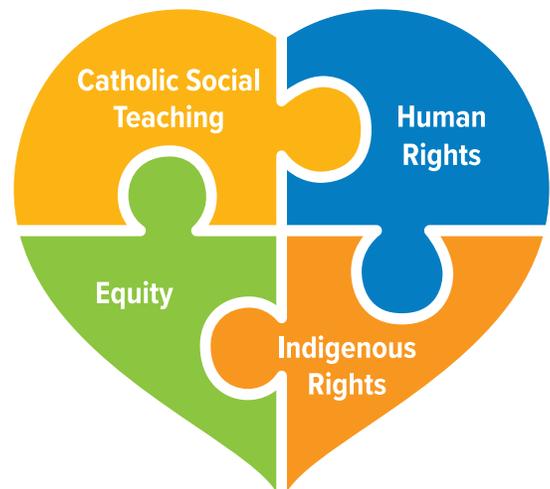
INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

At HCDSB, we ensure the inclusion of First Nation, Métis and Inuit histories and perspectives in our schools, our system and our communities. By recognizing and promoting an awareness of these histories and contemporary realities, we will support the holistic success of all our students, in particular our First Nation, Métis and Inuit students.

FOR MORE INFORMATION - Please visit Indigenous Education – Halton Catholic District School Board:
<https://www.hcdsb.org/faith-community/indigenous-education/>

Human Rights and Equity

At HCDSB, we are committed to creating safe, inclusive and welcoming learning environments that support student achievement and well-being in our Catholic schools. Human Rights and Equity are guiding values that are consistent both with Catholic Social Teaching, reaffirming the dignity of every individual, as well as the Ontario Human Rights Code, which safeguards students and staff from discrimination based on the protected grounds.



THE OFFICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUITY:

- ✓ Provides education and information on human rights and equity issues in education.
- ✓ Embeds equity and human rights principles in HCDSB policies, procedures, and practices.
- ✓ Works with schools to address human rights related concerns and incidents of racism and discrimination.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Please visit Human Rights and Equity – Halton Catholic District School Board:
<https://www.hcdsb.org/our-board/human-rights-and-equity/>

Graduation Requirements

Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD)



30 CREDITS
IN TOTAL



40 HOURS OF COMMUNITY
INVOLVEMENT



COMPLETION OF THE
LITERACY REQUIREMENT

Students must earn the following compulsory credits to obtain the Ontario Secondary School Diploma:

17 Compulsory Credits	Credits
English (1 credit per grade)	4
Math (1 credit in Grade 11 or Grade 12)	3
Science	2
Technological Education (Grade 9 or Grade 10)	1
Canadian History	1
Canadian Geography	1
The Arts	1
Health and Physical Education	1
French as a Second Language	1
Career Studies	0.5
Civics and Citizenship	0.5
STEM related course Of the 17 compulsory credits, you must complete 1 from the following group:	1
• Business studies	
• Computer studies	
• Cooperative education	
• Mathematics (in addition to the 3 compulsory Math credits required)	
• Science (in addition to the 2 compulsory Science credits required)	
• Technological Education (in addition to the 1 compulsory Tech credit required)	

13 Elective Credits	Credits
Students are required to take:	13
✓ 4 Religious Education courses, one each year in Grades 9-12.	
✓ 9 Optional credits that match a student's interests and individual pathway plan.	

Other Requirements

Online Learning Requirement –
Of the 30 credits required for an OSSD, at least 2 must be online learning credits. For information on opting out of the online learning requirement, please see your Guidance Counsellor.

Financial Literacy Requirement –
The financial literacy graduation requirement is a part of the compulsory Grade 10 mathematics course.



Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC)

For Students and Families/Caregivers

The Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC) will be granted, on request, to students who are leaving secondary school upon reaching the age of eighteen without having met the requirements of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. To be granted an OSSC, a student must have earned a minimum of 14 credits, distributed as shown.



14 CREDITS IN TOTAL

7 Compulsory Credits	Credits
English	2
Math	1
Science	1
Canadian History or Geography	1
Arts or Technological Education	1
Health and Physical Education	1

7 Elective Credits	Credits
Students are required to successfully complete an additional 7 credits (Religion courses included) that match their interests or develop their skills.	7

Students are **not** required to complete:

- 40 hours of community involvement
- the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)
- the online learning graduation requirements

Certificate of Accomplishment (COA)

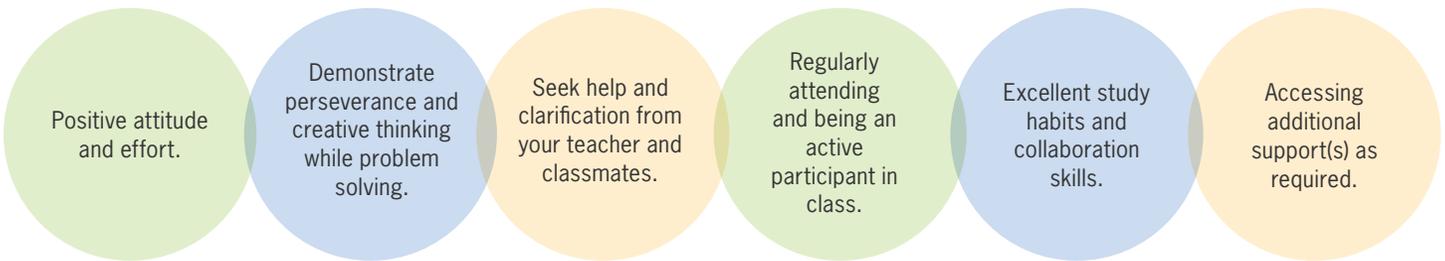
Students who are leaving secondary school upon reaching the age of eighteen without having met the requirements for the OSSD or the OSSC may be granted a Certificate of Accomplishment. This certificate recognizes achievement for students on the Community pathway who will go on to participate in further education, engage in volunteer/paid work, or participate in community programs.

