



Secondary Student Handbook 2026-2027

The purpose of this handbook is to give you an understanding of how we support a safe, inclusive, welcoming school culture focused on student learning. In the following pages, you will see the commitments we make to you and your students. This handbook also outlines the principles of good citizenship for all members of our educational community.

One of our most important commitments is to open communication between the school and home. If you have any questions about this handbook, we encourage you to contact the school and we will be happy to discuss them with you.



Secondary Student Handbook

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PART A: Applicable to DSBN Academy (Pages 2-13)

What does it mean to be a DSBN Academy Student?

By choosing DSBN Academy as your school in September 2026, it is with the mutual understanding of the following:

The Faculty at DSBN Academy are committed to providing an environment of high expectations. They will encourage, support, and empower you to distinguish yourself academically so that you can be competitively eligible for admission and then graduate from a post-secondary institution.

We utilize several key strategies to remove barriers and create opportunities for you to engage in school life and develop the skills and confidence required for academic success.

DSBN Academy is a unique program, and our students are expected to:

- Wear the school UNIFORM without requiring prompts or reminders.
- Participate in the mandatory ENCORE program.
- Participate in the mandatory ADVISORY program.
- Contribute to a positive culture both in the classroom, hallways, and on the bus.

Your success also involves embracing our **CORE** Values: Commitment, Optimism, Respect, and Excellence.

To demonstrate **commitment**, students:

- Take personal responsibility for their actions.
- Honour their commitments and act with integrity.
- Show loyalty to friends, colleagues, and the school.

To demonstrate **optimism**, students:

- Believe in the positive potential in themselves, others, and society.
- Look at the bright side of any situation.
- Expect the best possible outcome.

To demonstrate **respect**, students:

- Value all members of the school community.
- Acknowledge and embrace diversity.
- Use language appropriate for school and always free of harmful slurs and oppressive speech.

To demonstrate **excellence**, students:

- Show pride in personal achievement.
- Set high standards and personal goals for improvement.
- Make best use of talents, time, and resources.

As Faculty of DSBN Academy, we need all students to be willing to follow the expectations of the program. We understand that each child is unique and may face challenges along the way, and we are here to support you.

Sincerely,

The DSBN Academy Faculty



Secondary Student Handbook

2026-2027

DATES TO REMEMBER

SEMESTER ONE		SEMESTER TWO	
Sept. 8	First Day of Semester 1	Feb. 1	First Day of Semester 2
Sept. 11	Spirit Wear Day	Feb. 1	Black History Month Begins
Sept. 21	Encore Block 1 Begins	Feb. 1	Encore Block 3 Begins
Sept. 24	Terry Fox Walk	Feb. 4	Grad Photos
Sept. 29	Picture Day	Feb. 12	Semester 1 Final Reports Issued
Sept. 25	Alternate Dress Day	Feb. 12	Spirit Wear Day
Sept. 30	Rowan's Law Day	Feb. 15	Statutory Holiday (Family Day)
Sept. 30	National Day for Truth & Reconciliation	Feb. 24	Anything Pink Day
Oct. 1	Meet the Teacher (4-5 pm)	Feb. 26	Alternate Dress Day
Oct. 9	Spirit Wear Day	Mar. 3	Academy Awards
Oct. 12	Statutory Holiday (Thanksgiving)	Mar. 11	Progress Reports Issued
Oct. 15	Progress Reports Issued	Mar. 12	Spirit Wear Day
Oct. 21	Awards Breakfast	Mar. 15-19	March Break
Oct. 22	Parent Teacher Interviews (Phone)	Mar. 24	Parent Teacher Interviews (Phone)
Oct. 26	Professional Activity Day	Mar. 25	Alternate Dress Day
Oct. 30	Alternate Dress Day	Mar. 26-29	Statutory Holidays
Nov. 9-13	Encore Break Week	Apr. 9	Spirit Wear Day
Nov. 11	Remembrance Day	Apr. 12-16	Encore Break Week / Spirit Week
Nov. 12	Term 2 Begins	Apr. 14	Term 2 Begins
Nov. 13	Spirit Wear Day	Apr. 19	Encore Block 4 Begins
Nov. 16	Encore Block 2 Begins	Apr. 20	Midterm Reports Issued
Nov. 17	Midterm Reports Issued	Apr. 29	Alternate Dress Day
Nov. 25	Application Day	Apr. 30	Professional Development Day
Nov. 26	Alternate Dress Day	May 3	Music Monday
Nov. 27	Professional Development Day	May 3-7	Ontario Skilled Trades Competition
Dec. 1	Grade 8 Pasta Supper	May 14	Spirit Wear Day
Dec. 4	DSBN Academy Anniversary/Spirit Wear	May 19	Academy Awards
Dec. 11	Alternate Dress Day	May 24	Statutory Holiday (Victoria Day)
Dec. 14-18	Spirit Week	May 28	Alternate Dress Day
Dec. 16	Academy Awards	June 1	Pride Month Begins
Dec. 21 -Jan. 1	Winter Holiday	June 2	Grad Breakfast
Jan. 4	First Day of Class After Holiday	June 11	Spirit Wear Day
Jan. 8	Spirit Wear Day	June 21	National Indigenous Peoples Day
Jan. 22-28	Final Culminating Activity Days	June 21-25	Encore Break Week
Jan. 18-28	Encore Break	June 23-29	Final Culminating Activity Days
Jan. 29	Professional Development Day	June 30	Professional Development Day
		July 5	Semester 2 Final Reports Issued

