



# St. Ann Catholic Elementary School

*Proud member of the Saint Francis Family of Schools  
"The Spirit of Excellence"*

## **September - Beginning of the School Year**

We gather at the start of a new school year with somewhat mixed emotions. Teachers and students alike may feel both excitement and anxiety. Looking ahead to the coming year may fill us with renewed energy and hope, or with reluctance and worry.

O Divine teacher, be our constant guide as we begin a new year of teaching and of learning. May all that we do be directed to the pursuit of truth and justice.

Spirit of wisdom, grant us a greater appreciation for the dignity and value of each person whom we encounter.

Keep us mindful that each of us carries knowledge and experience that we can share. Open all of our minds and hearts even more to the wonders of your creation. Be our constant guide as we journey together.

Amen

## **Staffing Changes**

Welcome to Miss. Harder, who will be teaching grade 4 this year. She will be filling in for Mrs. Bagnulo. We welcome Mrs. Severy, who will be teaching the Arts program. Mrs. LeRose has moved to a new school and we wish her all the best. Finally, we welcome Mrs. Gasnik, who will be our new Child and Youth Worker. Mrs. Carroll has moved on to Blessed Trinity in Grimsby and we wish her all the best.

## **Happy First Week of School**

I look forward to working with all of you throughout this fifth year. I will be providing you with weekly updates of news and events at the school this year as we navigate through 2025 - 2026. I will also post important dates on the school website at: <https://schools.niagaracatholic.ca/stann-stcatharines/>

Thank you again and have a great weekend. I look forward to seeing everyone on September 2!!

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## Morning Drop-off/End of Day Pick-up

Just a reminder to parents that these are busy times and we will do our very best to move traffic along. Please be patient and remember to always drop off and pick up your child close to the curb so that they are not crossing traffic.

## St. Ann (SC) Bell Times

8:25	Bus Arrival/Drop Off Starts
8:35	Bell to start school
10:45 - 11:05	Recess
11:05 - 11:25	Nutrition Break (Lunch- Food Day Orders served)
12:45 - 1:05	Recess
1:05 - 1:25	Nutrition Break (Lunch)
2:45	Parent Pick Up Starts
2:55	End of Day Bell/Bus and Walker Dismissal
3:00	Bus Departure (varies with weather, etc)

## Busing and Parent Pick-up and Drop-off

Please contact the school first about any address changes or bus situations. We work closely with the transportation department and most changes to the bus have to be entered into the Maplewood system at school. Please be patient with bus times for pick up and drop off for the first two weeks.

At the beginning of the day, parents can drive up to the front doors of the school to drop off their child(ren). An adult will be there to direct them. Parents that are getting out of their vehicle to walk their child to the kindergarten area for drop-off will need to park in the parking lot. Please note that we have limited spaces. Buses will be pulling in and dropping off students at the front of the YMCA entrance. Please do not park in this area so that buses can enter and leave for their next run.

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At the end of the day, parents can pick up their child(ren) from the front of the school by parking in the parking lot and meeting them at the front of the school. Pick-ups will be dismissed at 2:45 pm before the buses arrive at 2:55 pm. At this time all bus students and walkers will be dismissed. Please make sure you do not block the buses from entering the front of the school and the YMCA entrance.

### **PPM 128 - Student Cell Phones**

As we continue to foster a safe and positive learning environment for all students, I would like to remind you of the new regulations regarding cell phone use that have been implemented in Ontario schools.

To minimize distractions and maximize learning, cell phones are only permitted during instructional time when they are being used for educational purposes as directed by the teacher. Outside of these times, students are expected to keep their phones turned off and stored away unless needed for documented learning needs and/or health related requirements. We kindly ask for your support in reinforcing this policy with your children and encouraging them to focus on their studies during school hours.

Your cooperation is essential in helping us maintain a healthy and respectful school environment. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these rules, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

### **Nutrition and Water Bottle Policy**

A healthy school environment enhances student learning and success, and enhances students' social and emotional well-being. In order to establish this environment and reduce the risks for all students who suffer severe, life threatening allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) to certain foods, Principals and staff must follow the Administrative Guidelines as outlined in the Anaphylaxis Policy 302.1 of the Niagara Catholic District School Board and the Nutrition Tools for Schools encourages healthy eating choices and encourages non-food choices as rewards.

