



Mary Ward Catholic School

September 2025

School Information

Principal: Mr. A. Cardamone **Superintendent of Education:** Mr. D. Massi

Parish: Our Lady of the Scapular Church

Pastor: Fr. Gregory Schmidt **Associate Pastor:** Fr. Ronnie Tagnines

Website: <https://schools.niagaracatholic.ca/maryward/>

Location: 2999 Dorchester Road Niagara Falls, ON L2J 2Z9

Phone: 905-354-9221

Welcome Back Tiger Families

Welcome Back to a New School Year at Mary Ward Catholic!

The staff at Mary Ward Catholic School are thrilled to be back and eager to begin another exciting and enriching school year. We warmly welcome all returning families and extend a heartfelt greeting to those joining our community for the first time.

We are also pleased to welcome back Fr. Gregory Schmidt and Fr. Ronnie Tagnines, our dedicated pastors and spiritual leaders from Our Lady of the Scapular Parish. Their continued presence and guidance are a blessing to our school community. Our opening mass is scheduled for September 8, 2025 at Our Lady of the Scapular Parish. All are welcome.

As we begin this new chapter, we pray that the year ahead is filled with spiritual growth, academic achievement, meaningful friendships, and joyful experiences. Rooted in our shared faith, we ask for

God's blessings on our students, families, staff, and everyone who is part of the Mary Ward community.

Our staff remains deeply committed to the mission of Catholic Education, and we reaffirm our dedication to providing exemplary learning experiences that nurture the whole child—spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, and physically. The strong partnership between home, school, and parish continues to be the foundation of our success.

We value the voices of all members of our community and invite your input as we work together to foster a positive and inclusive environment. Our Catholic School Council meeting and elections will take place on September 23, 2025. If you are interested in being an active member, please join us.

As always, please feel free to reach out to us with any questions, ideas, or concerns.

Wishing everyone a blessed and successful school year!

Mr. A. Cardamone

Dear God,

Thank you for the gift of education in every form. As our children prepare to start a new year may confidence be their foundation, may grace be their guide and may hope be their compass towards a bright future. I pray they would have eyes to see the needs of those around them and a heart to love well. May they face each day with positivity knowing that no matter what comes their way, they do not have to face it alone.

Amen.



Called By Name

Jesus doesn't just know your name. He calls you by it! In Matthew 28:19, Jesus tells us to "go and make disciples of all nations." But, He doesn't send us out as strangers. He calls each of us by name. He asks us to join this great mission. Just like Jesus called Simon by name and made him Peter, He calls you by your name too. He sees the special gifts you have. You aren't just another face in the crowd. You are called by name to help others follow Jesus right where you are. As we start this school year, let's listen for Jesus calling our name and answer Him in love!



Mary Ward Staff 2025-2026

Secretary: Mrs. Roberto

Child & Youth Worker: Mrs. Vanklinken

Educational Assistants: Mrs. Figueroa, Mrs. Leo, Mrs. Janiak & Mrs. Dolan

Librarian: Mrs. Arcuri

Caretakers: Mr. Maloney & Mrs. Panetta

Educational Resource Teacher: Mrs. Biamonte-Ramunno

Kindergarten: Mrs. Bomberry / Mrs. Kostyk

Kindergarten: Mrs. Rufrano / Ms. Picard

Kindergarten: Mrs. Quaranta

Grade 1: Mrs. Jakovljevic

Grade 2: Mrs. Marrie

Grade 2/3: Mrs. Renda

Grade 3: Mrs. Giorgi

Grade 3/4: Miss Marano

Grade 4: Mr. Cottringer

Grade 4/5: Miss Marinelli

Grade 5: Mrs. Sommise

Grade 6: Mrs. Zappia

Grade 6/7: Miss Driscoll

Grade 7: Mr. Molnar

Grade 7/8: Mr. O'Neil

Grade 8: Mrs. Wojtasik

FSL: Mme. Driscoll & Mme. Covelli

Itinerant Arts: TBD

Multilingual Language Learner Teacher: Mrs. Cottringer

Primary Team Members: Ms. Giammarco & Mrs. Pulido

Principal: Mr. A. Cardamone



Respectful Interaction at Mary Ward

Fostering a Respectful and Caring Community at Mary Ward Catholic

At Mary Ward Catholic School, we are deeply rooted in Catholic and Christian values, which guide our commitment to creating a safe, kind, and loving environment for all who work, learn, and contribute to our school community.