<https://www.dsbni.org/equity/days-of-significance-calendar>



Secondary Student Handbook

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DSBN ACADEMY SECONDARY BELL SCHEDULE

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Period One	8:45-9:50	8:45-9:50	8:45-9:50	8:45-9:50	8:45-9:50
Period Two	9:55-10:55	9:55-10:55	9:55-10:55	9:55-10:55	9:55-10:55
Lunch	10:55-11:35	10:55-11:35	10:55-11:35	10:55-11:35	10:55-11:35
Period Three	11:35-12:35	11:35-12:35	11:35-12:35	11:35-12:35	11:35-12:35
Period Four	12:40-1:40	12:40-1:40	12:40-1:40	12:40-1:40	12:40-1:40
Period Five	1:45-2:45 ENCORE	1:45-2:45 ENCORE	1:45-2:45 Advisory	1:45-2:45 ENCORE	1:45-2:45 ENCORE
Buses	3:05	3:05	3:05	3:05	3:05



Secondary Student Handbook

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ACADEMIC INTEGRITY EXPECTATION

Academic Integrity is an expectation that students act with honesty and take responsibility for demonstrating what they have learned. This includes using resources appropriately and properly citing the works and ideas of others. It also includes adhering to the guidelines provided by the teacher relating to group work, independent tasks, and formal evaluations.

When students breach 'Academic Integrity', it is known as 'academic misconduct' or 'academic dishonesty'.

WHAT ARE SOME, BUT NOT ALL, EXAMPLES OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT?

- Using Artificial Intelligence/Apps to generate work and submitting as your own work.
- Sharing information with another student knowing that this is to be submitted as the borrower's own work.
- Copying from another student (whole or in part) and submitting as your own.
- Collaborating with others when an assignment is designated as an 'independent task'.
- Copying/pasting material (digital/print) without proper quotations/citations.
- Possession/use of unauthorized material and/or devices during a test or exam.

HOW WILL DSBN ACADEMY TEACHERS RESPOND?

Early intervention and clear expectations are supportive measures in preventing academic misconduct and creating a culture of Academic Integrity. Teachers will:

- Communicate expectations regarding demonstrations of student learning.
- Conference with student regarding any incident of suspected academic misconduct
- Determine educative action based on scenario and professional judgement, which may include:
 - Rewrite/resubmission of the assignment
 - Provide an alternative task/assignment
 - Apply late penalty on resubmission
 - Assign a mark of 'zero' for repeated misconduct
- Report all incidents of academic misconduct to Administration
- Contact home regarding any incident of academic misconduct

HOW WILL DSBN ACADEMY ADMINISTRATORS RESPOND?

- Keep record of incidents of academic misconduct
- Collaborate with Faculty to determine educative action
- Apply progressive discipline for repeated academic misconduct

ADVISORY

Please Note: Advisory takes place during provincially mandated instructional time. As such, normal attendance expectations and procedures apply.

- Grade 9 & 10 students will be assigned to a Junior Advisor and then reassigned to a Senior Advisor for grades 11 & 12.
- Advisors will create opportunities to build skills needed as you navigate from grade 9 to life after high school.



Secondary Student Handbook

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AGE OF MAJORITY

The Age of Majority in the province of Ontario is 18 years. As an adult student, staff are required to deal directly with the student in all matters concerning their schooling. In effect, this means that communication from the school will go directly to the student. Parents/guardians will require student permission to gain access to information about attendance and achievement. Adult students are expected to adhere to the DSBN code of conduct and DSBN Academy expectations for all students. As an adult student, they are solely accountable for any consequences resulting from absences from school or from the abuse of this privilege. Adult students are expected to meet with the Vice Principal to provide direction about parent/guardian access.

ATHLETICS

To be a member of our competitive sports teams at DSBN Academy, participants must:

- Be a full-time student.
- Maintain a passing grade in each class and achievement to meet post-secondary goals.
- Maintain an acceptable level of attendance and punctuality.
- Demonstrate conduct that conforms with the DSBN Academy Code of Conduct.
- Note: If a student's attendance and/or academics are impacted by outstanding assignment(s), they will be temporarily removed from participating in games/tournaments.

