

*St. Dominic Savio
Catholic Elementary
School*

Student Agenda 2019-2020

3 Westforest Trail.
Kitchener, ON N2N 3A6
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<https://stdominic.wcdsb.ca/>

***Learning, growing and transforming the world together as faithful
Disciples of the Risen Lord.***

This Agenda Belongs to:

Name: _____

Grade: _____ Teacher: _____

I have read and understood the contents of the St. Dominic Savio CES Student Handbook. I will live up to the expectations outlined for me. It is my responsibility to know the rules of the school.

Student's Signature: _____

I/We have read and understood the contents of the St. Dominic CES Student Handbook.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

I/We have signed up for Newswire and Cash On-Line so that we receive all notifications.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____



School Year Calendar

The following are the important dates for the 2019 – 2020 school year, including days when the school is closed.

Tuesday, September 3	First Day of School
Friday, September 20	Professional Activity Day
Monday, October 14	Thanksgiving
Friday, October 25	Professional Activity Day
Friday, November 15	Professional Activity Day
Friday, December 6	Professional Activity Day
Monday, December 23 – Friday, January 3	Christmas Holidays
Friday, January 24	Professional Activity Day
Monday, February 17	Family Day
Monday, March 16 – Friday, March 20	March Break
Friday, April 3	Professional Activity Day
Friday, April 10 Monday, April 13	Good Friday Easter Monday
Monday, May 18	Victoria Day
Friday, May 29	Professional Activity Day
Friday, June 26	Last Day of School

School Hours

- 9:15 -- Classes begin
- 10:25 - 10:40 -- Morning recess
- 12:00 - 1:00 -- Lunch break
- 2:20 - 2:35 -- Afternoon recess
- 3:45 – Dismissal

Stay Informed!

- Agenda / Communication Bag
- D2L Class Website (as provided by your child's teacher)
- EnCOMPASS Parent Portal:
<https://wcdsb.compassforsuccess.ca/portal/parent/index.do>
- Google Classroom (as provided by your child's teacher)
- Parent Toolkit
- School Cash Online: <https://wcdsb.schoolcashionline.com/>
- School Council: <https://stdominic.wcdsb.ca/school-council/>
- School Sign
- School Website: <https://stdominic.wcdsb.ca/>
- Staff e-mail: firstname.lastname@wcdsb.ca
- Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region (STSWR):
www.stswr.ca
- Teacher Contact: <https://stdominic.wcdsb.ca/staff-list/>
- Twitter feed [@wcdsbStDominic](https://twitter.com/wcdsbStDominic)
- WCDSB Website – <https://www.wcdsb.ca/>

Subscribe to:

- St. Dominic Savio Newswire:
<https://stdominic.wcdsb.ca/newswire-subscribe/>
- WCDSB Newswire: <https://www.wcdsb.ca/>

Overview of Success at St. Dominic:

Welcome to St. Dominic. We are committed to making your child's years at school productive and enjoyable. There are many responsibilities which students will be expected to accept as a student at St. Dominic. To help students make responsible choices at school, their teachers will teach what is expected while they are at school. As a staff, we promote and try our best to model the *Golden Rule*, "Do unto Others as you would have them Do unto You". Our code of conduct is based on **clear expectations, effective teaching of desired behaviours, and consistent support from all adults in the building.**

Success at St. Dominic will be achieved in three ways:

1. Implementing the St. Dominic Code of Conduct;
2. Clear Behaviour Routines including: lining up, respectful behaviour, lunchroom expectations, washroom / fountain procedures, gym procedures, recess/snack procedures, greeting adults, etc.;
3. Communication of our Code of Conduct to all partners via this document; announcements; assemblies; daily interactions and other forms of communication.

Why?

- To ensure a safe and secure school for staff, volunteers, guests, and, most importantly, our students;
- To promote and model a positive, proactive environment;
- To maximize engaged learning time;
- To have clear, consistent, achievable, and high expectations for our school;
- To minimize conflict, aggression, and the need for punishment;
- To empower our students to make good choices, be successful, and become contributing members of our society.

Catholic education views human life as an integration of body, mind, and spirit. Rooted in this vision, Catholic education fosters the search for knowledge as a lifelong spiritual and academic quest. The expectations of the Catholic learning community are described not only in terms of knowledge and skills but also in terms of values, attributes, and actions. By the time our students graduate, they are expected to be...

- ✓ A Discerning Believer Formed in the Catholic Faith Community
- ✓ A Caring Family Member
- ✓ An Effective Communicator
- ✓ A Collaborative Contributor
- ✓ A Responsible Citizen
- ✓ A Reflective and Creative Thinker
- ✓ A Self-Directed, Responsible, Life Long Learner

St. Dominic School Code of Behaviour:

At St. Dominic Savio Catholic Elementary school, we have developed a positive Code of Conduct. Our plan will reduce the amount of time spent on classroom management issues, focus the school on "bell to bell" teaching, and improve learning and achievement for all our

students. All students deserve an education of the highest calibre in a friendly, safe Christian environment. We will demonstrate that all staff members share the same high expectations, and that these expectations extend beyond the classroom: into the halls, the yard, and the community. It is reasonable to expect that teachers will have individualized routines within their classrooms such as homework procedures, reward systems, washroom, movement, entering and exiting etc. This code of conduct facilitates "school discipline". By adhering to the following basic principles, we will achieve a high level of clarity, consistency, and success.