Therefore, as a reminder to all families that there should be no food items brought to the school for birthdays or holidays (Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, etc). Any special classroom events will be organized by the teacher.

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## **Dress Code Reminder**

Please take a moment to review the Elementary Dress Code policy before purchasing new dress code items for the 2025-2026 school year. This dress code policy also provides guidelines for Out-of-Dress Code wear.

<https://docushare.ncdsb.com/dsweb/Get/Document-1981986/302.6.10%20-%20Elementary%20Standardized%20Dress%20Code%20Policy%20AOP.pdf>

## **Attendance Reminder**

Please remember to enter your child's absence or late arrival before 8:35 am. After 8:35 am, you will have to call the school or wait for the callout system to contact you. The system will continue to call out until you have completed all the steps required. I have included the link below:

<https://niagaracatholic.ca/safearrival/>

## **SchoolCash Online**

Throughout the school year, there will be opportunities for your child to participate in social justice initiatives, food days, field trips, and other activities that may include a fee. All fees are collected through SchoolCash Online. I have provided the link below:

<https://ncdsb.schoolcashonline.com/>

## **Parent Portal - Maplewood Student Information System**

Just a reminder that all report cards, class placements, and IEP's will be provided electronically through the Maplewood Student Information System. I have provided the link to the Parent Portal for access to this and all sites that may assist you and your child.

<https://sites.google.com/niagaracatholic.ca/parents/home>

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## **Grad Hoodies and Spirit Wear**

Just a reminder that all spirit wear can be ordered directly from Big Bear Spiritwear

<https://www.bigbearspritwear.com/st-ann/>

## **Fire Drills / Hold and Secure Practice**

Every year we will perform six fire drills (3 in the fall and 3 in the spring) as well as two hold and secure/lockdown practices. A letter will come home with the dates for the hold and secure practices to explain the process.

## **Updated Emergency Forms**

Emergency forms will be sent home to all families during the first week of school. If there are no changes to the form, please reply "No Changes" so that we know you have received the form. We will be making these changes as we receive them.

## **ECO Schools - St. Ann Received a Gold for Eco-Initiatives**

Niagara Catholic District School Board commit to beginning conversations with cafeteria suppliers at all board sites before their next contract renewal in order to transition from the use of food and beverages packaged in plastic containers, and discontinue the use of single-use plastic utensils and straws at all board sites by September 2023; and

And Niagara Catholic District School Board bans all single-use plastics from all board sites and encourages staff and students to use reusable food and drink containers beginning in September 2022.

As we begin to prepare for the upcoming school year, when the current supply of single-use plastics runs out, no replacements will be ordered. Let's make a difference this year!!

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Battery Recycling will continue at the school. All used batteries can be brought to the main office.

Litterless Lunches - When considering packing snacks and lunches, reusable containers are used to reduce the amount of garbage being collected at the school.

**Field Trips** - As we plan and prepare for field trips we remind all families that: All activities have an inherent risk of injury; this includes activities students take part in on educational field trips. One very important part of effective planning requires that parents be informed of the risks associated with the proposed activity and give permission for their child to participate. This is accomplished by using a Permission/Informed Consent form provided by Niagara Catholic. The purpose of Informed Consent is to demonstrate that the school board acts as “a reasonable and prudent person” in informing the participant and his/her parents that there are inherent risks associated with specific activities, and that certain injuries may result if the student participated. Common risks that are inherent to activities include but are not limited to:

- Collision with natural or man-made objects or other persons; hard surfaces;
- flying objects;
- physical agility including rapid movements and quick turns and stops;
- Physical exertion;
- Exposure to weather conditions;
- Exposure to vegetation, insects and wildlife;
- Site conditions, e.g., heights, water, equipment, and materials;
- Modes of transportation;
- Failure to remain within designated areas and supervised activities.