We believe that every member of our community—students, staff, parents, guardians, and community partners—deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. As such, aggressive or hostile behavior or language directed toward others will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

We welcome and value feedback, concerns, and diverse perspectives, and we ask that all communication—whether by email, phone, or in person—be conducted in a respectful and peaceful manner. This expectation applies to everyone in our community and is essential to maintaining a positive and productive school climate.

By upholding these standards, we foster a community where collaboration, problem-solving, and mutual support thrive—allowing every individual to grow and succeed.

Thank you for your continued partnership and commitment to making Mary Ward a place of compassion, excellence, and faith.

Curriculum Night / Meet the Teacher

Wednesday, September 17, 2025 - 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

We are excited to invite all parents and guardians to our **Curriculum Night / Meet the Teacher Night**—an informative evening designed to help you connect with your child’s educators and gain insight into the learning journey ahead.

Throughout the evening, you’ll have the opportunity to:

- Meet your child’s classroom teacher
- Learn about curriculum expectations and classroom routines
- Ask questions and engage in meaningful dialogue

To accommodate families with multiple children, teachers will host **three identical classroom presentations** at the following times:

- **6:00 p.m. – 6:20 p.m.**
- **6:30 p.m. – 6:50 p.m.**
- **7:00 p.m. – 7:20 p.m.**

We look forward to seeing you there and working together to support a successful school year!

Bell Times 2025-2026

Entry Bell — 8:35 AM
Nutrition Break —10:05 AM
Activity Break —10:25 AM
Nutrition Break —12:45 PM
Activity Break —1:05 PM
Dismissal— 2:55 PM

Student Supervision

Student Safety Procedures at Mary Ward Catholic

At Mary Ward Catholic School, student safety is our top priority. To help ensure a safe and supervised environment for all, please take note of the following important procedures:

Morning Supervision

- Supervision begins with the arrival of the first bus at 8:25 a.m.
- Please do not drop off students before 8:25 a.m.
- If arriving early, parents/guardians are asked to remain with their child until supervision begins.

Afternoon Supervision

- Supervision concludes at 3:05 p.m., following bus dismissal.

Nutrition and Activity Breaks

- All students are supervised during both nutrition and activity breaks throughout the school day.

Student Entry Procedures

- Grades 4–8: Enter through the front entrance.
- Kindergarten to Grade 3: Enter through the door west of the gym.

Late Arrivals: To ensure accurate attendance tracking, any student arriving after the 8:35 a.m. bell must:

1. Buzz the office at the front entrance.
2. Pick up a late slip before proceeding to their classroom.

We appreciate your cooperation in following these procedures to help keep our school community safe and well-organized.

Yearbooks Have Arrived!

The 2024-2025 school year was definitely one to remember! And now you will soon reminisce about all those good times! If you ordered a yearbook last year, it will be delivered to you the first week back.

Teachers will begin taking photos as soon as we begin for the 2025-2026 yearbook. Be sure to complete the Parent Guardian Consent Form - Notice of Collection Use and Disclosure of Student Personal Information that is available in School Cash Online in order for your child's photo to be used. As well, be sure to order your copy as soon as it is posted in School Cash Online!

Reminders

Electronics

Supporting a Focused Learning Environment: New Cellphone Use Guidelines

As we continue to foster a safe, respectful, and focused learning environment at Mary Ward Catholic

School, we would like to remind families of the new province-wide regulations regarding cellphone use in Ontario schools.