Our Discipline Beliefs

We believe that our school code of conduct represents our highest aspirations for all our students. We believe that as a staff we see discipline as positive and productive, not negative and punitive. Our staff members act as guides and facilitators rather than referees.

We believe that students come to St. Dominic to learn and achieve to their fullest potential, and in times of trouble, we do whenever possible, keep the emphasis on learning rather than punishment. We believe the word discipline is an umbrella for positive skill development.

We believe that the more students are engaged in high level, meaningful, developmentally appropriate, and challenging tasks, the more apt they are to be positive learners who devote their energies toward learning and achieving, and not toward making poor choices regarding their behaviour.

We believe that school discipline creates a 'culture of the school', which is distinct from the culture on the street, in students' homes, and the media. We all behave with specific expectations in mind when we visit a library, hospital, and a Church. St. Dominic School is the same.

We believe that St. Dominic School is "A Caring, Catholic community, Committed to Learning and Growing Together." As a caring community, we will always strive to have our students realize that physical and verbal violence is not a socially acceptable method of behaviour. Our entire staff will promote social skills in our students that will foster a positive learning environment, free from physical or emotional intimidation.

We believe that, for students to achieve the high expectations we have set for school discipline, they should not only be told of the school and classroom rules, but they need time to practice and reinforce the skills as well. It's about following procedures and routines automatically so students can save their most important thinking for what matters the most at school: the challenging learning tasks in the classroom.

Discipline isn't what we do when students misbehave; It's what we do so they won't.

Classroom teachers have developed specific routines with respect to a variety of school and classroom procedures. These procedures include, but are not limited to procedures for: lining up outside when the bell rings, respectful behaviour, lunchtime behaviour, going to the washroom / getting a drink, gym, recess/snack times, greeting of adults, and especially dealing with visitors to our school. The expectations for these procedures were designed to support student

safety and will be consistently applied by all staff. We have developed a school plan to assist with these routines called 'Manners Matter'.

We believe that all students strive for independence, and, as a staff, we strive to foster and develop this independence in a structured, safe, caring, and supervised environment. This is part of the culture of St. Dominic.

We believe that, as a St. Dominic staff, we not only teach classroom, school, and yard rules, but also the language of respect: respectful body language; respectful facial expressions; language that is effective, assertive, and respectful; respectful tone of voice; respectful self-talk; disagreeing respectfully; using words to solve problems and conflicts; presenting and supporting differing points of view; and honouring and recognizing others. We do so through classroom lessons, religion programs, anti-bullying framework (IMAGINE), classroom meetings, guest speakers, assemblies, liturgies. We model respectful behaviour.

We believe that the behaviour of students should improve as they get older. Therefore, we expect our eldest students to not only be the best-behaved students in the school, but also to be role models to each other and to the younger students as well. There are many ways our older students can develop their leadership and maturity. Some of these ways may include:

- Be a part of morning announcements
- Be an office helper
- Be a kindergarten helper
- Be a bus buddy
- Greet visitors to the school
- Be a playground buddy – teach social skills to younger students, be part of a Circle of Friends
- Write thank you notes to people who help the school
- Be a member of Student Parliament
- Set up audio visual equipment around the school; help set up for Liturgies & assemblies
- Provide orientation for new students
- School wide special days: Carnivals, Pancake Day, Dances, Mission Day...
- Set a good example – be a role model
- Use excellent manners
- Respect others
- Respect yourself
- Respect our environment – pick up / clean up
- Be courteous and polite
- Make sure everyone is treated fairly. Stand up for those who aren't.
- Identify and resolve issues at school
- Help other students with their work (book buddies, tutors...)

Interventions

We believe that students learn in different ways and at different rates. Because the goal of school discipline is always about learning, the interventions used for inappropriate behaviour depend upon the individual student. Many students may just need a reminder that they have broken a rule and be given the opportunity to demonstrate how they can uphold the rule in the future. Some students may require a more detailed plan for success. Staff always endeavours to consider the individual student and the circumstances, including mitigating factors (age of the student, cognitive ability of the student, mental health needs of the student...). Staff also considers the nature and severity of the incident and the impact of the incident on the climate of the school. Ensuring that St. Dominic School is a safe place to learn and grow for all students is our number one goal. To assist the student get back on track we may:

- Interview with the student(s)
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Recess/lunch in an alternate location
- Reflections
- Detention
- Contact with parents
- Restorative Justice practices
- Payment for damages / restitution
- Removal from special activities
- In-school suspension with a re-entry plan
- Out of school suspension with a re-entry plan
- Expulsion
- Involvement with support agencies, police
- Referral to In School Team
- Referral to Collaborative Team – Child and Youth Worker, Social Worker
- Referral to community supports i.e. counselling
- Completion of Bill 157, "Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form" which is filed in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR)

Supporting Discipline through Positive Relationships - Bullying

At St. Dominic, we believe that it is through our partnerships (students, parents and staff) that we will ensure success for our students.