Students working towards a Certificate of Accomplishment may take K- courses, which are alternative, non-credit courses for students with special education needs. These courses are designed to support the growth of fundamental skills, independence and self-care.

Literacy & Numeracy

Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD)

KEYS TO SUCCESS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL CLASSES



GRADE 9 EQAO ASSESSMENT OF MATHEMATICS

Students enrolled in the de-streamed **Grade 9 Mathematics**, MTH1W, course participate in the EQAO Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics during the semester in which they complete the course. Students will complete the digital assessment in-class on computers. The assessment addresses student learning of the knowledge and skills learned in **Grade 9 Mathematics** and results are used to inform each student's final grade.

QUICK FACTS

- Scores for HCDSB math students have, historically, exceeded provincial average.
- In the Grade 9 de-streamed math course students will learn coding, financial literacy, mathematical modelling, and data literacy.
- In addition to the math content and skills, students in MTH1W will also develop transferable skills such as communication, collaboration, problem solving, and innovation.

NEW IN 2025! Starting in **September 2025**, students must earn a financial literacy graduation requirement as part of the compulsory Grade 10 mathematics course. **A mark of 70% or higher is required** to pass this requirement and earn the Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

SUPPORT & PREPARATION FOR EQAO & OSSLT

Students are provided with a wide range of supports within the classroom and outside class time to ensure they are well prepared for provincial assessments. Students with special education needs or special considerations (including those with an IEP) may receive applicable accommodations on these assessments.

Check out the EQAO website for sample tests and FAQs: www.eqao.com

ONTARIO SECONDARY SCHOOL LITERACY TEST (OSSLT)

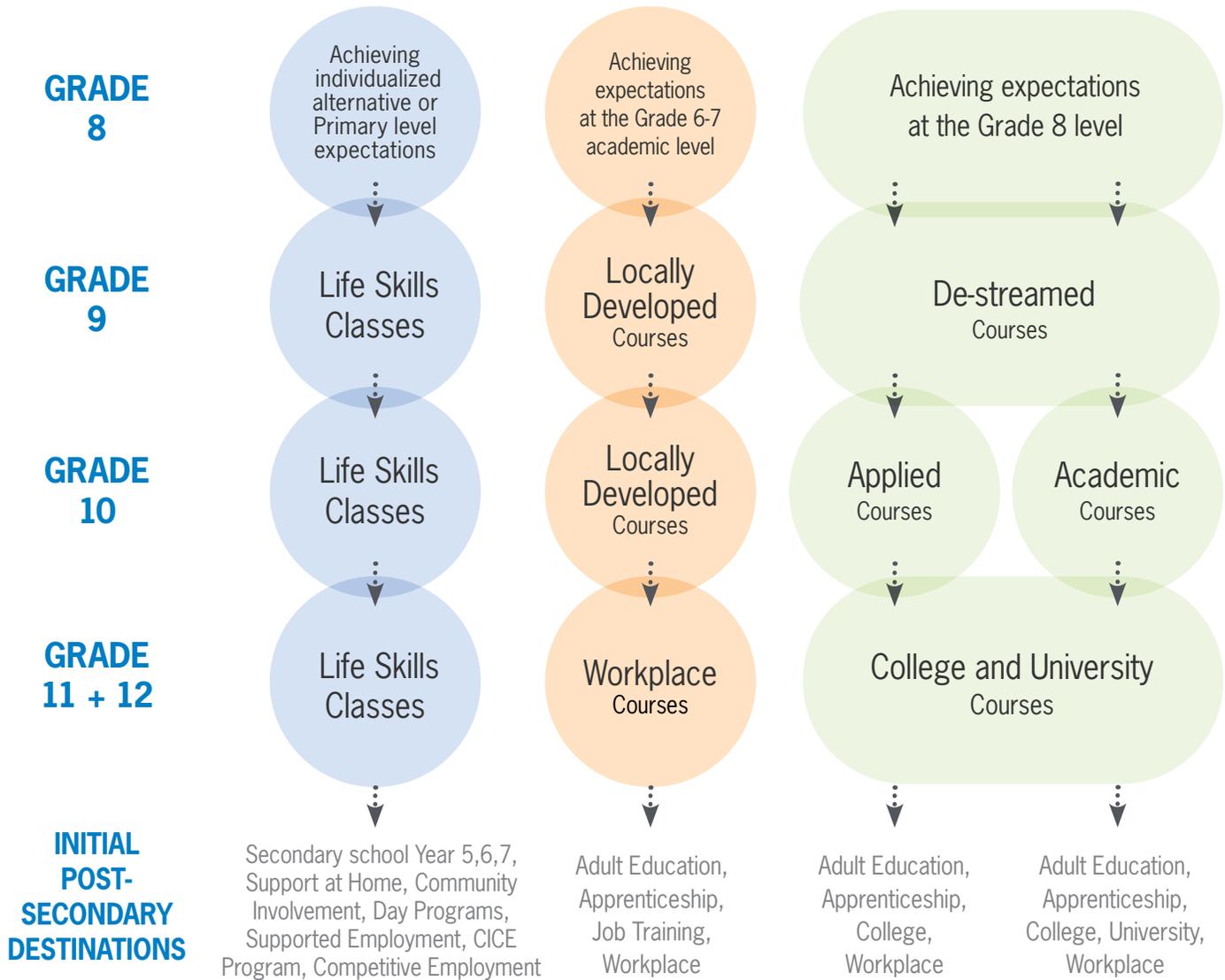
All students are required to successfully complete the OSSLT requirement to earn an OSSD. This test is based on the literacy expectations up until the end of Grade 9 and is administered with their Grade 10 English class in either first or second semester.