Effective this school year, the Ontario Ministry of Education has implemented uniform rules across all schools to reduce distractions and support student well-being:

Grades K–8:

Students must keep cellphones on silent and out of sight for the entire school day, unless explicitly permitted by a teacher for educational, medical, or special needs purposes



General Expectations:

- Devices must be turned off or set to silent.
- Phones must be stored out of view (e.g., in a bag or pocket).
- Teachers will provide option for storage.
- Students who do not comply may be asked to surrender their device for the class or day, depending on grade level
- Repeat violations may result in progressive discipline, including possible suspension

We kindly ask for your support in reinforcing these expectations at home and encouraging your child to stay focused on their learning during school hours. These measures are part of Ontario's broader effort to promote mental health, reduce distractions, and ensure consistency across all schools

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the school office.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support.

Payment for School Activities

Sign Up for School Cash Online – A Safer, Easier Way to Pay

We encourage all parents and guardians to register for **School Cash Online**, our secure and convenient platform for making payments related to student activities, trips, and events. This system helps reduce the need to send cash or cheques to school, making transactions safer and more efficient for everyone.

Why Use School Cash Online?

- Fast and easy payments from home
- Track your child's school-related expenses
- Receive notifications about new items available for purchase
- No need to send money with your child

Register Today: Visit: <https://ncdsb.schoolcashionline.com>

Follow the simple steps to create your account and link your child.

Thank you for helping us streamline school payments and keep our students safe!



SchoolCashOnline.com: Welcome

SchoolCash Online

ncdsb.schoolcashionline.com

Back to School Bus Transportation Information

Opt-In/Opt-Out of Transportation: Families confirm bus use through the NSTS Parent Portal form. Families opted-in for 2024–25 remain opted-in for 2025–26. Families not using the bus must

complete the Opt-Out form. This process ensures accurate capacity planning, ride times, and manifests. In the Fall, NSTS will work with schools and drivers to remove non-riders.

Bus Operations: Routes run Monday–Friday for consistency and accurate manifests. Only students listed on the manifest may ride; no unauthorized passengers. Families making address changes or new registrations should arrange alternate transportation for the first two weeks of school, as schools and NSTS may not be able to process all changes immediately.

Bus Safety

Bus Safety Guidelines – Ensuring a Safe Ride for All Students

At Mary Ward Catholic School, student safety is a shared responsibility. Please take a moment to review and discuss the following **bus safety expectations** with your child to help ensure a safe and respectful experience for everyone:

At the Bus Stop

- Arrive **5 to 10 minutes early**.
- Stand **safely on the sidewalk or shoulder**, away from the road.

When the Bus Arrives

- Line up in a **straight line**.
- Wait until the bus has **fully stopped** and the doors have opened.
- **Do not touch** the outside of the bus.

Getting on the Bus

- Board **one at a time**.
- Use the **handrail** while climbing the stairs.
- Go directly to your seat and **settle in quickly**.

While Riding the Bus

- Sit properly: **back against the seat, bottom on the seat**.
- Keep your **school bag on your lap**.
- Use a **quiet voice** to help the driver stay focused.

Getting Off the Bus

- Remain seated until the bus has **come to a complete stop**.
- Exit only at your **designated stop or school**.
- If your routine includes meeting a parent or guardian, **look for them before getting off**.
- If you **don't see your parent/guardian** or **miss your stop**, **inform the bus driver immediately**.

Crossing in Front of the Bus

- Wait for the **driver's signal** before crossing.
- Cross only when the driver confirms it is **safe to do so**.

Thank you for your continued support in keeping our students safe during their daily travels. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school office.

Crossing Guard Safety

Crossing Guard Safety Reminder

To ensure the safety of all students, please remind your child to follow the crossing guard's signals carefully:

- When the crossing guard blows the whistle once, it means stop and wait.
- When the whistle is blown twice, it signals that it is safe to cross.

Students should always wait for the two-whistle signal before stepping onto the road, and follow the crossing guard's instructions at all times.

Thank you for helping us keep our students safe on their way to and from school.

Emergency Medical Protocols

Supporting Student Health and Safety at Mary Ward

At Mary Ward Catholic School, we are committed to working in close partnership with families to provide a safe, inclusive, and healthy learning environment for all students.