Staff

- Foster positive relationships with students by encouraging mutual respect
- Watch for signs of bullying and intervening when it happens
- Respond quickly and supportively to reports of bullying or other behaviour
- Taking parent and student concerns about incidents and bullying seriously
- Progressive Discipline consequences for inappropriate behaviours
 - Provide a safe environment for students who report bullying
 - Model positive ways of getting along with others

Students

- Treat each other respectfully
- Refuse to bully others
- Refuse to let others be bullied
- Do not stand by as other students are teased or bullied
- Include everyone in play, especially those who are often left out
- Report bullying to a trusted adult

Parents

- Model positive ways of getting along with others (i.e. during a disagreement)
- Help their son/daughter find ways to express anger that do not involve hurting others physically or emotionally
- Teach problem solving skills
- Inform school staff if their child tells them about a bullying incident
- Support the schools bullying-prevention efforts
- Help their son/daughter understand the value of accepting and celebrating individual differences
- Be alert to signs their child is being bullied or may be bullying others

When evidence arises of student use, possession or trafficking of drugs (including alcohol) or other illegal substances and/or weapons, the student may be suspended or expelled from the school and all schools under the jurisdiction of this School Board. Please refer to Bill 212 for further information. Assault, racial incidents, wilful damage to school property, repeated acts of intimidation/bullying, and theft will result in immediate suspension. Professional judgement will be used in this process. Issues of competence, frequency, and deliberateness will be considered, along with mitigating circumstances.

Mobile Technology Devices:

Students are only allowed to use mobile technology devices when directed by a staff member for the purposes of learning. **Students are not allowed to use their mobile technology devices on school premises or at school related events.** Mobile technology devices will be confiscated from anyone violating this rule. The school is not responsible for damaged, lost or stolen items.

Valuable Personal Items:

Students are strongly discouraged from bringing valuable belongings to school (e.g. I-Pods, electronic games and toys). Students are not to use / play with these items during class time. If they do so, they will be confiscated from the student. The school is not responsible for damaged, lost or stolen items.

Student Dress:

We expect that all students will dress in clean, neat and practical clothing. Good judgement and respect for self and others is the criterion for acceptable dress. This is particularly true during the warm weather months. The Dress Code is in effect for class trips, unless instructed differently.

Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately in the winter months. This includes boots, mitts, hats, etc. **Students must always be wearing some sort of footwear inside and outside school.** Students must have shoes for inside other than those worn outside during the winter.

Students must wear running shoes to participate in physical education.

While the selection of clothing worn at school is the responsibility of parents and student, the school reserves the right of final decision concerning dress and appearance.

The following are included as examples of inappropriate student dress:

- Sexually explicit or revealing clothing;
- Clothing with wording or graphics which are racist, sexist, profane or demeaning to another person or towards the school;
- Clothing with wording or graphics which advocate violence;
- Clothing with wording or graphics which promote alcohol or illicit drugs;
- Clothing which is recognized to be associated with gang membership;
- Clothing that exposes the midriff, spaghetti straps, strapless tops and low-cut necklines;
- No undergarments of any kind (bra straps, boxers etc.) are to be showing;
- Skirts or shorts must be at least mid-thigh in length;
- Caps and hats are to be removed when students enter the building (this signals it is time to change from outside behaviour to inside behaviour)

If a student comes to school wearing clothing which fits into one of the categories listed above, the school may:

- Exclude the student from regular school activities until the situation can be rectified (e.g. T-shirt turned inside out for the remainder of the school day, wearing a school shirt, etc.);
- Contact parents and request replacement clothing if the problem cannot be rectified in the above manner;
- Take further action as appropriate if there is consistent violation by a student regarding inappropriate student dress.

Due to the constantly changing variety of apparel style, the Principal and staff have the authority to determine if a clothing item not specifically covered in this dress code is, in fact appropriate for school attire.

Student Behaviour on the Bus:

It is the responsibility of each student to follow bus safety procedures. ***Remember, riding the bus is a privilege-not a right.*** Students who consistently disregard the bus rules put everyone's safety at risk and they will receive a bus suspension.

Parents are asked to review these expectations with their children.

Students will:

- ONLY ride the bus to which they are assigned
- Board the bus in a single line, without pushing or shoving
- Sit where directed by the driver
- Remain seated until the end of the trip
- Talk quietly
- Keep arms and head inside the window
- Cross the street in front of the bus and wait for the driver to signal before crossing
- Leave the bus at the regular stop unless permission is granted by the principal upon a request from the parent/guardian

Bicycles / Skateboards / Scooters:

Students who ride bicycles/skateboards/scooters to school are to observe the following:

- They must be walked while on school property and while crossing at the crosswalks
- Students are to lock their bicycles in the racks

- Students are to wear approved safety helmets

Pets:

Dogs and other pets should be left at home and walked off school property.

