



St. Patrick's Catholic High School

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Mrs. D. Crawford – Director Education
Mr. S. Johnson – Superintendent of Education
Mr. John Van Heck – Chair of the Board
Mr. C. Kehoe – Principal

Mrs. E. Moffat-Sharpe – Vice Principal
Mr. T. Johnson – Vice Principal
Mrs. K. Lobsinger – Acting Vice Principal
Mrs. W. McLean – Head Secretary

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The start of the 2020-21 School year is almost here. The staff extends a special welcome to all of our new families who have joined the school community, as well as all of those returning for the new year. As a school team, we look forward to working with families and the community to make a difference in the well-being of all the students - academically, socially, mentally and spiritually.

As we put the finishing touches on being September Ready and providing an excellent Catholic education, our first priority is the health, safety and well-being of students and staff. We want to be able to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 as much as possible. With this in mind, we have many items we would like to share with families.

Self-Screening for Symptoms

Self-screening to prevent symptomatic individuals from entering the school (in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19) will be expected. Daily screening using the COVID-19 self-assessment is required daily:

<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>

As parents and guardians, you are asked to ensure your child remains home if they are displaying COVID-19 symptoms or even if they are feeling unwell. We need your help and diligence in this matter. Symptoms can be found at the link below:

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_reference_doc_symptoms.pdf

Please note that if symptoms arise throughout the school day, your child will be removed from the classroom to a safe location. You will be asked to pick up your child from school immediately if they show symptoms. These students will not return to the classroom, but will remain in a safe location until pickup. Please ensure the school has your most up-to-date contact information so they may reach you if your child needs to be picked up.

Visitor Access to the School

Building access will be limited. Parents and all other visitors are asked to call the school office ahead of time to schedule meetings with the school principal or speak with other school staff. Please note, for the safety of all, the preference is to communicate with parents/guardians through telephone conversations or video conferences. Any visitors to the school will be required to self-screen and to wear a medical mask while on school premises. Drop offs of lunches, forgotten items, etc will only be allowed in emergency circumstances.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

If your student will be away from school, it is imperative that you inform the office before 8 am by leaving a message on the school 519-332-3976 x20411 or emailing sphattendance@sccdsb.net from a parent email address. Leave the student name, parent name and reason for absence.

Students arriving by bus will enter through designated doors. Students being dropped off, need to be let out in our drop off lane by the gym doors. If picking up at the end of the day, park in a designated parking spot to wait for your student to exit the building. Please do not line up beside the school in the driving lanes to drop off/ pick up students.

During drop off and pick up, please practice physical distancing. Keep a safe distance of 2 metres between you and others when possible. This includes interactions with a teacher, school staff or other parents and students.

Each day, when students arrive at school, they will go directly into the school to their classroom. The school will be divided into four zones which we will be referring to as "Houses." Students will enter through the door that leads directly to the house where their class is. A map and further information will be made available shortly.

Lockers will not be assigned for the foreseeable future. Students will remain with their class for the entire school day and will keep all their belongings with them.

It is imperative that students arrive with their mask on and go directly to their classroom while maintaining as much physical distancing as possible. This will help to maintain our cohorts and promote the health and safety of all.

Some items that may surprise some students but need to be adhered to in order to honour the mandates of the Ministry, Medical Officer of Health and school board safety protocols include:

- Students will remain in their classroom for the entire school day
- Masks worn need to cover the nose, mouth and chin. Mask patterns need to be appropriate for school
- There is no mixing of cohorts, students will not interact with students in different classes, even at lunch or during breaks
- Students will be in regular uniform clothes, with spirit day Tuesdays continuing as usual
- Students will eat lunch in their classroom - cafeteria services, microwaves and vending machines are not available at any point in the day
- Students who leave for lunch will not be allowed to return after lunch
- Students who leave the building without permission throughout the day will not be readmitted (for example: go for an unapproved walk, skip class, go to the pit, etc.)
- All extra-curricular activities have been cancelled for the foreseeable future

Preparing Your Child For School

Your child(ren) may feel anxious about what school will be like when returning. Please take time to talk to your child about some of the new health measures to help prepare for the first day of school. Let them know that while there will be changes, the key school experience will be the same as before - learning in a classroom with a caring teacher and friends. The teacher and the students within a classroom will be a cohort. Cohorting refers to the practice of keeping students together in a small group throughout the school day, with limited exposure to multiple teachers or a wide variety of classmates. The size of the cohort will depend on ministry guidelines. This will help to limit exposure to others, thus reducing the risk of COVID-19 and making contact

tracing easier. Another safety measure is that school-based staff will wear appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment). Students are required to wear masks indoors on school property. Students will wear their own non-medical mask. Other important safety measures include:

- washing or sanitizing hands often throughout the school day;
- keeping distance between others by following signs throughout the building and outside of the school;
- avoiding sharing food or personal items;
- covering coughs and sneezes;
- telling staff if feeling sick at school;
- having scheduled bathroom breaks and maximum occupancy in the bathroom;
- having staggered lunch and break times;
- having assigned seats on the bus - students who take the bus will have to sit in the same seat every day.

Minimize Items Brought to School

Each day, students will need to bring personal belongings, but the amount should be **minimized**. All items should be labelled as much as possible. Personal items to be brought to school will include **mask and several spares for throughout the day as needed** (required), enough **lunch and snacks** for the whole day and necessary utensils, **refillable water bottle** (as individuals will not be able to drink directly from the mouthpiece of the water fountains), Phys Ed apparel (if in a Phys Ed course), and a limited amount of preferred learning resources (pencil case with items). All personal items being brought to school should be labelled and will be stored separately. All personal items brought to school are the student's responsibility, the school is not responsible for the care of them, and are brought at the student's own risk. The school does not assume responsibility if an item is lost, stolen or broken.

Bring Your Own Device

Students are welcome and encouraged to bring their own device, with a charger, to be used by the student for learning. They are expected to follow board policy for acceptable use and follow their teacher's direction about when it is appropriate to use/put away their device. Parents need to sign a permission form once in a student's SCCDSB school career to get access to the wifi (insert permission form here). If students are participating in BYOD (bringing your own device from home), the device must be cleaned each day, prior to returning to the school.

Please remember that our school and board's first priority is the health, safety and well-being of students and staff. The plans in place will follow direction from the Ministry of Education and will be flexible to respond to changes in direction from the Ministry and public health, based on the latest health data.

First Day of School

September 14 - Grade 9 Students Only

September 15 - All students

Sincerely,

Mr. Chris Kehoe - Principal
St. Patrick's Catholic High School