We recognize that some students may have medical conditions—such as severe allergies, diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, intolerances, or seizure disorders—that require specific care and attention during the school day. To ensure we can meet each child's needs and support their well-being, it is essential that we have an up-to-date Plan of Care on file.

If your child has a medical condition that requires a specific plan, please contact the school as soon as possible so we can work together to ensure their safety and success.

Thank you for your continued support and collaboration.

Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis Awareness and Safety at Mary Ward Catholic School

At Mary Ward Catholic, we are committed to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and healthy environment for all students. We have several students who live with anaphylaxis, a severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction that can be triggered by exposure to allergens such as peanuts, dairy, medications, latex, insect stings, and even residue from unwashed hands.

In accordance with provincial health and safety guidelines, our school has implemented procedures to support students at risk, including:

- Individual Plans of Care for students with known medical conditions
- Staff training on recognizing symptoms and administering emergency treatment (e.g., EpiPen)
- Risk reduction strategies in classrooms and common areas
- Ongoing communication with families and the school community



We kindly ask all families to support these efforts by avoiding the inclusion of known allergens in lunches and snacks. Classroom teachers are working diligently to prevent accidental exposure, and your cooperation is essential in keeping all students safe.

If your child has a medical condition that requires a Plan of Care, please contact the school office as soon as possible so we can ensure their safety and well-being throughout the school day.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding in addressing this serious health concern.

Niagara Region Public Health

Eyes Ready for the School Year!

Proper vision is important for a student's learning and social development. A full eye exam by an eye doctor (optometrist) is the best way to ensure healthy eyes and good vision.



The Eye See...Eye Learn® (<https://optom.on.ca/esel/>) program is for students in junior and senior kindergarten to have a full eye exam (covered by OHIP) with a participating optometrist (<https://find.optom.on.ca/>) *Participating optometrists will have a note beside their name saying "Eye See...Eye Learn doctor." If a child needs glasses, they will receive a free pair donated by Plastic Plus, Modern Optical Canada and the participating optometrist. For children aged 19 and under, OHIP covers the cost of a complete annual eye exam and any follow-up assessments that may be required.

A yearly eye exam is recommended – find an eye doctor near you (<https://find.optom.on.ca/>). For more information, please visit <https://www.niagararegion.ca/health/schools/vision-screening.aspx>.

Check Your Child's Routine Vaccinations or Exemption Information

Public Health is checking vaccine records and exemptions for all school-aged children. Often, children are up-to-date with their routine vaccinations (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/vaccines-children-school>) but their records have not yet been reported Public Health's Vaccine Team



(<https://niagararegion.ca/health/vaccinations/default.aspx>). Doctors, childcare centres, and schools do not automatically share these records with Public Health.

How to check your child's vaccination record:

1. Log in to Immunization Connect (ICON) (<https://nrph.icon.ehealthontario.ca/#!/welcome>)
2. Make sure all the vaccines your child has received are listed. Add any that are missing.
3. Look at the "Immunizations Needed" section. If something is missing, book an appointment to get your child vaccinated. After the appointment, add the new vaccine to ICON.

For exemptions:

If you have an exemption, make sure it's still valid for school-aged children. Exemptions from childcare expire when your child starts school in September.

If we don't have all the information, Public Health may contact you later this fall.

For questions, call the Vaccine Team at **905-688-8248** or **1-888-505-6074 ext. 7425**.

If English isn't your first language, interpreter services are available.

Safely Packing Lunches

1. Clean

- Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water before preparing any meal

- Make sure you sanitize countertops, utensils and any lunch boxes or lunch bags



- For surfaces and lunch boxes/bags: mix 2.5 ml (1/2 tsp) of bleach with 1 L (4 cups) of water.
- Apply to surface and let stand briefly.
- Rinse with clean water and air dry or use a clean towel.

- Wash raw fruits and vegetables before eating

1. Keep Cold Food Cold

- Meat, chicken, seafood, eggs, and dairy products must stay cold to stay safe. Use frozen packs to keep food at or below 4°C (40 F).
- Use an insulated lunch bag and place freezer packs between foods that need to stay cold. Refrigerate the night before to get your lunch bag off to a cool start.