The OSSLT is now completely online. Schools will help students become familiar with the EQAO testing platform prior to the test date.

Students who are unsuccessful on the test can either, retake the test the next semester, or enroll in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC). Successful completion of the OSSLC satisfies the student's OSSLT requirement for graduation. Exemptions may be granted to students NOT working towards an OSSD. In certain circumstances, students may be deferred until a later administration of the test.

Pathways – there are many pathways to success

This map is a general guideline of pathway options, and movement between the pathways is possible. Consult with your teachers, parent/guardian, and guidance counsellor to review the option(s) that best meet your individual pathway plan for success.



Q & A

Your Guidance Department is an excellent source of information on pathway choices.

CAN A STUDENT CHANGE COURSE TYPES?

YES! Students can change course types. Speak to a Guidance Counsellor if this is something you are considering.

DO ALL OF THE COURSES THAT A STUDENT SELECTS HAVE TO BE THE SAME TYPE? (I.E. ALL AT THE ACADEMIC PATHWAY?)

NO! Students are encouraged to take the type of course that best suits their interests, pathway plan and learning style. Students may select a variety of course types.

IS THERE SOMEWHERE I CAN GO FOR HELP IF I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT COURSE SELECTION?

YES! Grade 8 teachers and Elementary Pathways Itinerant teachers are available to assist with selecting courses for Grade 9. All secondary schools offer information evenings to assist with planning for the transition from Grade 8 to 9.

Choosing for Success!

Course Types - Grade 9 and 10

COURSE TYPES FOR THE ONTARIO SECONDARY SCHOOL DIPLOMA (OSSD)

As part of a broad strategy to provide equitable opportunities and positive outcomes for all students, schools in Ontario no longer stream students into Academic and Applied courses in Grade 9. This is called de-streaming. Students will continue their experience of learning together with peers. All students will have the same learning experience to prepare for the senior courses and the post-secondary pathway they choose. The de-streaming of Grade 9 allows students more time to explore areas of interest before deciding on their initial post-secondary pathway.

De-streaming Frequently Asked Questions: www.hcdsb.org/learning-resources/a-guide-to-de-streaming/

Grade 9

De-streamed (W) courses equip all students with the knowledge, skills and work ethic to be successful in Academic or Applied courses in Grade 10.

A de-streamed course provides a single course that covers the foundations of Academic and Applied courses providing both theoretical and application based learning.

Grade 10

Academic (D) courses focus on the key concepts of the subject (discipline) and explore related concepts as well. Academic courses develop students' knowledge and skills by emphasizing theoretical, abstract applications of the key concepts while incorporating practical applications.

Applied (P) courses focus on the key concepts of the subject (discipline) area. In Applied courses, familiar, real-life situations will be used to illustrate ideas and students will be given more opportunities to experience hands-on practical applications of the concepts being studied.

Locally Developed (L) courses are designed to focus on core knowledge and skills to meet individual student needs for compulsory subjects. Locally Developed courses may review and reinforce elementary curriculum expectations to give students a stronger foundation necessary for further study at the secondary level. Locally Developed courses should only be selected after consultation with parents/guardians, teachers and guidance.

Open (O) courses are appropriate for all students and are designed to broaden students' knowledge and skills in subjects that reflect their interests and prepare them for active and rewarding participation in society. They are not designed with the specific requirements of apprenticeship, college, university, or the workplace in mind. For example, Open courses are offered in Grade 9 and 10 Arts, Music, Religion, and Physical Education.