ABSENCES/LATES

ABSENCES If students are going to be absent from school, parents/guardians are to contact the school each day using the Safe-Arrival system. If a phone call or Safe-Arrival is not possible, then the student must bring a note signed by a parent/guardian to the Attendance Secretary before being admitted to class. Parents/Guardians can sign students out via Safe-Arrival, phone call or note. In the case of a last-minute appointment or emergency, a phone call from a parent giving the reason the student is being excused will be accepted.

EXTENDED ABSENCES Dates of school holidays are published in this handbook. Please plan vacations that do not require students to miss an extended period or exams. If this cannot be avoided, please submit a request for an extended absence to the administration. Students are responsible for working with their teachers to complete missed work. Student requesting extended time away from school for exceptional circumstances must notify the office in advance to complete required paperwork at least 2 weeks before the planned absence.

LATES – Bus arrival times, lunch break, and travel time between classes support student responsibility with punctuality. Lateness to class should be due to an extenuating circumstance only. Students who are habitually late to class will be subject to progressive discipline as it is disruptive to the learning environment of others. Progressive discipline can include home contact, detention, in-school suspension, and formal suspension.



Secondary Student Handbook

.....

ACADEMY AWARDS

At three different ceremonies throughout the year Academy Awards will be presented to students in 6 categories.

C.O.R.E.	• Exemplifies one of the C.O.R.E. values.
Positive Leadership	• Contributes to the success of a team/group/class • Takes initiative to lead group tasks & discussions • Positive attitude/demeanor when leading
Perseverance	• Sees obstacles as an opportunity to persevere and grow • Faces challenging situations with a growth mindset
Citizenship	• Demonstrates good character by being honest and dependable • Responsibility with school rules and expectations • Positive peer
Encore Star	• Fully engaged in the opportunities provided during Encore (including regular attendance) • Enthusiastic participation which positively impacts the climate of the Encore experience
Argo Champion	• Evidence that they advocate for what's right • Evidence that they are contributing to a positive school culture/school spirit

These are prestigious recognitions and students are encouraged to document these in their Student Profile Form.

D2L (Online Learning Platform)

D2L is the platform that DSBN Academy secondary teachers use to post daily news, related to the course, as well as assignments, and achievement. Grade 9 students will quickly adapt to using D2L to seek information when they have missed school, and to submit assignments. Teachers use D2L in various ways and depths depending on the course and their experience. There is also a D2L 'grade page', where student services will share grade specific information and important links.



Secondary Student Handbook

DRESS CODE for SCHOOL UNIFORM

DSBN Academy requires its students to wear a uniform which helps to create a positive atmosphere for learning and fosters a sense of team and community.

Maddalena Uniforms (St. Catharines) is our official uniform provider.

DAILY UNIFORM EXPECTATIONS:

- Report to class on time and in uniform with needed supplies.
- Prior to class, store hats, toques, coats, backpacks, and any other non-uniform items in lockers.
- Remain in uniform during the instructional day and Encore. This includes lunch break.
- When there are extenuating circumstances, students may borrow uniform items from the main office prior to the start of the school day and return borrowed items at the end of the day.

TOPS & SWEATERS embroidered with DSBN Academy Logo from the school's designated uniform supplier or previous supplier.

- Navy/White Polo
- Navy $\frac{3}{4}$ Zip - new
- Navy Crewneck
- Grad Hoodie (Class of 2027 Only)
- Grey Crewneck, Grey Fleece, and Navy Fleece are discontinued but students have permission to wear these items.

***NOTE** – It is important to preserve the integrity of our school uniform. Uniform tops and sweaters are not to be worn over ANY visible non-uniform items such as sweatshirts, or brightly coloured t-shirts.

GREY PANTS/SHORTS/SKORT from the school's designated uniform supplier.

- Grey pants
- Grey shorts
- Grey skirt

***NOTE-** It is important to preserve the integrity of the school uniform. DSBN Academy uniform shorts and skirt may be altered to no more than 14 cm above the knee (finger-tip length). Uniform pants should not be rolled.

SHOE WEAR: Appropriate indoor shoes with non-slip sole. Some courses have additional requirements for safety reasons (i.e., tech, gym, science) that will be communicated to students.

ACCESSORIES: Hats and toques are not to be worn in the school. When choosing other accessories, we ask that all members of our school community are mindful of:

- Health and safety considerations
- The dignity and well-being of students and staff (i.e. Free of inappropriate or discriminatory imagery or wording).

UNIFORM INFRACTIONS: Students who are not adhering to the school's uniform dress code and guidelines will be directed to the main office and subject to progressive discipline. This can include removal from class, home contact, detention, in-school suspension, and formal suspension.

*Scenarios which present themselves during the school year will be considered by administration and communicated to the student body.