Playground Safety:

Students are welcome to bring sports equipment for personal use during recess/lunch hour. Please label all items clearly.

Certain items can however, be considered unsafe for use on the school yard and are therefore not allowed: roller blades, hockey sticks, and hard balls. Scooters/skateboards cannot be ridden at recess.

To ensure student safety, the students must remain in visible locations while on the yard (e.g. they cannot play behind portables).

All students must listen to and show respect for all staff and yard supervisors.

Progressive Discipline:

To meet the goal of creating a safe, caring, and accepting school environment, the Waterloo Catholic District School Board supports the use of positive practices as well as consequences for inappropriate behaviour, including progressive discipline, which includes suspension and expulsion where necessary. The Board considers homophobia, gender based violence, and harassment based on sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, colour, ethnicity, culture, citizenship, ancestry, origin, religion, creed, family status, socio-economic status, disability and/or any immutable characteristic or ground protected by the *Human Rights Code*, as well as inappropriate sexual behaviour unacceptable and supports the use of positive practices to prevent such behaviour. The Board does not support discipline measures that are solely punitive or the use of exclusion as a disciplinary measure.

Positive Practices

To promote and support appropriate and positive pupil behaviours that contribute to creating and sustaining safe, comforting and accepting learning and teaching environments that encourage and support students to reach their full potential, the Board supports the use of positive practices for: (1) prevention, and (2) positive behaviour management.

Positive Practices may (but are not limited to) include:

- Student Leadership
- Character education
- Student success strategies
- Promoting healthy relationships and healthy lifestyles
- Program modifications and accommodations

The Board recognizes that, in some circumstances, positive practices might not be effective or sufficient to address inappropriate pupil behaviour. In such circumstances, the Board supports the use of consequences.

Progressive Discipline Consequences

Progressive discipline may include early and/or ongoing intervention strategies and include a range of interventions, supports and consequences when inappropriate behaviours have occurred, with a focus on improving behaviour, such as one or more of the following:

- Meeting with the pupil's parent(s)/guardian(s), pupil and principal;
- Referral to a community agency for counselling;
- Relocation to an alternate learning environment;
- Withdrawal of privileges or a warning;
- Increased supervision and structure;
- Written plan for appropriate future behaviour;
- Apology – "make it right";
- Restorative Justice practices;
- Alternate recess / alternate procedures;
- School service

Progressive discipline is most effective when dialogue between the school and home regarding student achievement, behaviour and expectations is open, courteous and focused on student success. When addressing inappropriate behaviour, it is important to consider the particular pupil and circumstances, including any mitigating factors, the nature and severity of the behaviour, and the impact on school climate.

All school staff has a responsibility to report to the Principal incidents that can lead to suspension or expulsion. Principals must contact the parents of victims of these types of incidents.

All school staff who works directly with students must respond to incidents that have a negative impact on the school climate.

Responding may include asking a student to stop behaviour, naming the behaviour and explaining why it is inappropriate/disrespectful and asking the student for a change in behaviour.

This is our Code of Conduct. We believe that our written Code, along with complete staff support, clear and consistent routines, modelled with training opportunities, and appropriate behaviour interventions (when required), will do what our Code of Conduct was written to do, i.e., provide positive support and modelling for our students so that they can be safe and successful in the wonderful learning environment of St. Dominic Savio Catholic Elementary School.

This is what we believe!

School Parish Community:

St. Dominic is a member of St. Mark Catholic Parish.

55 Driftwood Drive
Kitchener, Ontario N2N 3A2
519 – 571 – 9200

School Masses are celebrated throughout the school year. Sacraments celebrated with students include Reconciliation, Eucharist, First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

Religious Instruction:

Religion is taught formally in all classrooms and is also integrated into all aspects of our children's educational experience. All students participate in religious and family life instruction and celebrations.

A Residential Retreat Program is available to our Grade 8 students.

Fire Drills:

To help our students become familiar with proper evacuation procedures, school and fire department officials conduct fire drills throughout the school year. During these drills, students are directed by the teachers, to leave the school in an orderly and quiet manner, using their designated exit. The exit signs are posted in each room and students are informed of these. Any other individuals who are in the building must also evacuate the premises when the alarm sounds.

Lock Down Protocol:

The purpose of a lock down is to safely confine all students and staff from potentially dangerous intruders. A lock down will almost always be initiated by police, but, in some situations may be initiated by the principal or staff member.

St. Dominic School has an established procedure which is updated and shared with all staff. At least twice a year, the school community practices the lock down procedure.

Extreme Weather:

As a school community, we practice Extreme Weather / Tornado drills.

Reporting Student Progress:

Under the provincial reporting system there are two formal reporting periods for the Grade 1-8 pupils: winter and spring. In November, a progress report will be completed for students and interviews will be scheduled. Report cards will be sent home in February and in June. For each reporting period the parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive a copy of the report card, the original will be placed in the student's OSR, along with the parent/guardian comment sheet which parent(s)/guardian(s) are requested to sign and return to the school.