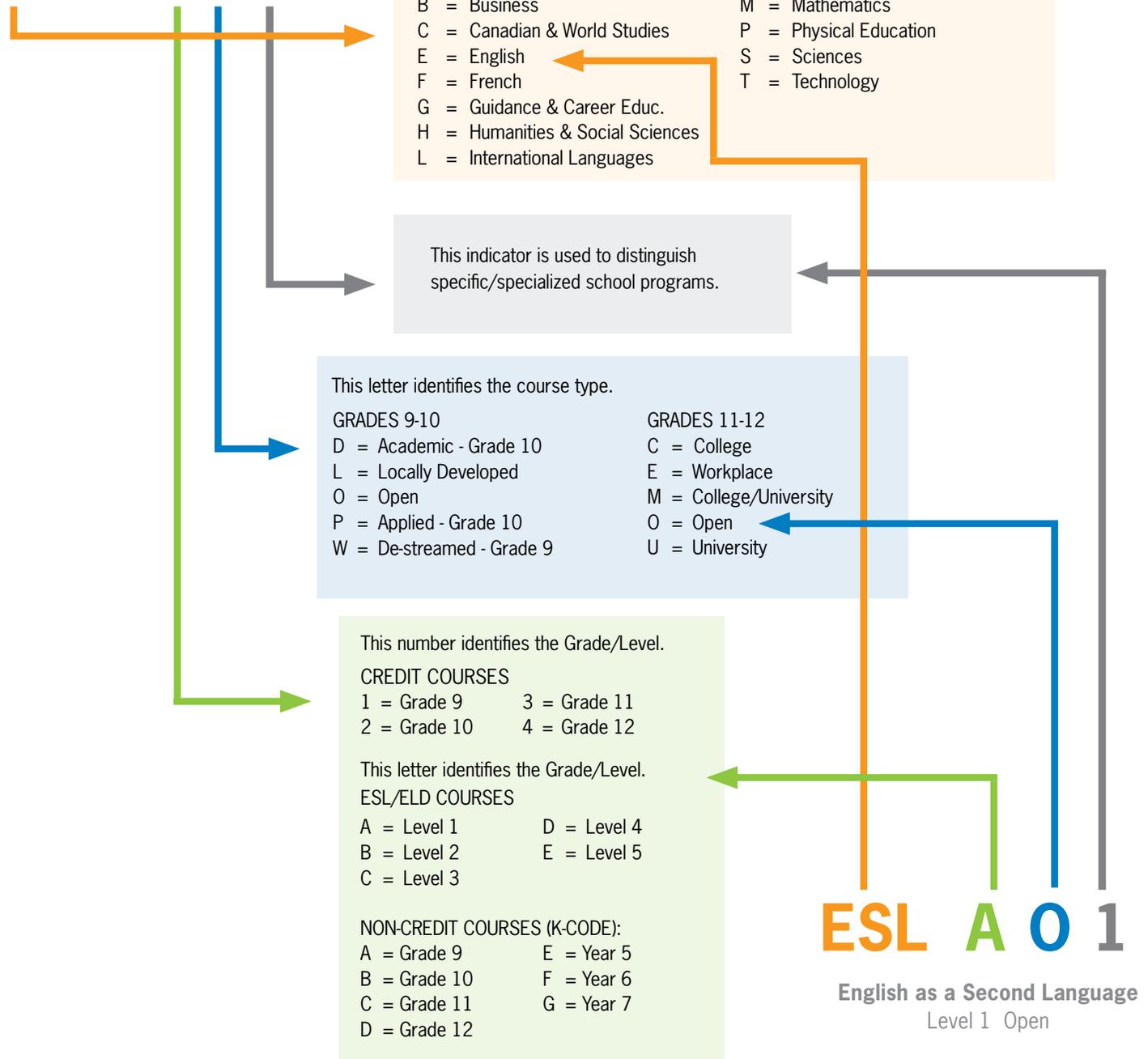
Decoding a Course Code

Courses use a 6-Character Course Code for Identification

The first 5 characters of the course code are set by the Ministry of Education. The sixth character is used by school boards to identify a specific characteristic of the course. For example, the sixth character, "F," indicates French Immersion courses in the HCDSB.

CGC 1 W 1

Geography Grade 9 De-streamed



Course Selection

Use the High School Planner in *myBlueprint* to select your courses for Grade 9

Seek advice from your teachers and parents/guardians when making these choices. Plan for success by choosing the course types that match your interest and ability. There are opportunities throughout secondary school to move between course types, if necessary, based on your skill development and post-secondary goals.

STEP 1: ADD COURSES

Students choose **eight** courses for Grade 9.

Six of your courses are **compulsory**: English, Math, Science, Geography, French and Religion.

Two of your courses will be **electives**.

Electives can include courses in the Arts, Business, Physical Education, and Technology.

Can't decide? Don't worry!

All these subject areas are also available in Grade 10.

For students entering the Life Skills Program, there will be transition meetings with parents/guardians to discuss course selection in the early Spring.

It is recommended that the compulsory Arts credit is taken in Grade 9 or 10.

Don't forget: a Grade 9 or 10 Technology credit is compulsory, so add it to your Grade 9 or Grade 10 high school planner (see page 7).