1. Keep Hot Food Hot

- Hot food must stay hot at above 60°C (140°F). Use insulated containers and keep them closed until ready to eat or take your food cold and reheat it.

For more information visit https://www.niagararegion.ca/living/health_wellness/inspection/safe-food-handling-dine-in.aspx.

Active School Travel

#BackToSchool season is the best time to start planning your child's active route to school this September. This year, take the stress out of driving and consider walking, biking, and scootering or rolling to school with your child! Plan your active journey to school and try it out this back-to-school season! There are several benefits of active school travel for your children:



1. More people walking means fewer cars and cleaner air around the school
2. Kids who walk, bike, or roll to school arrive alert and ready to learn
3. Active transportation to school counts towards daily physical activity needs for your children and much more!

To help build confidence and participate in active transportation safely, consider reviewing the resources below:

- [Blue the Butterfly](https://vimeo.com/449360434/fe564ed3b1) (<https://vimeo.com/449360434/fe564ed3b1>) – a pedestrian safety video for families.
- [Cycle Safety Virtual Bike Rodeo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-JdZN1-iaK) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-JdZN1-iaK>) – education and training for safe cycling featuring skills like putting on a helmet, using hand signals, and doing shoulder checks.

Vaping Has No Place in Our Schools

As part of Ontario's updated [Provincial Code of Conduct, Policy/Program Memorandum 128](https://www.ontario.ca/document/education-ontario-policy-and-program-direction/policyprogram-memorandum-128) (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/education-ontario-policy-and-program-direction/policyprogram-memorandum-128>) now includes stricter rules to keep vaping and smoking products out of schools and away from our young learners.

Effective September 1, 2024, students are not allowed to possess or use vaping products (or tobacco) on school property, including



within 20 metres of school grounds. If a student is found with these items, they must surrender them immediately, and parents will be notified.

This update supports a safe, healthy, and distraction-free environment for all students. It's also backed by the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, which helps protect children from exposure to harmful substances.

Let's work together to keep our schools vape-free and focused on learning!

If your child needs support with vaping, check out [Youth-Vaping, Substance use, and Technology \(VAST\)](https://www.camh.ca/en/patients-and-families/programs-and-services/youth-vast) (<https://www.camh.ca/en/patients-and-families/programs-and-services/youth-vast>).

For more information, please visit <https://www.niagararegion.ca/health/substances/default.aspx>

School Messenger

One of our greatest priorities is ensuring that all our students arrive safely to school each and every day. School Messenger allows parents to report their child's absence quickly and conveniently using a mobile app, a web site, or an interactive toll-free phone line to report an absence, late arrival or early departure, in advance.

As a result, it will take the school less time to verify student attendance, and less time to begin to notify parents and guardians of absences that were unexpected or unplanned. This time savings makes it faster and more efficient to account for all students and their safety.

If your child is marked absent and the absence hasn't been explained in advance, our SafeArrival system will be able to rapidly contact you by automated phone call, text message, email, or mobile app push notification to get a reason for the absence. Calls and contacts will continue until you choose an option to explain the absence.

PLEASE continue to call and advise the school of your child's absences, late arrival or early dismissals by using the mobile app, online <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca/#/home> or by calling 1-844-287-6287. It'll be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to make it convenient for you to report future absences.

Student Information Forms

On the first day of school, you will be receiving a copy of the student information sheet, which the school keeps on file for all children in our building. The information provided should be current and up to date, as it is critical that we have a means of contacting you during the day should there be a need.

Please return these with changes indicated in the space provided by Friday September 12, 2025.

If you have a current email address, please be sure to add it on the form in the space

Should there be any changes during the school year, please keep us informed. It is imperative that we have accurate and complete information on file.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED - Delta Bingo & Gaming

Mary Ward Catholic School would like to extend a big thank you to Delta Bingo & Gaming on Drummond Rd. for their contributions to our school fundraising initiatives.