All parent(s)/guardian(s) are invited and encouraged to attend interviews/conferences in November. Parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or teachers may request interviews at any time.

Reporting for Junior Kindergarten will involve two Observation times, one in November and one in February. A written report is made in June. In Senior Kindergarten, a report will involve an interview in December and a written report in the winter and spring terms.

Newsletters:

Parents / Guardians are encouraged to go to the school website (<https://stdominic.wcdsb.ca/>) and register for **NewsWire**. Important bulletins and current events will be posted directly to the website and a notification will be sent to you via email.

Individual teachers also prepare monthly classroom bulletins or calendars and/or provide information electronically.

Parking Lot Safety:

If you must park your car you can only do so on school property in the designated visitor spaces. All parents / guardians should use caution when driving in any of the school areas (e.g. parking lot, kiss and drop) as children are walking in these areas.

At no time should any vehicle be parked in the bus drop off and pick up zone at the front of the school. If you do so, your car may be ticketed.

You may drop your child off at school in the “kiss and drop” area (off of Victoria Street). This area is intended for quick stops, **not for parking.**

We appreciate that we have more families wishing to park their cars than can be accommodated. We encourage families to walk to and from school to alleviate the parking congestion. We also encourage older siblings to wait with younger siblings to allow for delayed pick-up.

Extra-Curricular Activities:

At St. Dominic we believe that students who participate in extracurricular activities enhance their enjoyment of school and are taught the lifelong skills of team building, responsibility and initiative.

- Inter-school athletics are an enrichment of our school physical education program. Students will try out for teams and the coach(s) of that particular activity will make all decisions as to who makes the team. The coach’s decision is final and will not be overturned by anyone, including the principal
- When a child accepts a position on a team, he/she will sign, along with his/her parents, a commitment to participate in all activities associated with the team as determined by the coach
- The coach will set the number of games or practices a team member can miss before forfeiting his/her position on the team. A note from a parent/guardian will be required prior to a student being absent from a game or practice
- If a student loses his/her place on a team or quits after signing the commitment form, they will not be allowed to participate in the next activity at that level.

Lunch:

All children are welcome to stay for lunch, but if they live near the school and someone is at home, we encourage them to go home for a hot meal and a break from school.

- Students eat lunch from 12:00 – 12:20 p.m. Everyone must go outside at 12:20 p.m. unless the weather dictates otherwise (rain, extreme cold)
- Grace before meals is recited in the classroom before the children begin to eat
- Each child eats his/her lunch in the classroom
- It is the child’s responsibility to clean up after him/herself
- Please send nutritious and garbage less lunches whenever possible. Use reusable lunch bags, containers for sandwiches etc.
- Please complete the Lunch Arrangements form via School Cash Online

Lunch Expectations:

- Each student staying for lunch must eat at the table or desk designated by the teacher or lunch supervisor
- Students will be given the opportunity to use washroom facilities before being dismissed into the yard
- Proper table manners are to be used always
- Students are not allowed to take food or drinks into the yard during lunch hour and/or recess breaks

- Students do not have access to microwaves for warming food up
- Students do not have access to refrigerators for keeping food cold
- Students should bring necessary utensils from home

Leaving School Property at Lunch:

If a student regularly goes home at lunch, parents will complete a Lunch Arrangements form via School Cash Online.

Other students are permitted off school property at lunch time **only under the following circumstances:**

- If a parent/guardian is taking a student out at lunch time they are encouraged to give the classroom teacher a signed and dated note (or use the Student Agenda or Communications bag)
- Parents/guardians are asked to meet their child in the main office prior to leaving the school
 - Before your child can leave, you are asked to come to the main office and sign the “Student Sign In/Out” binder. Your son/daughter will then be called from class to meet you at the office.
- If a parent/guardian gives permission for a student who normally stays at school for lunch to leave school property during the lunch hour, the student must give the classroom teacher a signed and dated note. They will also require to sign the “Student Sign In/Out” binder upon leaving and returning to school.

Communication Guidelines for Parents/Guardians:

Parents, students and staff have a right to receive affirmation for what they are doing and the right to know when concerns arise. Communication must recognize the dignity of the individual. All people deserve respect, dignity, fair treatment and inclusion. As part of respecting dignity of the individual, the individual has a right to know firsthand of a concern from the individual who has the concern, not second-hand from someone else who has not been involved in the issue. The W.C.D.S.B. has put the following process in place:

STEP 1:

- Speak to the individual
- Issue resolved (if unresolved go to step 2)

STEP 2:

- Speak to the Principal
- **If you have not spoken to the individual, the Principal will ask you to do so**
- The Principal will involve the individual in the discussions
- The Principal may request, at any time in the process, that you put your concerns in writing
- The Principal may involve, at any time in the process, others who may be helpful in resolving the concern; support staff from the school board, employee group representatives, the local parish, community agencies
- You may contact your Trustee at any time. The Trustee will direct you to follow the process outlined above

Other School Related Concerns:

For all other school-related concerns/suggestions that do not involve taking the matter up first with a staff member, the communication should be directed to the school Principal. The effective use of these

communication guidelines by all involved will result in the fair and quick resolution of concerns.