Secondary Student Handbook

DRESS CODE for ALTERNATE DRESS DAYS:

Everyone has their own unique style and aesthetic. We celebrate students' individuality and respect their ability to express themselves. Our only expectation is that all students come to school dressed appropriately for a learning environment. When deciding on clothing, we ask that all members of our school community are mindful of:

- Health and safety considerations
- The dignity and well-being of all students and staff (i.e. clothing that is free of inappropriate or discriminatory imagery or wording)

DRESS CODE for SPIRIT WEAR DAYS:

These days are an opportunity for students to show their Argonaut pride and wear the Spirit Wear items they have purchased while adhering to the DSBN Dress Code above. Students do not have to wear uniform pants when wearing Spirit Wear tops.

DRESS CODE for SPORT TEAMS

On Game Days, students are expected to be in school uniform and may not wear jerseys and/or alternate bottoms on scheduled game days whether home or away. Dismissal for games will accommodate time to change on game day.

Team members are encouraged to wear club/team shirts on spirit days.

*Special permission may be granted by administration for special events.

ENCORE

Encore is an approach to support students with planning their extra-curricular choices that will enhance their applications for post-secondary, specific bursaries and/or scholarships, as well as provide learning support opportunities.

Changes to Encore selections?

Every effort will be made to accommodate your top 3 choices each day. It is important that students make a commitment to a club/activity and to try new things. Encore change requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Similar to course selections, students will attend their Encore choices until a change is officially reflected on their student information system (ASPEN SIS). Changing into a new Encore after initial selections will be made when possible but cannot be guaranteed. It is important students submit their Encore selections on time and choose options they can enjoy for the duration of the Encore block.



Secondary Student Handbook

.....

Awarding & Tracking Your ENCORE Points

At the end of each block, each Encore leader will award points.
based on participation.

If a student has not been consistent with participation / attendance
with a club / activity they may not be awarded up to 3 points. Encore leaders may also consider awarding
fewer than 3 points based on an individual students' engagement.

Encore Honour Roll

The Graduation Awards Committee will refer to
Encore points when making decisions about
school-based awards, bursaries, and
scholarships.

Students will receive special recognition for
earning a minimum number of points each year.
GO ARGOS!

ENCORE Attendance & Expectations

Please Note: ENCORE takes place during provincially mandated instructional time. As such, normal
attendance expectations and procedures apply.

Multiple learning support options will be available during ENCORE.

- ✓ **Be Punctual** (Ready to participate at 1:45 p.m.)
- ✓ **Be Prepared** (Bring all necessary supplies and clothes)
- ✓ **Be Respectful** (Make sure that you respect all Encore Leaders)
- ✓ **Be Dedicated** (Embrace each opportunity)

RESPONSIBILITY WITH DUE DATES & FINAL DEADLINES

The following guidelines and expectations for students and faculty are to help students practice and develop time-management skills.

Students demonstrate responsibility when they:		
Complete and submit class work, homework, and assignments according to agreed upon timelines. Use class time, and homework club so that they can meet deadlines. Talk to their teacher ahead of time when they are struggling with completing a major assignment/presentation.	Request an extension (due to extenuating circumstances) at least 2 days prior to deadline. Are prepared to submit presentation materials and complete the presentation the next day following an unexpected absence. Are prepared to write a test the next day following an unexpected absence.	Understand that mark deductions will be applied when assignments are submitted late. Understand that teachers need to return assignments to other students and will provide a FINAL call for outstanding assignments, after which a mark of 'zero' will be assigned.
Due Dates & Final Deadlines		Missing a Presentation or Test
Teachers will: Assign a due date that is reasonable and based on professional judgement. Communicate deadline and process for submission (i.e. through online platform, timing of deadline).		Teachers will: Expect students to communicate ahead of time if they are going to be absent during a scheduled presentation or test. Expect students to complete presentation/test on the day following an approved absence. Determine if an alternative test or presentation is needed upon the student's return.
Mark Deductions & Zeros		Extensions for Major Assignments
Teachers may: Apply mark deductions after the due date. - Grade 9 & 10 (5% per day – max 15%) - Grade 11 & 12 (5% per day – max 25%) Conference with students regarding a missing major assignment. Assign a mark of 'zero' after the FINAL deadline has passed. Consider extenuating circumstances on an individual basis.		Teachers will: Communicate process for requesting an extension. Consider an extension if student follows process outlined by teacher. Consider an individual student's extenuating circumstances.



Secondary Student Handbook

.....

STUDENT COUNCIL

DSBN Academy Student Council is comprised of elected members. Executive members are elected by the student body in the spring for the following school year. The number of votes assist the Staff Advisors in appointing the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister.

Grade 9 Reps are added in September as chosen by their classmates.

Rules and expectations for Student Council representatives are provided by the Faculty Advisor.