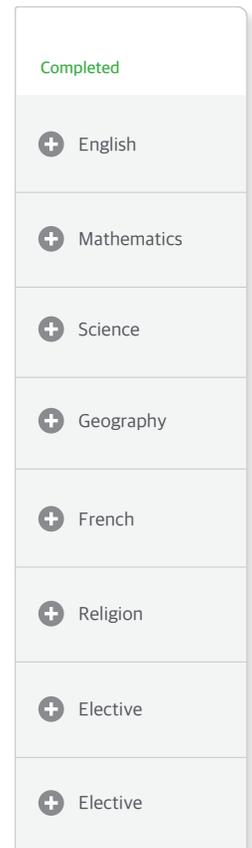
Mathematics
Grade 9 • MAT1LI • 1 Credit • Locally Developed

Mathematics
Grade 9 • MTH1WI • 1 Credit • Destreamed



Visual Arts: Open
Grade 9 • AV11OI • 1 Credit • Open

Exploring Technologies: Open
Grade 9 • TIJ1OI • 1 Credit • Open



Completed

- + English
- + Mathematics
- + Science
- + Geography
- + French
- + Religion
- + Elective
- + Elective

STEP 2: REVIEW AND SUBMIT COURSES

When you're satisfied with your eight course selections, click **Review Course Selections**. You'll have an opportunity to look over the courses you've chosen one last time. Check carefully: Once you click Submit Course Selections, you **cannot** make changes.

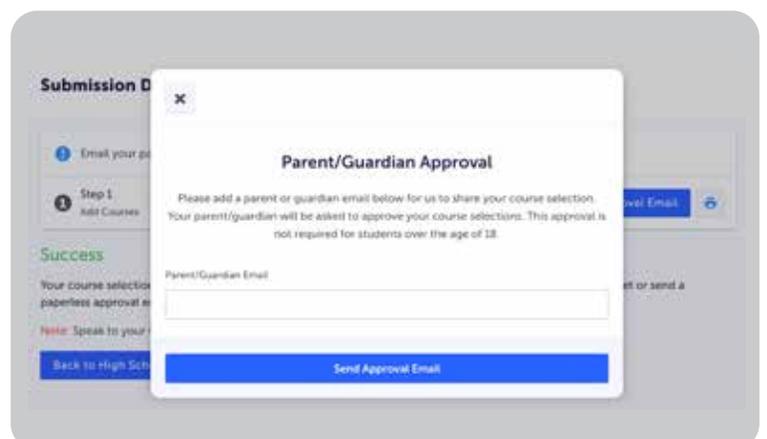
Online Parent/
Guardian Approval

STEP 3: SEND PARENT/ GUARDIAN APPROVAL EMAIL:

The last step is for you to send the Parent/Guardian Approval Email. Enter your Parent/Guardian's email so they can receive a copy of your course selections for online approval.

CONGRATULATIONS!

You've planned your courses for Grade 9!



Submission D

Parent/Guardian Approval

Please add a parent or guardian email below for us to share your course selection. Your parent/guardian will be asked to approve your course selections. This approval is not required for students over the age of 18.

Parent/Guardian Email

Send Approval Email

Education and Career Life Planning

Making Choices for Your Future

Your journey to success starts with your Individual Pathway Plan (IPP).

Starting in elementary school, students are encouraged to discover their interests, strengths, and gifts, and the opportunities available to explore their interests. Students are encouraged to design their Individual Pathways Plan, and update it regularly, using a web-based program called myBlueprint. Together, students and parents/guardians can explore careers, education options, and plan high school courses using Backward Design.



Pathways

Create your Individual Pathways Plan (IPP) with myBlueprint



myBlueprint is a web-based, interactive program used by HCDSB students, parents/guardians and teachers to facilitate career exploration, post-secondary research, pathways planning and portfolio development.

All students in Grades 7 to 12 complete pathway planning activities in myBlueprint.

"Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect." Romans 12:2

Your Individual Pathways Plan (IPP)



Starting Your Journey with myBlueprint

GRADE

8

WHO AM I?

ASSESS YOUR INTERESTS AND SKILLS

- Complete the *Who am I* surveys
- Add your results to your portfolio

WHAT ARE MY OPPORTUNITIES?

EXPLORE CAREERS - Keep an open mind to ALL Pathways

- Search for careers based on your interests
- Favourite one occupation

WHO DO I WANT TO BECOME?

PATHWAYS PLANNING

- Write two goals to help you achieve your plans
- Update your portfolio to capture what you have learned and write a reflection

WHAT IS MY PLAN?

POST-SECONDARY RESEARCH

- Select your secondary school courses for Grade 9

PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT

- Use myBlueprint as your personal filing cabinet, upload files

Plan & Select your courses

All students plan and select their courses online using myBlueprint. (see page 13)

For Students and Families/Caregivers

Getting Started Current HCDSB Students:

Log into D2L

D2L

Login format:

**firstname.lastname.###@students.
hcdsb.org**

*TIP: Your password is the same password
you enter for your school account.*

Family/Caregiver Account - Keep in touch with your child's Individual Pathways Plan (IPP) and together explore career and education options. Use the Family Account from anywhere you have access to a computer.

CREATING A FAMILY/CAREGIVER ACCOUNT

1. Visit <https://app.myblueprint.ca/?sdid=haltoncatholic>
2. Click **Sign Up** in the top right corner.
3. Enter the activation key for your child's secondary school. This is available from the Elementary Pathways Itinerant teacher or the Grade 8 teacher.
4. Select Family/Advisor.
5. Select student's grade range: Grade 7-12.
6. Click Create My Account.
7. Fill out personal information.



Apprenticeship
College
Community
University
Work

Pathways

Making Choices for Your Future

Pathway destinations include: Apprenticeship, College, Community, University and Work.