St. Dominic School Council:

The school council includes parents, staff, community representation and the Principal.

Open Meetings are set approximately 6 times throughout the school year.

- Dates of meetings are advertised to the community on our school website (<https://stdominic.wcdsb.ca/school-council/>) as is the agenda and minutes
- Parents are encouraged to attend these open meetings

Responsibilities of the School Council:

Act as an advisory body with the purpose of enhancing student learning:

- School Code of Behaviour
- Curriculum and program goals and priorities
- The responses of the school or school board to achievement in provincial and board assessment programs
- School budget priorities, including local capital improvement plans
- School community communication strategies
- Extra-curricular activities in the school
- School-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational, and nutrition programs
- Community use of school facilities
- Local coordination of services for children and youth
- Development, implementation, and review of board policies at the local level
- School Councils are not forums to discuss teacher – student – parent issues

Parent Volunteers:

At St. Dominic, we want to encourage parent participation in the education of our children. Volunteers help us improve education by adding human resources to our community and volunteering also enhances the knowledge and skills of parents. In both cases, it is the students who receive the most benefits.

The whole school community benefits when schools integrate volunteer components into our programs. When the volunteers assisting in school activities also happen to be parents, they are, over time, better able to understand the teacher's role and what is expected of students. After working together, relationships between the school and parents can become enhanced because of the closer communication between the two. At St. Dominic, we welcome volunteers – we quite simply could not offer the number of special events without this support.

* Classroom Volunteers:

- Working with small groups or individuals, under the guidance of the teacher. We would not have you work directly with your own child

* All Star Reading Program:

- Volunteers read 1:1 with primary students for 20 – 30 minutes

* Strong Start (Letters, Sounds and Words Program):

- This is a 10 week early reading intervention program where trained volunteers work 1:1 with students in SK, Grade 1 or

Grade 2 to help them understand: letters, sounds and some initial words in print

- We also have a Strong Start program for our English as a Second Language Learners

* Nutrition for Learning Program

* Yearbook

* School Council:

- All parents are invited to attend and participate in school council activities

Field Trips/Special Events:

- All parents are invited and welcome to attend field trips, help with Picture Day, Pancake Day, Mission Day, fundraising activities etc. Letters home/School Cash Online posts will highlight the need for parent/guardian volunteers
- All volunteers in a school must sign a Volunteer Offence Declaration form.

Excursions

We are very fortunate to live in an area which has an interesting history and varied places of interest in our immediate surroundings. Due to budget constraints in the past years, students have been required to pay for all excursions. We ask for your co-operation and support in completing required permission forms for excursions promptly. Please notify the principal or your child's teacher should you require financial assistance for a field trip. Every student will be provided with the same opportunities and no one will be left behind due to financial reasons.

We ask for your co-operation and support in completing required permission forms for excursions promptly via School Cash Online. **Handwritten notes and verbal permission are not acceptable forms of permission for school excursions. If the form(s) is/are not returned, students will not be permitted to participate in the excursion.**

Attendance and Safe Arrival:

Students are expected to attend school regularly and be punctual. **Parents are required to phone the school, 519-576-5503, if a student will be absent or late. Messages may be left on the attendance line at any time.**

If a child has not arrived at school and a phone call or note has not been received, the administrative assistant will attempt to alert parents by telephone at home or at your place of employment if necessary. If parents cannot be contacted, we will contact the emergency number provided by the parents. Failing to reach parents or emergency contacts, the police will be notified and sent to the home.

If your child is going to be absent, please:

- Send a note to your child's teacher in advance when possible
- Phone the school and leave a message on the attendance line which operates at any time during the day or night
- State the date of the absence, your child's name, spell your child's last name, the teacher's name, and the reason for the absence. Unless you notify us otherwise, we will assume your child will be back the following day. At no time is the student to

report themselves absent for the school day or is the student to have someone less than 18 years of age report them absent

- Contact the school and speak with the administrative assistant

Extended periods of absence, for reasons other than health, require permission of the principal. More than 15 days of absence requires a special form to be completed, entitled "Intent to Be Absent Temporary Student Withdrawal".

Forms are available on the WCDSB website:

About Us >
Our Governance >
By-Laws, Policies and Administrative Procedures >
Board Policies and Administrative Procedures >
Administrative Policies & Procedures...
Communications & Report (APC) >
Elementary Attendance Procedures – APC009 > [APC009-04 Intent to be Absent Temporary Student Withdrawal](#)
Or obtain the form from the Main Office

Parents who remove their child from school are responsible for their child's education.

In cases of chronic truancy, the principal will involve the school board's attendance counsellor to assist the student. Persistent truancy is a serious matter and could result in court appearances and charges being laid.