TRANSFERS into DSBN ACADEMY

DSBN Academy does not support new applicants or re-entry from previously enrolled students into grades 9-12. Students can apply to attend up until grade 8. Please note that no applications will be accepted for grades 9- 12. This applies to all secondary students, including former DSBN Academy students who wish to re-enter the school after attending another secondary school.

VALEDICTORIAN

The Valedictorian is a very prestigious and important role which includes:

- Epitomizing the qualities for which graduates strive
- Composing and delivering the valedictory address on behalf of the graduating students
- Representing the entire school community - not just themselves or immediate circle of friends - when crafting and delivering the speech)

CRITERIA TO BE THE VALEDICTORIAN:

- The candidate must be a graduating student of DSBN Academy in June of the current year.
- The candidate must have a minimum of a 70% average in their Grade 12 courses.
- The candidate must have demonstrated the school's C.O.R.E Values throughout high school.
- The student must have demonstrated school involvement in many facets of school life.
- The candidate has accepted an offer to a college or university program.

SELECTION PROCESS:

- Nominated candidates must submit a completed application form by the specified deadline. This must include support from 5 other potential graduates and 3 secondary teachers. Self-nominations are welcomed.
- All nominated candidates will be brought forward to the Awards Committee to ensure they meet the criteria outlined above.
- Students who meet the criteria will be required to deliver an elevator pitch to the graduating class. The speech will focus on why they are the best candidate to represent the graduating class.
- The graduating class will vote for the valedictorian. If there are more than two candidates, there will be a two-step vote. If there is a tie, there will be two Valedictorians; or if one does not wish to be Valedictorian, then the other student will be Valedictorian.
- The Valedictorian address must be reviewed by administration – deadline to be determined in collaboration with both parties.
- The Valedictorian must remain in good standing. Should the Valedictorian fall from this standing, the role of the Valedictorian will be awarded to the second-place candidate.
- The Principal has the right to revoke any nomination if necessary.



Secondary Student Handbook

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PART B: Applicable to all Secondary Schools (Pages 13-22)

****Changes are subject to updates provided by DSBN's policy and procedures processes.**

CODE OF CONDUCT

The DSBN believes fostering a positive school climate that supports student achievement and well-being focuses on prevention and early intervention strategies to address inappropriate behaviour.

These standards of behaviour outlined below apply whether they occur on school property, on student transportation, at school-related events or activities, or in any other circumstance that could have an impact on the school climate.

The provincial Code of Conduct outlined in PPM 128, revised October 17, 2018, sets clear provincial standards of behaviour.

All DSBN schools will have a link to policy G-08: Code of Conduct for Schools on their website and if applicable, in their school agendas.

PURPOSES OF THE CODE

Subsection 301(1) of Part XIII of the Education Act states that, "the Minister may establish a code of conduct governing the behaviour of all persons in schools". Subsection 301(2) sets out the purposes of this provincial code of conduct, as follows:

1. To ensure that all members of the school community, especially people in positions of authority, are treated with respect and dignity
2. To promote responsible citizenship by encouraging appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community
3. To maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility
4. To encourage the use of non-violent means to resolve conflict
5. To promote the safety of people in the schools
6. To discourage the use of alcohol, illegal drugs and, except by a medical cannabis user, cannabis
7. To prevent bullying in schools

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

Respect, Civility, and Responsible Citizenship. All members of the school community must:

- Respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity
- Respect differences in people, their ideas, and their opinions
- Treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is disagreement
- Respect and treat others fairly, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status, or disability
- Respect the rights of others
- Show proper care and regard for school property and the property of others
- Take appropriate measures to help those in need



Secondary Student Handbook

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- Seek assistance from a member of the school staff, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully
- Respect all members of the school community, especially persons in positions of authority
- Respect the need of others to work in an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching
- Not swear at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority

SAFETY

All members of the school community must not:

- Engage in bullying behaviours
- Commit sexual assault
- Traffic in weapons or illegal drugs
- Give alcohol or cannabis to a minor
- Commit robbery
- Be in possession of any weapon, including firearms
- Use any object to threaten or intimidate another person
- Cause injury to any person with an object
- Be in possession of, or be under the influence of alcohol, cannabis (unless the individual has been authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes), and illegal drugs
- Provide others with alcohol, illegal drugs, or cannabis (unless the recipient is an individual who has been authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes)

TEACHERS AND OTHER SCHOOL STAFF

Under the leadership of their principals, teachers and other school staff maintain a positive learning environment and are expected to hold everyone to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour. As role models, teachers and other school staff uphold these high standards when they:

- Help students work to their full potential and develop their sense of self-worth
- Empower students to be positive leaders in their classroom, school, and community
- Communicate regularly and meaningfully with parents

According to PPM 128, the following responsibilities are outlined to support a collaborative ownership of the code of conduct.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Under the direction of DSBN, school administrators take a leadership role in the daily operation of a school. They provide this leadership by:

- Demonstrating care for the school community and a commitment to student achievement and well-being in a safe, inclusive, and accepting learning environment
- Holding everyone under their authority accountable for their own behaviour and actions
- Empowering students to be positive leaders in their school and community
- Communicating regularly and meaningfully with all members of their school community
- Maintain consistent and fair standards of behaviour for all students
- Demonstrate respect for one another, all students, parents, volunteers, and other members of the school community
- Prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship



Secondary Student Handbook

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STUDENTS

Students are to be treated with respect and dignity. In return, they must demonstrate respect for themselves, for others, and for the responsibilities of citizenship through acceptable behaviour. Respect and responsibility are demonstrated when students:

- Come to school prepared, on time, and ready to learn
- Show respect for themselves, and for others, and for those in positions of authority
- Refrain from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of others
- Follow the established rules and take responsibility for their own actions

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents/Guardians play an important role in the education of their students and can support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe, inclusive, accepting, and respectful learning environment for all students.

Parents/Guardians fulfill their role when they:

- Are engaged in their student's schoolwork and progress
- Communicate regularly with the school
- Help their student be appropriately dressed and prepared for school
- Ensure that their student attends school regularly and on time
- Promptly report to the school their student's absence or late arrival
- Become familiar with the provincial Code of Conduct, the DSBN Code of Conduct, and, if applicable, the school's Code of Conduct
- Encourage and assist their student in following the rules of behaviour
- Assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their student

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Through outreach, existing partnerships may be enhanced and new partnerships with community-based service providers and members of the community (e.g., Elders, Senators, Knowledge Keepers) may also be created.

Community-based service providers and resources are among the supports that boards can use to deliver prevention or intervention programs. Protocols are effective ways of establishing linkages between boards and community-based service providers and of formalizing the relationship between them. These partnerships must respect all applicable collective agreements.

POLICE

The police play an essential role in making our schools and communities safer. The police investigate incidents in accordance with the protocol developed with the DSBN. These protocols are based on the Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol, 2015, developed by the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services and the Ministry of Education.



Secondary Student Handbook

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SAFE ARRIVAL/ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES Our school has an easy method for you to report your student's absences. With Safe Arrival, you can report daily absences and schedule absences by using one of the following:

- Calling the toll-free phone line at 1-866-479-3261
- Logging on to the web portal at • www.safearrival.com
- Using your smart phone or tablet. Simply download the School Messenger app We ask that you report all absences prior to bell time for the current day.

To support the safety of our students, if your student is not at school and has not been reported absent, our staff will attempt to reach you and your contacts to confirm their whereabouts. If a student arrives late to school or needs to leave early, they must sign in/out. It is the responsibility of the student to make up missed work.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

There may be times during the school year where inclement weather or other situations could cause transportation cancellations or school closures. At times, when student transportation has been cancelled and schools remain open, the decision to have students attend school on that day rests with the parent or guardian.

EXAMS: If inclement weather occurs on exam days, detailed instructions will be provided for rescheduling. Information about transportation cancellations and school closures will be available through the following channels:

- www.dsbni.org or www.nsts.ca
- **DSBN Facebook or Twitter**
- **NSTS Transportation Delay or Cancellation Alerts**
- **Niagara Student Transportation Service**
- **905-346-0290 Voice Auto Attendant**
- **Local radio and television stations.**

COLLECTION OF FUNDS & PERMISSION FORMS

School Cash Online is a safe, reliable portal that will ensure the security of your information. School Cash Online, enables you to use your debit or credit card to make quick and easy payments. Our school also uses School Cash Online to obtain permission for school events.

To gain access to the system, simply click on the "School Cash" button which is located on our school website. Parents that do not bank online are always welcome to come into the office to pay for items, and to sign permission forms.

VISITORS

We want all visitors to feel welcome at our school. The procedures we have in place help us provide you with timely access to the school and give our entire school community confidence that student safety is being maintained.

Once you enter the school, please report directly to the main office where our staff can assist you. There, you will sign in and receive a visitor badge that identifies you as a trusted member of our community. At the end of your visit you will sign out at the office.



Secondary Student Handbook

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SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

At our school, we believe everyone has a contribution to make towards student success. We appreciate the support of volunteers who offer their services and improve the education and lives of our students.

To ensure the safety of our students and the school community, the DSBN has created a helpful handbook to support our school volunteers. If you are interested in becoming more involved with our school, please contact the office and our staff would be happy to work through the process with you.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

Our School Council provides a vital link between the school, families and community. The council is made up of dedicated parent volunteers interested in supporting student success. The council meets regularly throughout the school year and provides feedback and supports programs to improve student achievement.

We encourage you to become involved. You may also find more information on our website.

SMOKING/VAPING

Smoking and vaping are not allowed in schools or on school grounds. Adults wishing to smoke or vape in public areas must be at least 20 meters from school grounds.