The Halton Catholic District School Board views all five post-secondary pathway destinations as worthy and valuable. In our secondary schools, we provide students with a wide range of course types, programs, supports and learning opportunities to meet the needs of all learners and prepare students for success in secondary school and beyond.



Pathways are flexible and may be combined and changed. As students begin to know themselves, their interests, strengths, values and skills, they are better prepared to select related opportunities for learning and work.

In collaboration with parents/guardians, Guidance Counsellors, Special Education teachers, subject teachers, and peers, students will develop an Individual Pathways Plan (IPP). They will make decisions, set goals and develop and implement the steps needed to successfully complete secondary school and proceed to their initial post-secondary destination.



Apprenticeship

Post-secondary Education Pathway

**Gain 85% of your training on the job.
Spend 15% of your time in the classroom.**



Apprenticeship is a practical method of learning, providing hands-on training in over 144 skilled trades.

Apprentices are paid while gaining work experience and wages increase with skill level.

How long does an Apprenticeship take?

Becoming a certified tradesperson requires a combination of on-the-job training and in-school training done at a local college or training centre. Training lasts 3 to 5 years depending on the trade or occupation.



Apprenticeship sectors

include: Construction, Industrial, Motive Power and Service.



Apprenticeship leads to:

Apprenticeships give you the skills you need to pursue careers such as: carpenters, chefs, horticulturists, information technologists, educational assistants and hairstylists.

Consider an Apprenticeship if:

- You enjoy hands-on learning and have good mechanical and spatial abilities.
- You enjoy fixing things, assembling and disassembling structures.
- You are able to solve problems, determine why something does not work and how it can be done better.
- You are interested in earning while you learn.



NOTE: Take OYAP in high school to prepare for Apprenticeship post-secondary education (see page 22).

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON APPRENTICESHIP, VISIT:

<https://www.oyappajo.com>

<https://www.myblueprint.ca/haltoncatholic>

<https://www.skilledtradesontario.ca>

<https://www.apprenticesearch.com>

<https://www.haltonpathways.ca/skilled-trades>

<https://www.careersintrades.ca>

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/start-apprenticeship>

<https://www.ontariocolleges.ca>

College

Post-secondary Education Pathway

College programs provide an effective combination of practical skills and theoretical learning. College programs are interactive and project based to facilitate quality learning.

College leads to:

College programs give you the skills you need to pursue a variety of careers such as: journalists, police officers, dental hygienists, website technicians, paralegals and chemical technologists.

How long does College take?

Colleges have certificate, diploma, advanced diploma, degree, and joint college/university programs that take 1 to 4 years to complete. Cooperative education programs may also be offered which provide paid work experience related to a field of study.

Consider College if:

- You find success in hands-on learning.
- You are looking to get in, get out, and get to work, as most college programs are a shorter term.
- You enjoy smaller classes and the personal approach to instruction.
- You have specific career goals that require a college education.
- You are interested in developing technical and occupational skills required for your chosen career area.

Also consider:

- Entrance requirements
- Tuition costs
- Location
- Experience
- Job prospects



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON COLLEGE, VISIT:

<https://www.ontariocolleges.ca>

<https://www.gotocollege.ca>

<https://www.tcu.gov.on.ca>

<https://www.haltonpathways.ca>

<https://www.myblueprint.ca/haltoncatholic>

<https://www.transitionresourceguide.ca>

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/osap-ontario-student-assistance-program>



Community

Pathway

From the Life Skills Program, students transition to adult life incorporating activities and pastimes chosen to reflect their interests, skills and needs.

Project SEARCH, GROW Program (Thomas Merton), Supported Independent Living, Community Integration through Co-operative Education (CICE).

The Life Skills Program leads to adult life that can include participation in:

Making plans for this Pathway?

- **Pathway 1 (Support at Home):** Respite, Home and Community Care Services, Residential Care.
- **Pathway 2 (Community Involvement) and Pathway 3 (Day Programs):** Respite, Community Participation Supports, Residential Care, Day Programs.
- **Pathway 4 (Supported Employment) and Pathway 5 (CICE/Competitive Employment):** Employments Supports, Employment Services (Centre for Skills Development), Moving Forward Day Program, Volunteer, Competitive Employment,

- Students may participate in the Life Skills Program until June of the calendar year in which they turn 21 years of age.
- Transition Plans are reviewed and updated yearly as part of the IEP process.
- Students, parents/guardians, special education teachers, and community support agencies work together to create a plan.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON COMMUNITY, VISIT:

<https://www.dsontario.ca>

<https://www.communitylivingontario.ca>

University

Post-secondary Education Pathway

University offers a broad comprehensive education in general areas (sciences, humanities and business).

University leads to:

University programs give you the skills you need to pursue careers such as: engineers, musicians, financial analysts, registered nurses.

How long does University take?

- Students in university obtain bachelor degrees, masters degrees, and doctorate degrees, ranging from 3 to 10 years of study.
- Universities offer Cooperative Education programs offering a paid work experience related to a field of study.

Consider University if:

- You enjoy abstract concepts associated with course material and academic or theoretical learning.
- You enjoy independent, self-directed learning.
- You have specific career goals in mind that require a university education.