Injuries may occur as a result of participating in activities that are inherent in the aforementioned risks. Injuries can include but are not limited to bruises, cuts, scrapes, sprains, strains, broken bones, dental injuries, concussions, back and spinal injuries, sunburn, insect bites/stings, serious injury. The risk of sustaining these types of injuries result from the nature of the activity and can occur without any fault of either the student, or the school board, its employees/agents or the facility where the activity is taking place. By choosing to take part in this activity, you are accepting the risk that you/your child may be injured. The chance of an injury occurring

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can be reduced by carefully following instructions at all times while engaged in the activity. If you choose to attend this field trip /educational activity, you must understand that you bear the responsibility for any injury that might occur. The Niagara Catholic District School Board does not provide accidental death, disability, dismemberment or medical expense insurance on behalf of the students participating in this activity.

### **Happy Grandparents Day - September 8, 2025**

This Universal Prayer For Grandparents was composed by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI in 2008 for the Catholic Grandparents Association.

Lord Jesus,  
you were born of the Virgin Mary,  
the daughter of Saints Joachim and Anne.  
Look with love on grandparents the world over.  
Protect them! They are a source of enrichment  
for families, for the Church and for all of society.  
Support them! As they grow older,  
may they continue to be for their families  
strong pillars of Gospel faith,  
guardian of noble domestic ideals,  
living treasuries of sound religious traditions.  
Make them teachers of wisdom and courage,  
that they may pass on to future generations the fruits  
of their mature human and spiritual experience.

Lord Jesus,  
help families and society  
to value the presence and roles of grandparents.  
May they never be ignored or excluded,  
but always encounter respect and love.  
Help them to live serenely and to feel welcomed  
in all the years of life which you give them.  
Mary, Mother of all the living,

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keep grandparents constantly in your care,  
accompany them on their earthly pilgrimage,  
and by your prayers, grant that all families  
may one day be reunited in our heavenly homeland,  
where you await all humanity  
for the great embrace of life without end.

Amen

### **Grandparents Day Assembly - September 8**

Grandparents are invited to attend the school on September 8, from 12:00 - 12:45. There will be a brief assembly in the gymnasium and then they will have an opportunity to visit their grandchild(s) classroom.

**Catholic School Council - First meeting Sept 23 at 6:30 PM** - As a Catholic School Council member, you can help your council discover new and exciting ways to contribute to the education of students in your school. Education is a partnership involving parents, students, teachers, principals, school boards, government, and the community. Your involvement in the council gives you the opportunity to strengthen that partnership, and to be part of a dedicated team working to ensure a high quality of education and an accountable education system for the children of Ontario. Your participation can make a difference! Nomination forms will be emailed out to all families. Please consider joining the St. Ann Catholic School Council

Nomination Forms will be emailed out on **Monday, September 8, 2025.**

### **Yearbooks**

The yearbooks went on sale in June. We will keep you posted when they arrive at the school!

### **ORANGE SHIRT DAY 2025 – Tuesday, September 30, 2025**

Orange Shirt Day is the story of Phyllis Webstad, an Indigenous woman who shared her experience at an Indian Residential School through the children's book, The Orange Shirt Story. By participating in Orange Shirt Day, we recognize the harm done to generations of children by the Indian Residential School system in Canada. The

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first Orange Shirt Day occurred on September 30th, 2013 as Chief Fred Robbins saw Phyllis' story as a way of bringing together Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Since that time, Orange Shirt Day has grown into a national awareness among schools, businesses, and communities.

In June 2021, the Federal Government of Canada designated September 30th as the National Day for Truth & Reconciliation. While this addresses Call to Action #80 of the Truth and Reconciliation 94 Calls to Action, it coincides with an established day that was created by Survivors of Indian Residential Schools. As a Board we can acknowledge the Federal statutory day, but for school and student activities, for the present time, it remains "Orange Shirt Day" as a way of respecting the grass root Indigenous movement.

### **Important Dates**

September 2 - First Day of School

September 8 - Grandparents Day 12 PM - 12:45 PM (Overflow parking at back of the school)

September 18 - Curriculum Night/Meet the Teacher 6:00 - 7:00 PM

September 25 - Rowan's Law Day

September 26 - Terry Fox Day - Out of Dress Code - (Red and White)

September 30 - Orange Shirt Day - Dress Code Bottoms

### **Save the Date**

**Student Photo Day - October 23, 2025**

**Grade 7 Vaccinations (Hepatitis B, Meningococcal and Human Papilloma Virus) - October 8 and April 20**

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