BELONGINGS

Students who choose to bring personal items to school do so at their own risk and must accept responsibility for their care. We will not be held responsible for damage, loss, or theft.

LOCKERS

At our school, students are assigned lockers. Students are expected to keep their personal belongings in their locker, clean it regularly, and make sure locker doors are locked.

Lockers are the property of the DSBN and are used by students with permission of the school. Students are advised that the school has the right to search lockers and remove locks, if necessary.

Where the school has concerns of possible criminal violations, the search may also include the Niagara Regional Police who may use any of their investigative tools, including the trained canine unit.

PREVALENT MEDICAL CONDITIONS

If you have a student with a prevalent medical condition (Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes, Epilepsy or others) we want to make sure we have a current Plan of Care to support your student.

All parents of students with prevalent medical conditions are asked to fill out the new Plan of Care and submit to the school.

You can download the forms here: dsbn.org/prevalent-medical-conditions.
For more information, please contact the school.



Secondary Student Handbook

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CONCUSSIONS

The DSBN has a concussion policy and procedures to support proper prevention, identification, management, and return to learn strategies. The DSBN engages in concussion education in a variety of ways, including recognizing Rowan's Law Day, commemorated on the last Wednesday in September to raise awareness about concussions.

If your student has sustained a suspected or actual concussion while not at school, please contact the school, to make sure they are aware.

FIRE DRILLS/EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS/ LOCKDOWNS

We're committed to maintaining our schools as safe places for all of our students. To create and maintain a culture of safety, we practice both fire and lockdown procedures at several times during the school year. School staff work with students to ensure they understand these procedures and feel comfortable acting should the circumstances ever warrant.

ONTARIO CURRICULUM

Click here to view the curriculum for your subjects: www.dsbni.org/secondary/curriculum

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education supports and programs are responsive to the strengths and needs of each student, ensuring a successful learning environment for all. Working together and collaborating with parents as a team to support our students is essential to achieving success. For more information, please contact your student's special education resource teacher.

INDIGENOUS SELF-ID:

The DSBN provides programs and measures to support all First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students. All First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students have the right to voluntarily self-identify so that they may receive supportive programming and instructional practices that better serve their learning needs. The first measure in recognizing this right is establishing self-identification procedures to identify, collect, and aggregate student achievement data for students.

Who Can Identify?

Any student of Indigenous ancestry, First Nations (Status, Non-Status), Métis, or Inuit can identify. This process is completely voluntary and confidential, and no proof of ancestry is needed.

How is the Data Collected?

Students can identify by filling in the student registration form or the student information update form any time during the school year.

What if I Do Not Wish to Participate?

Participation is completely voluntary. The self-identification will remain open to all who attend the DSBN. You can activate self-identification at any time by requesting a student registration form or self-identification postcard from the main office.

For further information email: Indigenous@dsbn.org or call the Indigenous Consultants at: 905-641-2929 K-8 ext. 52246, 9-12 ext. 52317, or visit <https://www.dsbni.org/indigenous-education/>



Secondary Student Handbook

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FIELD TRIPS/EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Field trips and experiential learning provide students with the opportunity to learn outside of their classroom. When planning these experiences, we consider curriculum connections, safety of students and accessibility for all. We will work together to address any barriers to your student's participation.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR LEARNING

To enhance the learning and empowerment of students, and maintain an effective and safe electronic learning environment, the DSBN requires that all students follow the rules and regulations set out by the Ministry of Education.

REPORT CARDS/CAREGIVER & TEACHER MEETINGS

Each semester, there are three reporting periods: progress report, mid-term report, and final report. After the progress report, caregivers can meet with their student's teacher.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT HOURS:

Every student who begins secondary school in Ontario is required to complete a minimum of 40 hours of community involvement to receive their diploma. This requirement encourages students to develop an understanding of the various roles they can play in their communities and to help them develop a greater sense of belonging within their communities. Talk to Student Services to learn more about how to earn and track your hours.

HONOUR ROLL

DSBN secondary schools value the commitment and hard work of all our students. The honour roll is one way that students can be recognized for their academic accomplishments. Students in all pathways will be considered for the honour roll if they have an average of 80% on their top eight courses for the school year. Grade twelve academic achievement is honoured through graduation awards.

Please note the following:

Summer School:

- **GRADE 9** - Summer school courses taken the summer before and the summer after grade 9 are included.
- **GRADES 10 & 11**- Summer school courses taken the summer after each grade are included.

E-Learning, Night School & Alternative Pathways Program

- All courses included

Cooperative Education (Double Credit)

- Weighted according to the number of credits.

Students taking Resource & Student Success Periods

(Spare in Grade 11)

- Minimum credits to be adjusted.

