



Secondary Student Handbook

2024-2025 School Year



Welcome to the DSBN Family!

We are looking forward to working with you and your family to support all students.

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'll 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 maintain open communication between the school and home. If you have any questions about this handbook, we encourage you to contact the school who will be happy to discuss them with you.

COMMUNICATION

The relationship between parents and the school is a key component of student success. Our staff work hard to foster

open communication with parents. If you have feedback or concerns about your student's education, we invite you to contact your student's teacher as a first point of contact. We use a variety of tools to provide families and the community with timely information about the school and activities.

These tools may include:

- Governor Simcoe Secondary School webpage at: <http://govsimcoe.dsbni.org/>
- Twitter @simcoeredcoats and Instagram @simcoe.redcoats
- Governor Simcoe's electronic sign at the front of the school
- Customized e-mail and phone messages

BELL TIMES

Period 1	8:10 – 9:25
Period 2 (incl. announcements)	9:30 – 10:55
Lunch	10:55 – 11:35
Period 3	11:35 – 12:50
Period 4	12:55 – 2:10

Please note that students are expected to be in class for the start of each period.

IMPORTANT DATES

September 3, 2024	First Day of Semester 1
September 25, 2024	Rowan's Law Day
September 30, 2024	National Truth and Reconciliation Day
October 10, 2024	Progress Reports Sent Home
October 11, 2024	PD Day
October 24 & 25, 2024	Leadership Conference
November 3 to 9	National Skilled Trade and Technology Week
November 5, 2024	OSSLT Testing Window Opens
November 6, 2024	Take Our Kids to Work Day
November 5 & 6, 2024	Term 1 complete, beginning of Term 2 - CIV/CAR
November 12, 2024	Midterm Reports sent home
November 18-28, 2024	EQAO Snapshot Window
November 29, 2024	November PD Day



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December 3, 2024	OSSLT Testing Window Closes
January 8, 2025	EQAO Math Testing Window Opens
January 13-16, 2025	Grade 8 Open Houses
January 31, 2025	Winter EQAO Math Testing Window Closes
January 22 - Jan 28, 2025	Final Culminating Activities
January 29, 2025	PD Day
January 30, 2025	Semester 2 Starts
February 11, 2025	Semester 1 Report Cards sent home
February 14, 2025	PD Day
February 19, 2025	System Area Meeting
February 26, 2025	Anything Pink Day
February 26, 2025	DSBN Skills Challenges @ Niagara College
March 6, 2025	Progress Reports sent home
March 18, 2025	OSSLT Testing Window Opens
April 4, 2025	PD Day
April 10 & 11, 2025	Term 1 complete, beginning of Term 2 - CIV/CAR
April 15, 2025	OSSLT Window Closes
April 22-May 2, 2025	Spring EQAO Snapshot Window
April 23, 2025	Midterms sent home
May 5, 2025	Music Monday
May 6 -7, 2025	Ontario Skilled Trades Competition
May 28, 2025	EQAO Testing Window Opens
June 5, 2025	System Area Meeting (Director's Appreciation to follow)
June 25, 2025	EQAO Math Testing Window Closes
June 19 - 25, 2025	Final Culminating Activities
June 26-27, 2025	PD Days
July 3, 2025	Semester 2 Reports sent home



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PARKING PASSES

All students must obtain and display a parking pass distributed annually by Governor Simcoe. Applications will be available via Google Form. Please visit the main office for more information, access to the form, and to pick up passes for approved applicants.

PICK UP/DROP OFF

Pick up and drop off are some of the busiest times of the day, with many buses, students and parents in our parking lot and surrounding areas. The procedures we have in place are designed to support a safe, smooth and efficient transition for everyone at these critical times. To support student safety, we ask that you pick-up and drop-off students using the **one-way**, drive-thru route at the front of the school. Please do not block this drive-thru route, especially at the end of the day when safety can be an issue due to parking on the street and congregating.

BUS TICKETS / TRANSPORTATION

St. Catharines Transit Commission bus tickets may be purchased from the Main Office at lunch and after school. This fee is subject to change by the St. Catharines Transit Commission. Please direct inquiries/concerns/needs regarding transportation to the main office for consideration.

