

Welcome to St. Patrick's Catholic High School

June 2016

HIGH SCHOOL CONNECTIONS



ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Lighting the Way ~ Rejoicing in Our Journey



A Message from the Principal

On behalf of the entire staff and school administration, I am very excited to welcome each and every one of our nearly 330 Grade 9 students to our 2016-2017 school year. An especially warm welcome to all new families entering our school and to families with a child entering secondary school for the very first time. We are pleased that you will be part of our Catholic school community, as the graduating class of 2020!

We welcome you as well into a faith-filled school community that works diligently to live our faith; promote educational achievement and innovation; as well as foster stewardship, leadership and social justice.

We are grateful for our updated, modern and student-friendly facility, which allows us many opportunities to broaden educational achievement and innovation; and to live our faith through stewardship and leadership within our Catholic communities. You will quickly notice that we will urge you to be heavily involved!



Mr. R. Cicchelli
Principal



Collectively, as a school community, we strive to provide quality Catholic education, with well-rounded experiences, both inside and outside the classroom. It is our deepest desire that you be successful and involved and that you feel at home at St. Patrick's Catholic High School. We extend our best wishes for an amazing summer to all students and families and look forward to seeing you on September 1st, for the new Grade 9 student Link Orientation Day!. Welcome to the Home of the Fighting Irish!

Important information for students wanting to return for a 5th year at St. Pat's

There has been much discussion among parents and students about a previous announcement from the Ministry of Education, regarding a 34 credit threshold for secondary students. School boards were reminded that over a decade ago, Ontario moved to a four year secondary school program. Since that time, many students have opted to return for a fifth year, for a variety of reasons. The goal of the ministry is to shift our culture and encourage students to graduate in four years, as they do elsewhere in Canada and in the United States. In order to assist with this change in culture, school boards have been provided with supports that will help students to be better prepared to graduate within the four year time frame.

Resources have been provided to better support education in career/life planning. In Grade 7, students have begun to complete their online Individual Pathways Plan (IPP) with their teachers. These plans will be revisited twice a year, with even greater emphasis as students transition into secondary school. This IPP will be a focused activity when students take the Grade 10 careers course and each time they meet with their guidance counselors, throughout their time in secondary school. The policy document, *Creating Pathways to Success* was implemented in our schools in September 2013 for Grades K to 12, which provided resources for teachers.

In addition, students must acquire 40 hours of community service to be eligible for graduation. Grade 8 students may start accumulating community service hours as of July 1, 2016.

If you have further questions, the Ontario Ministry of Education provides more information at the websites listed below:

Most frequently asked questions — <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/students/faqs.html>

Memo to school boards — <http://faab.edu.gov.on.ca/Memos/SB2013/SB01E.pdf>

Home of the Fighting Irish

Our Focus on Social Justice and Serving Our Community

Through the Chaplaincy Department, students will be provided with various opportunities to enrich and develop their personal faith and awareness of others. Students will continue to assist a team in preparing and serving a meal at the Inn of the Good Shepherd on the fourth Monday of each month. This experience allows each individual student to fully understand the importance of supporting and nurturing others in our community.

Moreover, the tradition continues of helping various organizations through the work of *Irish Miracle* and *Cyclone Aid*. Each year, 400 to 500 students, staff and community volunteers participate in each event, collecting non-perishable items to provide for those who need our help during the Christmas and Easter seasons. These activities, and others, continue to inspire us to *Live Like Jesus* and to promote social justice and equality for all.



Class of 2020 — Link Crew Grade 9 Orientation

The purpose of our Grade 9 orientation is to transition students from elementary school in a way that gives them the best possible start to a successful secondary school experience. Grade 11 and 12 students will serve as leaders and mentors to the Grade 9 class. *Link Crew* is a year-long transition support and community building program that makes a positive difference in students' lives. Through *Link Crew* we connect our incoming Grade 9 students with successful senior student leaders, to create a bond of comfort and familiarity that spans the school age perimeters.

Grade 9 *Link Crew* orientation will be held **Thursday, September 1, 2016 from 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. in the school gym.** The day will include lunch. Through large and small group activities, students will receive a fun introduction to secondary school and have an opportunity to get answers to their many questions. *Wear comfortable clothes and don't bring all of your stuff ...travel light!* If you have any questions, please contact *Link Crew* coordinator Mrs. Judy Hubbard at judy.hubbard@sccdsb.net

St. Patrick's Breakfast Program

There are so many amazing things that St. Patrick's Catholic High School does to support its students in healthy living, whether it be mentally, emotionally or physically. One such example is the daily morning school breakfast program, which began operating in March 2010. This program covers all three elements of healthy living.



Through a strong network of volunteers and community connections, the *Breakfast Club* is available to all students five mornings a week throughout the school year and into final exams. During the 2015-2016 school year, more than 20,000 healthy starts have already been provided to the students and well over 100,000 nutritious morning food options have been served since the program's inception. On any given morning, students may have access to bagels, fresh fruit, granola bars, yogurt, cheese, smoothies and many other healthy choices.

A key feature that has contributed to the great success of the program is its adherence to the concept of universal access. *All* students are welcome to take part in the program. Every morning, students are greeted by the smiling faces of our amazing staff volunteers. The *Breakfast Club* has become a safe haven for many and has the feel of a drop-in café. Students and staff share in conversations, laughter and fun.

The Muskoka Woods Irish Leadership Experience

We are pleased to have the students from the 2015 *Muskoka Woods Irish Leadership Experience* enter into our Catholic high school community this fall. Our planning team was excited to introduce our "Irish Leaders in Training" to this years experience. Our ILIT students interacted with and guided our elementary schools to each of their activities and the evening program. They became a valuable part of our team, developing friendships with not only the elementary students and staff, but also with our many secondary staff and leaders.



They continue to demonstrate many leadership skills such as Industriousness, Friendship, Loyalty, Cooperation and Enthusiasm. We are excited for next year's nominees to join this new opportunity.

We also encourage you to consider applying to be a Muskoka leader when you are in Grade 10, 11 or 12, so that you can pay forward this magnificent experience, as the next generation of Catholic student leaders.