Students with unusual circumstance

(e.g. Instructional Outreach, Supervised Alternative Learning)

- Minimum credits adjusted at principal's discretion



Secondary Student Handbook

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GRADUATION CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

To graduate with your Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) you need 30 credits: 17/18 Compulsory and 13/12 Elective.

OSSD Prior to 2024 (18 compulsory credits):

- **English:** 4 courses
- **Math:** 3 courses
- **Science:** 2 courses
- **French as a Second Language:** 1 course
- **Canadian Geography:** 1 course
- **Canadian History:** 1 course
- **The Arts:** 1 course
- **Health and Physical Education:** 1 course
- **Civics:** .5 course
- **Careers:** .5 course

PLUS ONE CREDIT FROM EACH OF THE FOLLOWING GROUPS:

- **1 Group 1:** additional credit in English, or French as a second language, or a Native language, or a classical or an international language, or social sciences and the humanities, or Canadian and world studies, or guidance and career education, or cooperative education.
- **1 Group 2:** additional credit in health and physical education, or the arts, or business studies, or French as a second language, or cooperative education.
- **1 Group 3:** additional credit in Science (grade 11 or 12), or technological education, or French as a second language, or computer studies, or cooperative education

OSSD after 2024 (17 compulsory credits):

- **English:** 4 courses
- **Math:** 3 courses
- **Science:** 2 courses
- **French as a Second Language:** 1 course
- **Canadian Geography:** 1 course
- **Canadian History:** 1 course
- **The Arts:** 1 course
- **Health and Physical Education:** 1 course
- **Technology Education:** 1 course
- **STEM related Course group:** 1 course
- **Civics:** .5 course
- **Careers:** .5 course

IN ADDITION, STUDENTS MUST COMPLETE:

- 2 Online Learning Credits
- 40 Hours Community Service (completed over 4 years)
- The provincial literacy requirement – OSSLT
- The financial literacy requirement (applies to the 2029 & 2030 graduating classes only)



Secondary Student Handbook

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MENTAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING SCHOOL SUPPORTS:

Mental health and well-being is an important factor in student success. Learning to form healthy relationships, maintain physical health, academic engagement, and educational achievement are all impacted by mental health and well-being.

Students' mental health and well-being is supported in many ways:

- Helping students feel safe and included
- Instilling a sense of belonging and connectedness
- Working with them to feel confident in their identity

There may be times where the challenges of school and life lead students to feel overwhelmed. Every student has access to a comprehensive support system to help them succeed. It starts with anyone in the DSBN that students identify as a caring adult.

To learn more visit: <https://www.dsbni.org/well-being>

MENTAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING COMMUNITY SUPPORTS:

KIDS HELP PHONE

Kids Help Phone is always there for you. No matter what you want to talk about, they're there to listen. No judgment, totally private, 24/7.

- Call 1-800-668-6868
- Text CONNECT to 686868
- Live chat and explore resources at www.kidshelpphone.ca

ANXIETY CANADA YOUTH

You are not alone! Many teens experience difficulties with anxiety. There are lots of things that you can do to take charge of your anxiety for good.

- Visit www.youth.anxietycanada.com
- Download the MindShift CBT app

PATHSTONE MENTAL HEALTH

NEED HELP NOW? Call 1-800-263-4944

Youth up to age 17 may visit the Hear & Now Walk-in Clinic at:

- 1338 Fourth Ave. in St. Catharines
Open Mondays to Thursdays 9am - 7pm, Fridays 9am-4pm

CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION (CMHA) – NIAGARA BRANCH

If you're age 16 or older, you may visit the CMHA Adult Walk-In Clinic at:

- 1338 Fourth Ave. in St. Catharines, Open Tuesdays 11:30am-5:30pm

LGBTQT2s+ YOUTH LINE

A confidential, safe, and judgment-free place to talk for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning youth.

- Call 1-800-268-9688
- Text 647-694-4275
- Live chat and explore resources at www.youthline.ca

TEENMENTALHEALTH.ORG

This website is designed to share information about teen mental health and provide resources that can help you understand your mental health and help those you care about.

- Start by visiting www.teenmentalhealth.org/learn



Secondary Student Handbook



2026 - 2027 SECONDARY School Year Calendar

- First/Last Day of School
- Holiday - Schools Closed
- Professional Development Day
- Exam Days (Secondary)

September 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January 2027						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 31	25	26	27	28	29	30

February 2027						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March 2027						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April 2027						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May 2027						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 30	24 31	25	26	27	28	29

June 2027						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Recognizing Days Of Significance

The DSBN believes in building a culture of appreciation and inclusion, where students know they are valued, respected, and celebrated. In addition to this school year calendar, there is also a calendar for Days of Significance that occur throughout the year. This calendar highlights culturally relevant events and tools to cultivate young minds to embrace their genius, appreciate our differences and disrupt oppression so we all can live harmoniously. Please visit www.dsbni.org/equity/days-of-significance-calendar to view this calendar and resources.

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