SKATEBOARDS, LONGBOARDS, ROLLERBLADES & BIKES

As per District School Board of Niagara policy, skateboards, longboards and rollerblades are NOT permitted at school nor are they permitted to be used anywhere on school property.

Continued violation of this safety rule may result in the confiscation of these items by the administration. Students who ride their bikes to school must store them in the bike rack outside. The school is not responsible for the security of bikes that are stored in the bike rack outside so please ensure they are properly secured with an appropriate lock. Bikes MAY NOT be stored inside the school.

AGE OF MAJORITY

Please note that if adult students wish to authorize school staff to continue sharing their information with their parents/guardians, they have the option of completing the Over 18 - Permission to Communicate form. This form must be completed by the student and is available through our Governor Simcoe website, in hard copy in the Student Services office or by having the student login to their DSBN Student Portal and completing the following digital form, [Over 18 – Permission to Communicate](#).

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

Governor Simcoe promotes healthy lifestyles as described in the Ontario Curriculum and its expectations. Any action that is illegal in society is not permitted in school. The possession and use of alcohol and/or drugs by all students while on Board property, school buses, and while attending school and Board-sponsored events is strictly prohibited. Students found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to progressive discipline. In striving to maintain a drug and alcohol-free environment, our school will make use of a variety of means to ensure the safety of all.

STUDENTS WITH SPARES

Students with spares are asked not to wander the halls. To avoid unnecessary disruptions to other classes, students with spares are asked to go to the Learning Commons (library), the cafeteria or to leave the building. **Students in Grades 9 and 10 are not permitted to have spares.**

HALLS

Students are expected to refrain from any behaviour which causes disruption or endangers personal safety or the safety of others. Among such behaviours are yelling, pushing and shoving, horseplay, and running in the halls. Offensive or obscene language and profanity are also unacceptable. With the exception of students requiring access to their lockers for legitimate reasons, the halls are out of bounds while classes are in session. Students on spare are expected to work quietly in the designated areas, as stated above.

CAFETERIA AND LUNCH HOUR

The cafeteria is open daily from 7:30 a.m. until the end of lunch (11:30 a.m.). All students share the responsibility to keep it clean and are expected to cooperate by clearing their own garbage/litter from their tables by putting their trash in the appropriate receptacles.

Students are encouraged to eat lunch in the cafeteria. Students may also eat lunch in the library, designated classrooms in the English hall, or halls on the first floor where there is teacher supervision. The second and third floor are out of bounds during the lunch hour.

Students may eat outdoors during nice weather providing that all litter is placed in the proper receptacles.

Students are expected to cooperate with staff members who are on supervision duty in the cafeteria each day.

ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies are for all students, whether or not they are on a spare. All students present at an assembly must demonstrate respect for our guest presenters by refraining from talking during a performance or a presentation. In keeping with our school rule, cell phones may not be used during an assembly. In true "Simcoe" fashion, it is appropriate to show our



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appreciation for a presenter at the end of any assembly with applause. In respect for our guest speakers/presenters, students are asked to remain in an assembly until it is over.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Student involvement is an integral part of school life at Governor Simcoe. Students are encouraged to become involved in school activities. Eligibility for a school team and/or club is maintained as long as:

- during the playing season the student has a minimum of 2 classes, per semester (at least part-time status)
- the student has at least a 50% average, and
- is not encountering attendance and/or discipline problems.

School trips are available to students in good standing. The staff member in charge of the trip and the Principal and Vice-Principal have the responsibility to exclude from the trip any student whose behaviour and/or attitude make them a potential concern on a trip.

GUIDANCE / STUDENT SERVICES

WHO ARE WE?

Department Head: Mrs. Cara Stewart
Guidance Counsellors: Mrs. Cara Stewart, Mr. Tope
Guidance Secretary: Mrs. Alexie Jensen
Hours of Operation: 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily

WHAT DO WE DO?

The goals of Guidance/Student Services are to assist students in acquiring the knowledge and skills required to learn effectively, live and work cooperatively and productively with a wide range of people and set and pursue education and career goals.