Student Illness at School:

We do not have the facilities to accommodate children who are ill. Whenever a child is ill, we will request that someone come to pick the child up. We require an emergency contact number for every student.

Late for School:

School begins at 9:15 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Please make every effort to instil in your children the life skill of punctuality.

A child is late when they must enter the school through the front doors rather than with their class. When your child arrives late, he/she is to report to the office so that we are made aware of the child's arrival. Lates are noted in the daily attendance register and on report cards by teachers.

Chronic lateness will result in parents being contacted to help the student learn the habit of punctuality. Loss of school privileges may be the result for chronic lateness, and the school board social worker or attendance counsellor may be contacted. Chronic lates and absences greatly affect academic performance.

Leaving Early in the Day:

If you wish to withdraw your child during a day, please make you send a note to the classroom teacher. Before your child can leave, you are asked to come to the main office and sign the "Student Sign In/Out" binder. Your son/daughter will then be called from class to meet you at the office. *For your child to have the optimum learning experience, please keep sign-outs to a minimum.*

Leaving School Property:

In order to leave the school property during school hours, students must obtain written permission from their parent or guardian and give the note to their teacher.

Entering the School:

Classes will be expected to line up for entry purposes. Teachers will meet their classes at their designated entrances. We respectfully ask parents to drop off/pick up their child at the appropriate entranceway as opposed to coming in the school. **Parents are reminded that you need to sign in/out at the main office if you are entering the school between the hours of 9:15 a.m. and 3:45 p.m.**

Access to Students:

In order to ensure the safety and well being of the students and staff at St. Dominic, all parents, visitors, volunteers and outside groups are asked to report to the main office upon arriving at the school. Everyone will "sign in" and will be given an identification badge to wear that will indicate to staff and students that this person belongs in our school and has a meaningful purpose for his/her presence. When leaving, the visitor will return the identification tag and "sign out".

All school doors will be locked during school hours.

We respectfully ask parents/guardians to drop off/pick up your child at their appropriate school entranceway as opposed to coming into the school.

Unless there is a Court Order in a child's Ontario Student Record (OSR), both parents have access to the child and any verbal or written communication about the child. While we are happy to provide duplicate report cards, progress reports etc., we do require notice. Please call your child's teacher and/or the main office to let us know what you want. It can be difficult to duplicate interviews and it is appreciated if both parents can attend these together.

Transfer of Students:

If a student will no longer be attending our school due to a family move or transfer, please contact the school office in advance. All other records will be forwarded upon request from the Principal of the new school.

School Closures:

Severe weather conditions, disruption of essential services such as heat, hydro and water may cause us to close the school. All families are provided with the Emergency Dismissal Form via School Cash Online. We must have this information for all students.

Please become familiar with the [Inclement Weather Policy APH008](#)

About Us >
Our Governance >
By-Laws, Policies and Administrative Procedures >
Board Policies and Administrative Procedures >
Health and Safety (APH) >

If buses are cancelled in the morning, they are cancelled all day. Parents must drive students to school and pick them up at the end of the day, if schools are open.

Although schools are open and buses are running, if parents feel that conditions are not appropriate for their children to go to school; parents have the right to keep their children at home. If this is the case, please notify the school via the school's attendance line.

In case of [inclement weather](#), please check the Waterloo Catholic District School Board website @ www.wcdsb.ca or listen to the radio for information concerning the **Waterloo Catholic District School Board** school closings (570 CKGL- AM or 96.7 CHYM-FM). It is important to make an emergency plan with your children in case the school has to close prior to regular dismissal (i.e., leave a house key with a neighbour; child goes to neighbours and calls you from where they are; older brother or sister could be given the responsibility).

The safety of the children is always our priority. When the weather is bitterly cold (wind chill -20 or below) or pouring rain, we will keep the children inside during recess.

Medications / Illness:

The policy of the WCDSB prohibits the dispensing of medication to any student without the signed permission of the parent or guardian. Forms are available on the WCDSB website:

- About Us >
- Our Governance >
- By-Laws, Policies and Administrative Procedures > Health and Safety (APH) >
- [Medication Administration to Students Under the Age of 18 – APH004](#)
- Or obtain the form from the Main Office

Medication is kept at a designated site and the container must be clearly labelled with names (child, parent, doctor, phone numbers and directions).

If a student is well enough to attend school, he/she will be asked to go outside at recess time and participate in physical education classes unless a doctor's note is provided.

Allergies and Medical Conditions:

Some of our students have severe allergies to peanuts and nut products. We ask that you do not send food items with these products to school to ensure our student's safety.

Please complete and submit all necessary forms found on the WCDSB website:

- About Us >
- Our Governance >
- By-Laws, Policies and Administrative Procedures > Health and Safety (APH)
- [Anaphylaxis – APH005](#)
- [Asthma – Ryan's Law – APH028](#)
- [Diabetes Management Guidelines – APH015](#)
- [Epilepsy/Seizure Disorder – APH031](#)
- [Heart Conditions – APH032](#)
- [Medical Conditons – APH030](#)

Or obtain the form from the Main Office

- Please ensure that your child wears a medic alert bracelet

A picture of your child along with a description of their allergy(s) or medical condition will be shared with all staff, posted in classrooms and the staff room and carried by each staff member on yard duty.