Also consider:

- Entrance requirements
- Tuition costs
- Location
- Experience
- Job prospects
- Program length



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON UNIVERSITY, VISIT:

<https://www.ontariouniversitiesinfo.ca>

<https://www.ouac.on.ca>

<https://www.myblueprint.ca/haltoncatholic>

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/osap-ontario-student-assistance-program>

<https://www.transitionresourceguide.ca>

<https://www.oua.ca>



Work

Pathway



A wide variety of careers require a secondary school diploma, followed by specific on-the-job training. Examples of entry-level positions from secondary school include: real estate agents, animal care workers, bank tellers, photographers, website designers and construction labourers.

Some students who choose direct entry into work may later pursue an Apprenticeship, College and/or University.

Consider direct entry into the Workplace if:

- You have been successful in Workplace pathway courses and wish to explore workplace opportunities.
- You have developed practical workplace skills that have prepared you for a specific career without needing to pursue an Apprenticeship, College or University first.
- You want to gain workplace experience before continuing post-secondary education.
- You have specific career goals in mind that allow you to go directly to the workplace for on-the-job training.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON DIRECT ENTRY INTO THE WORKPLACE, VISIT:

<https://www.jobbank.gc.ca>

<https://www.myblueprint.ca/haltoncatholic>

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/employment-ontario>

<https://www.halton.ca/For-Residents/Employment-and-Financial-Assistance>

<https://www.centreforskills.ca>

Making Choices for **Your Future**

Specialty Pathways Programs

The Halton Catholic District School Board offers a wide variety of programs and activities to support education and career/life exploration. These activities give the students an opportunity to connect what they learn in school with the world beyond school. Experiential learning is particularly helpful in developing self-knowledge and awareness of opportunities. The majority of the programs noted are for students in Grade 11 or Grade 12.

NOVEMBER

TAKE OUR KIDS TO WORK DAY

Grade 9 students step into their future for a day and get a glimpse into the working world. Students spend the day in the workplace of a parent/guardian, relative, friend, or volunteer host, where they experience and learn about the world of work.



SPECIALIST HIGH SKILLS MAJOR (SHSM)

SHSM students focus their Grade 11 and Grade 12 education on a career path in a chosen sector. Students will meet the requirements of their OSSD by taking courses related to their sector, participating in a Cooperative Education experience and develop skills through industry recognized certifications. Successful students receive a SHSM red seal on their diploma and gain important skills on the job with employers.

Visit: <https://www.haltonpathways.ca/>



COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

Cooperative education is a learning partnership that provides senior students with valuable work experience while earning secondary credits. Co-op is a great way to try out a career and gain valuable skills and experience in a field that interests you.

ONTARIO YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM (OYAP)

OYAP is a school-to-work program. Students gain valuable skills and experience in one of Ontario's 144 skilled trades while taking a Cooperative Education course. Through OYAP, students may have the opportunity to start their Apprenticeship while in high school.

Visit: <https://www.oyappajo.com>

Visit: <https://www.haltonpathways.ca/oyap>



This Employment Ontario program is funded by the Government of Ontario.

Planning & Getting Ready for **Secondary School**

Things you can do in the summer **before** Grade 9

START YOUR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT HOURS

40

HOURS

The summer leading up to Grade 9 is an excellent time to start accumulating hours towards the 40 you must have to graduate with an OSSD.

Community involvement hours are important learning opportunities for students to explore their responsibility to the well-being of the community, and support people and projects that promote the common good. Students will also develop skills and explore their interests.



HOW TO DOCUMENT AND SUBMIT YOUR HOURS

- ✓ Students should pick up a Community Service form from their Guidance Office.
- ✓ This form is filled out and signed by the community service sponsor, and then returned to the Guidance Office.
- ✓ Keep in mind, a letter from the sponsor, documenting the community service experience, may be required.



REMEMBER!

Post-secondary scholarships often consider extracurricular and community involvement.

OTHER HELPFUL HINTS...

- ✓ Purchase your uniform before September.
- ✓ Plan your travel to and from school in advance.

ONCE SCHOOL STARTS:

- ✓ Get involved in activities or clubs that interest you.
- ✓ Develop good study habits and organizational skills.
- ✓ Attend class and complete assignments on time.

Your Support System

There are a number of programs and people to help you along the journey.

Entering secondary school is an important milestone in a students' life. Supports within the school help students to feel connected. Every student is assigned a guidance counsellor and administrator who are available to answer concerns and questions. There are also other caring adults - subject teachers, student success teachers, special education teachers, school chaplaincy leaders, child and youth counsellors, social workers, educational assistants, and coaches.



PARENTS/GUARDIANS/CAREGIVERS

Your family/caregiver plays an essential role in the transition to secondary school and is encouraged to remain involved in all aspects of your education.



TEACHERS

Teachers are role models and sources of valuable information for many students. They play an important role in developing student awareness of various career paths.



THE CHAPLAINCY LEADER

The Chaplaincy Leader provides opportunities to experience the risen Lord by sharing with students and staff in liturgical celebrations, retreats, social action, small faith communities, support groups and walking with individuals and groups on their faith journey.