We look after several tasks within the school such as timetabling, university and college applications, graduation, career/pathway planning, personal counselling, new student registration, maintenance of student records, liaison with feeder schools, and much more. If you're not sure about something, the best place to start is Guidance!

ARRANGING AN APPOINTMENT

If you wish to see a Counsellor, please visit the Guidance Office to request an appointment. Our Guidance Secretary, Mrs. Jensen will review your schedule and counsellor availability to arrange a convenient appointment for you. While we prefer that you arrange an appointment in advance, we know that emergencies do arise. Should you require immediate assistance, please come directly to the Guidance Office. If you require an appointment with one of our support staff, please see the Guidance Secretary.

SIMCOE SUPPORT STAFF

Social Worker: Mr. Virag (Full-time Monday – Friday)
School Nurse: TBD

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

Our main way of communicating with you is through the morning announcements, so stay tuned each day. These announcements are also posted daily on the Governor Simcoe website at <http://govsimcoe.dsbn.org>. Other important information is also shared through our grade-specific Google Classrooms, information posted both inside and outside the Guidance Office on bulletin boards and the walls as well as posted under the Guidance tab on the Governor Simcoe website. Check these out on a regular basis so that you are aware of important information, upcoming presentations, and other happenings. On occasion, we may come to your classes or invite you to assemblies and meetings where we will do presentations on various topics.

DSBN POLICIES

It is recommended that parents and students read the policies listed below. To view all District School Board of Niagara policies, visit: <http://www.dsbn.org/policies>

- Policy D-01: Digital Technology Use by Students
- Policy G-03: Equity and Inclusive Education
- Policy G-02: Safe Schools
- Policy G-26: Use of Mobile Devices by Students
- Policy G-28: Student Discipline
- Policy G-29: Safe and Accepting Schools: Bullying Prevention and Intervention

We will continue to bring attention to updated policies and procedures throughout the school year.

ONTARIO CURRICULUM

The Secondary Curriculum for each subject can be accessed using the following link, <https://www.dsbn.org/secondary/curriculum>.

INDIGENOUS SELF-IDENTIFICATION

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 such measure in recognizing this right is to establish 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



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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?

Students and/or parents/guardians who do not wish to participate will not check off any box. 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 visit

<https://www.dsbni.org/indigenous-education>;

email: Indigenous@dsbn.org or call Indigenous Consultants at: 905-641-2929, K-8 ext. 52246, 9-12 ext. 52317

FIELD TRIPS/EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

School trips are available to students in good standing. The staff member in charge of the trip and the Principal and Vice-principal, have the responsibility to review, advise and approve all participants to ensure a positive and safe experience consistent with expectations regarding student behaviour and attitude

USE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR LEARNING

To enhance the learning and empowerment of our students and maintain an effective and safe electronic learning environment, the DSBN requires that all students follow the rules and regulations set by the Ministry of Education. There are a limited number of chrome books/laptops available for student academic use within department areas as well as for sign-out through the library. Students are responsible for appropriate use and care of devices and may be subject to financial costs incurred for replacement or repair.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

DSBN schools strive to help students develop integrity, a strong work ethic, learning skills and work habits needed for success beyond school. Academic integrity means that students complete their own work, ask the teacher questions if they are unsure, and use proper citations when using another person's work for reference.

Plagiarism is when students claim that the schoolwork they have submitted is theirs, even when a part or all of it has been taken from an uncredited source (including the use of artificial intelligence cites/applications).

SOME EXAMPLES ARE:

- Using a sentence word for word without citing the source
- Using diagrams, charts, graphics, without citing the source
- Submitting work by another person and claiming it as your own
- Paraphrasing without citing the source
- Copying and pasting from the internet

WHAT IS A PROPER CITATION?

A citation is when the student gives credit by including the name of the author, title of source, and location of the original source. An example is, "Trudeau, J. 2019. Statement by the Prime Minister on Earth Day. Accessed from: <https://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/speeches>"

CONSEQUENCES

Consequences for academic dishonesty are considered on a case-by-case basis. Teachers use their professional judgment in cases of suspected academic dishonesty. Consequences may include one or more of the following:

- Redoing part or all of an assignment
- Completing an alternative assignment
- A loss of marks
- A mark of zero
- Suspension

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 Guidance 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.