This could not be possible without the help of parent volunteers from our community. A special thank you to Robyn Pearson and Amanda Leon for their leadership.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Robyn Pearson at robyndpearson@gmail.com.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Kiss 'n' Ride Drop-off

To ensure a smooth and safe drop-off experience for all students, please follow these important guidelines when using our Kiss and Ride area:

- Place your vehicle in park before allowing your child to exit.
- Remain in your vehicle—staff will be present to greet your child and safely escort them to the walkway.
- There is no need to exit your car, which helps keep traffic flowing and ensures safety for everyone.
- Please be patient and courteous to staff and other families during drop-off. Safety is our shared responsibility.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us maintain a safe and efficient morning routine.

Standardized Dress Code

A friendly reminder that all schools within the Niagara Catholic District School Board follow a standardized dress code to promote a sense of unity, respect, and focus within our learning environment.

Students are expected to wear:

- A white or navy collared shirt
- Navy bottoms – pants, shorts, or skirts

If you have any questions or concerns about the dress code or require clarification on specific items, please don't hesitate to contact the school. We are here to support you and work together to ensure all students feel comfortable and confident at school.

Thank you for your cooperation and continued partnership.

Mary Ward Spirit Wear & Grad Hoodies

As we look ahead to celebrating the Grade 8 Graduating Class of 2026, we're excited to offer Graduation Hoodies for students to order. These hoodies are a great way to commemorate this special milestone and may be worn as part of the standardized dress code throughout the school year.

If you placed an order over the summer, your hoodie will be delivered in early September.

To place a new order for a Graduation Hoodie or Spirit Wear, please visit:

www.maddalena-uniforms.com

We look forward to celebrating our graduates and making this year memorable!

Terry Fox Walk

Friday, September 26, 2025

On Friday, September 26, all students at Mary Ward Catholic School will participate in the Terry Fox School Day Walk—a meaningful event that honours Terry's legacy and supports cancer research.

This day will also mark our first Spirit Day of the school year! Students are encouraged to show their school spirit by wearing red and white. It will be an Alternate Dress Code Day, so students may wear appropriate non-uniform clothing in support of the event.

Families who wish to make a donation to the Terry Fox Foundation can do so online. 100% of the funds raised will go directly to support cancer research. More information on website to donate will be shared in September.

Thank you for your support and enthusiasm as we come together as a community to walk with purpose and pride.



Mary Ward Catholic Elementary School - Niagara Falls, ON | Terry Fox School Run

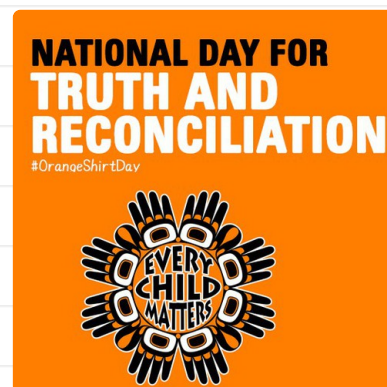
Terry Fox School Run

schools.terryfox.ca

Orange Shirt Day

Students and staff are encouraged to wear the colour orange on Tuesday, September 30, 2025, in support of Orange Shirt Day. We encourage all schools order shirts from Pegasus School Images, as all proceeds will be shared between the Orange Shirt Society and Woodland Cultural Centre. Pegasus Order Form Shirts are \$15 including tax. Families are encouraged to place their orders online through the link below. A credit card is required. At the time of placing orders, parents/staff will be asked to select: The shirt size, the quantity and the name of the school where the shirt is to be delivered. All orders must be placed by midnight, Monday, September 15, 2025 for all shirts to be delivered to schools on time.

<https://teamandspiritwear.com/NCDSBORANGEDAY/shop/home>



Mary Ward Catholic School Council

The Mary Ward Catholic School Council is already busy planning and getting organized for all the things that make Mary Ward Catholic School so special. At our first meeting we will be electing a

Council Chairperson, as well as our Parent Reps. As a Catholic School Council, we are mandated to meet 4 times yearly. There is a place for everyone on the Mary Ward Catholic School Council. Get involved and make a difference. Self Nomination forms will be emailed to families in early September. Our first meeting is **Tuesday, September 23, 2025 at 6:00 pm** in the school library.



Mr. A. Cardamone

Principal