ADMINISTRATORS PRINCIPALS/VICE PRINCIPALS

Administrators, Principals and Vice Principals are responsible for ensuring safe and secure schools. They are available to assist students and families/caregivers with concerns.



GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS

Guidance Counsellors are available to assist students with planning their educational pathways, personal career plans and course selections. They are also available to assist students with personal concerns and guide them to other professionals for specific assistance.



ML MONITOR TEACHER

The Multilingual Monitor Teacher supports newcomer students in the ESL/ELD programs with course work, course selection and liaises with classroom teachers, administration and guidance to support student success.



SOCIAL WORKER

School social workers provide service, on an urgent basis, to students, families/caregivers and schools in situations of risk.



SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

Special Education Teachers support the implementation of Individual Education Plans (IEP). They conduct diagnostic assessments, directly support students, teach learning strategy and alternative courses, and work with subject teachers to deliver accommodations and modifications.



STUDENT SUCCESS TEACHERS

The Student Success Teachers are an additional support to students who are struggling at school and who may be thinking of leaving school early. They work with students to help them be more successful and stay in school.

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Good mental health is something we all want for ourselves, our friends, our family and others in our community. Just like we care for our physical health, there are things we need to do to stay mentally healthy.

ABOUT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Just like physical health, our mental health requires attention and activity. Everyone's mental health changes now and then and it is important to inform yourself on how to support your own well-being.

STAYING WELL

We often take our mental health for granted. Learn some strategies for caring for your mental health, in good times and not-so-good times.

SIGNS TO WATCH FOR

There are times we may need more support to help us maintain our mental health. Learn the signs that you or a friend may need help.

GET HELP EARLY

All of us experience problems with our mental health from time to time. When you think you need help, you need to know where to turn. Reach out early, and get the help you need.

HELP A FRIEND

We're all in this together. Find out what you can do to support your friends and classmates.

UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Maintaining a positive outlook, building healthy relationships and making responsible decisions are social and emotional skills that help us to thrive. Social-emotional learning is the process of learning and practicing these skills.



**School
Mental Health
Ontario**

SMHO-SMSO.ca

We work together with Ontario school districts to support student mental health

VISIT:

<https://www.hcdsb.org/students/mental-health-well-being/>

Terms & Definitions

Compulsory Course - Refers to a specific course that students must take which fulfills part of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or the Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC) requirements.

Course Calendar - Course calendars are available in myBlueprint. The calendar describes courses and diploma requirements.

Credit - A credit is what you earn after successfully completing a course with a minimum of 50%. A one-credit course is scheduled for a minimum of 110 hours.

Credit Recovery Programs - Credit Recovery may be offered to a student who has been unsuccessful in demonstrating all of the curriculum expectation in a specific course.

Credit Rescue - Credit Rescue may be offered to a student who is at risk of not successfully completing the course expectations for a current course.

Elective Courses - Students will select courses that are of specific interest to them and will count towards the OSSD/OSSC requirements.

Individual Education Plan (IEP) - IEP is a written working document describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student, based on a thorough assessment of the student's strengths and needs.

Individual Pathways Plan (IPP) - Throughout your school years, students will explore and assess their opportunities, goals and plans for their future careers. Individual Pathways Plans (IPP) will be saved online in myBlueprint.

Prerequisite - A prerequisite course is a course that you must pass before moving on to the next level. For example, you must pass Grade 10 Applied English before you take Grade 11 College English.

Semester - The school year is divided into two semesters; September - January & February - June. A student will take 4 courses in each semester.

Schedule - You will receive a schedule that will indicate the courses you take, the period number, the room number and your teacher's name.

FAQ's

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Where do you buy a uniform?

Visit: www.hcdsb.org/schools/school-uniforms/

2. How do you get to school? The following website will provide information about transportation eligibility, www.haltonbus.ca

3. Can I complete my 40 hours community involvement at any time? Students may start accumulating community involvement hours in the summer before entering Grade 9. It is recommended that every student completes a minimum of 10 hours per school year.

4. Can course types be changed during or after Grade 9? Yes. Course types can be changed in consultation with teacher, parent/guardian and guidance teacher and is dependent upon availability.

5. Do all compulsory courses have to be taken from the same pathway (academic, applied, locally developed, college, university, workplace)? No, students may take courses from different pathways. They are encouraged to take courses that best suit their interests, academic ability, goals and learning styles.

6. How do you get involved in a club or team? School activities are communicated to students in a variety of ways. Listen and look for school announcements for details about getting involved. Many clubs and sports begin the first week of school.

7. Where do you go to get important dates and information about your secondary school such as report cards, PD days, parent/guardian nights, exam schedule, student activities?

Check the school's website and watch for emails from the school. Parents/guardians must ensure that the school has their current email address.

8. How do you get your locker and schedule? You will receive your timetable and locker information in the late summer, before Grade 9.

9. What if you can't find a class or open your locker?

Senior student leaders will be available to answer any questions you have as you adjust to secondary school.

Making Choices for **Your Future**

Begin planning your own Individual Pathways Plan (IPP) by going to: <https://www.myblueprint.ca/haltoncatholic>



**HALTON
CATHOLIC** 
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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www.hcdsb.org

"Remember that you are never alone, Christ is with you on your journey every day of your lives." St. John Paul II