If your child has a serious medical condition, please notify the main office. We will establish emergency protocols together.

Food and Nutrition Policy:

We continue to follow and implement the directions and expectations contained in the WCDSB Food and Nutrition policy. The purpose of this document is to ensure that a variety of nutritious foods and beverages are promoted and provided in our school. Highlights of the policy outline "healthy special food days", "healthy student rewards" and "healthy snacks that are appropriate during instructional time." The full policy can be found and read on the WCDSB website:

- About Us >
- Our Governance >
- By-Laws, Policies and Administrative Procedures > Health and Safety (APH) >
- [Elementary School Food and Nutrition – APH021](#)
- Or obtain the form from the Main Office

"When it comes to healthy eating habits, the influence of the school is second only to that of the parents and the home environment."

Parental Consents and Waivers:

During the school year students are often photographed, video taped or audio taped for a variety of reasons. This could include photos for yearbook, bulletin boards, displays, projects, etc., to allow us to use these photos and tapes, we request parental permission. The permission form will be sent to you via School Cash Online for completion.

Textbooks and Library Resources:

Students are provided with many resources at school. These materials are to be cared for and textbooks are to be returned at the end of the year or when requested by the teacher. Each class visits the library at least once a week for a resource exchange. All library books and resources are to be looked after and any that are misplaced or defaced must be replaced. When a resource has not been returned to the library a notice will be sent home with the student informing the parents. The notice includes the title of the resource and asks for parental assistance to return the resource. Information that can be taken to any book store to replace the resource will be provided. Students will not borrow another resource until the lost or damaged resource has been replaced.

Computer Privileges:

All students at St. Dominic from JK – Grade 8 have access to the computer(s) in their classroom and the Library. Students whose parents/guardians have completed "Acceptable Use of Computer Technology and Internet" via School Cash Online also have access to the Internet. All students are expected to adhere to the following rules:

- No food or drinks are allowed in the computer area
- Students are not allowed to use another student's log in

- Students will not access inappropriate sites on the Internet
- Students will not interfere with another student's work on the computer

If any of the above rules are broken, the student will lose his/her computer privileges.

At St. Dominic, we have been equipped with 3 hotspot locations for wireless network access. Access to the wireless network will expand learning opportunities for students and will provide access to thousands of interactive learning websites, educational videos and current information. If a teacher sees the use of personal devices as beneficial for learning, they will provide the students with the option to bring in their devices. This will be communicated to you by the teacher.

Social Media:

As part of the 21st century learning students will be participating in a variety of social media tools via the Internet in the classroom. Some of the social media tools that may be used in the classroom include the following: Wikis, blogs, Podcasts, video conferencing, surveys, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and other sites deemed appropriate by the classroom teacher in accordance with Ministry of Education curriculum.

Photography:

Our students and staff enjoy opportunities to share some of their activities with parents, and the school community through teams, clubs, and special events. Many of these are 'memory making' for families and as such photographs are often taken. We ask that families exercise their discretion when taking photographs or videos at school events and consider the privacy of other students who may also be present in those pictures. We would appreciate if families not upload images of students other than their own to the Internet (e.g. YouTube or Facebook). Your cooperation is appreciated.

Homework:

Students benefit from homework in the best of ways. In their own time and their own style, they can review what was covered in class. Homework improves students' understanding and retention of material covered earlier in the classroom. Study skills are developed: time management is learned. Through homework our students gain independence, initiative, responsibility and self-discipline.

Homework is a valuable teaching tool; teachers get feedback about student understanding and can use this information to identify and plan different levels of support for students individually. Homework calls for support from parents. That has benefits too! Parents can see what their children are working on and they can help monitor their child's progress and communicate more effectively with teachers about what is being studied in school.

Homework is directly connected to the Ontario Curriculum and therefore supports students' achievement of provincial learning expectations in all subjects. Results of homework completion are reported in the provincial report card under the 'Learning Skills' section.

Tips for Parents:

- **Establish a routine:** work out a regular homework schedule that might help avoid procrastination
- **Give space for homework:** create a bright and quiet space free of distractions where your child can concentrate on schoolwork
- **Be a role model:** read a book or newspaper while your child completes his/her homework
- **Be positive about homework:** let your child know how important school is. The attitude you have about homework will have a big influence on your child's attitude about homework
- **Supply learning materials:** make sure the materials your child needs (paper, pencils, calculator, dictionary etc.) are available
- **Encourage organization:** ask your child to show you their school agenda regularly. Let them see you record deadlines and important events in a work or family calendar
- **Set limits:** if homework is meant to be done by your child alone, stay away. Too much parental involvement can take away from the positive effects of homework, such as developing independent work and study skills
- **Praise your child:** offer words of encouragement for successfully completing homework. This builds confidence