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- **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.

SPECIALIZED SCHOOL TO COMMUNITY - Include when integrated at principal's discretion.

STUDENTS WITH UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES (E.G. INSTRUCTIONAL OUTREACH, SUPERVISED ALTERNATIVE LEARNING) - Minimum credits adjusted at principal's discretion.

GRADUATION CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

What you need to earn an Ontario Secondary School Diploma depends on the year you started Grade 9.

If you started Grade 9 in 2023 or in prior years, you must earn:

- 18 compulsory credits
- 12 optional credits
- the literacy requirement
- at least 2 online learning credits (opt-out option available – please see Student Services)

If you started Grade 9 in 2024 or in later years you must earn:

- 17 compulsory credits
- 13 optional credits
- the literacy requirement
- at least 2 online learning credits (opt-out option available – please see Student Services)

Everyone needs 40 hours of community involvement activities (volunteering) to get their high school diploma. Please visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/high-school-graduation-requirements> for additional details and the most current information regarding graduation requirements.

MENTAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING SCHOOL SUPPORTS

Mental health and well-being are important factors 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.dsbn.org/programs-services/well-being/home>

Code of Conduct

District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) believes that a school should be a place that promotes responsibility, respect, civility and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, included, accepted, and agree that it is the responsibility of all individuals to actively contribute to a positive school climate. The DSBN believes that to foster a positive school climate that supports student achievement and well-being, a focus should be on prevention and early intervention strategies to address inappropriate behaviour. These standards of behaviour apply whether on school property, on school busses, or other transportation means supplied by DSBN, 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 April 28, 2024, 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 or handbooks.

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



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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; and all Ministry of Education, School Board Policies
- 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
- 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
- Refrain from using abusive language or swearing at another person
- Not use personal mobile devices during instructional time except under the following circumstances:
 - for educational purposes, as directed by an educator
 - for health and medical purposes
 - to support special education needs, as documented in the student's IEP

Safety

All members of the school community must not:

- Engage in bullying behaviours, including cyberbullying
- 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, intimidate, or cause injury to another person
 - Be in possession of, or be under the influence of alcohol, cannabis (unless the individual has been authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes), illegal drugs or related products (for example, vape juice, a pipe or rolling papers)
 - For students, this would also include being in possession of electronic cigarettes, tobacco and nicotine products
 - Provide others with alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco, electronic cigarettes, cannabis or related products (for example, vape juice, a pipe or rolling papers)
 - Inflict or encourage others to inflict bodily harm on another person
 - Engage in hate propaganda and other forms of behaviour motivated by hate or bias
 - Commit an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property or to property located on the premises of the school
 - Record, take or share non-consensual recordings or photos of members of the school community
- 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. This may include engaging Public Health Units, such as Tobacco Enforcement Officers, to support education, prevention and enforcement when necessary
- Empowering students to be positive leaders in their school and community
- Communicating regularly and meaningfully with all members of their school community
- Model the standards of respect, civility and responsible citizenship

Teachers and Other School Staff

Under the leadership of their principals, teachers and other school staff maintain a positive learning environment and are



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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
- 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, in particular the skill of respectful communication, both in person and online
- Model the standards of respect, civility, and responsible citizenship. This includes modeling appropriate use of personal mobile devices. Educators are not to use personal mobile devices during instructional time, unless explicitly for work-related purposes

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
 - For students, this may include turning over items which do not comply with DSBN's Code of Conduct such as mobile devices, nicotine products, and/or electronic cigarettes

Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians play an important role in the education of their children 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 child's schoolwork and progress
- Communicate regularly with the school
- Help their child be appropriately dressed and prepared for school
- Ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time
- Promptly report to the school their child'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 child in following the rules of behaviour
- Collaborate and hold conversations at home about the school expectations surrounding cell phone use and/or vaping
- Assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child

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 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.