



In keeping with the Mission, Vision and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, the following are Administrative Operational Procedures for Safe Arrival.

PREAMBLE

The Board is committed to effective, regular and timely communication between the home and school in relation to student attendance, and has implemented the Niagara Catholic Safe Arrival system.

It is an expectation that parents/guardians will be responsible to use the Niagara Catholic Safe Arrival system to report their child's late arrival or absence for part or all of the school day.

The Niagara Catholic Safe Arrival system is accessible to parents/guardians to report their child's late arrival or absence quickly and conveniently in one of three ways:

1. Telephone: Toll free number (1.844.287.6287)
2. Parent Portal website: <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca>
3. Free Smartphone App, "Safe Arrival"

REPORTED LATES/ABSENCES

When parents/guardians report their child's late arrival or absence, the late arrival or absence will be recorded and parents/guardians will receive confirmation through a text message or e-mail as provided by the parent/guardian in the Parent Portal. The automated system call-out will NOT be activated when a child's late arrival or absence has been reported.

UNREPORTED LATES/ABSENCES

If a student's late arrival or absence is unverified, parents/guardians will receive an automated communication by phone (home and mobile numbers), and/or text message/e-mail as provided and established in the Parent Portal, seeking verification of the late arrival or absence. Parents/guardians may then indicate the reason for the late arrival or absence through the automated system call-out.

The Niagara Catholic Safe Arrival system procedures are as follows:

1. Parents/Guardians will receive a call at the home and mobile number as provided by the parents/guardians.
2. Parents/Guardians are required to listen to the entire message and follow the prompts accordingly.
3. Parents/Guardians will be asked about the late arrival or absence:
 - i. If parents/guardians are unaware of the late arrival or absence, parents/guardians will be asked to call the school immediately.
 - ii. If parents/guardians are aware of the late arrival or absence, parents/guardians will be asked to enter the reason.
 - iii. At the end of the message, parents/guardians are to confirm that the message has been received.

- iv. If parents/guardians do not confirm receipt of the message or if there is no response, the entire process will be repeated.
4. Parents/Guardians will also receive a text message/e-mail as provided and established in the Parent Portal.
5. If the system does not receive a response from parents/guardians, the school secretary will contact as listed in the student information system the parents/guardians and/or emergency contact(s) to verify a student's absence.
6. The principal may contact the Niagara Regional Police Service regarding any student's failure to arrive at school.

TRAINING

The Board will facilitate training for teaching and support staff, including occasional and casual staff on the Niagara Catholic Safe Arrival system.

DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

It is an expectation that parents/guardians will use the Niagara Catholic Safe Arrival system to report their child's late arrival or absence for part or all of the school day.

- Report their child's late arrival or absence prior to the commencement of the school day using the Niagara Catholic Safe Arrival phone system, web or app option.
- When a call is received through the automated system call-out, listen to the entire message and follow the prompts to confirm the late arrival or absence.
- Provide current emergency contact information, in order of priority of the individuals to be contacted in case of an unverified late arrival or absence.
- Notify the main office, in a timely manner, of any changes to emergency contact information.
- Provide written documentation that is signed, dated, stating the dates and reason for their child's absence that will exceed five (5) or more consecutive days (i.e. vacation, medical procedures).
- If parents/guardians do not report a student's absence, the principal may contact the Niagara Regional Police Service regarding a student's failure to arrive at school.

BUS CANCELLATION AND SCHOOL CLOSURE

- When bus transportation is cancelled but schools are open, all parents/guardians are required to report their child's absence using the Niagara Catholic Safe Arrival system.
- When schools are closed by the Director of Education due to inclement weather or any other reason, parents/guardians are not required to report their child's absence.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRINCIPAL OF THE SCHOOL

The Niagara Catholic Safe Arrival system is designed to be flexible, with a view of achieving overall effectiveness and efficiency.

The principal of the school will:

- support the use of the Niagara Catholic Safe Arrival system;
- communicate the plan to all parents/guardians, and the Catholic School Council, within the first month of each school year and to any new parents/guardians registering a student during the school year;
- include the safe arrival system and procedures in the student handbook detailing the expectations placed upon the parents/guardians to report a late arrival or absence;
- periodically review the safe arrival system with parents/guardians and Catholic School Council to confirm its effectiveness;

- identify the time for the staff to input their classroom attendance into the student management system;
- implement procedures that facilitate the communication of a student’s late arrival or absence by the home to the school and the school to the home;
- take into account both normal recurring circumstances and unusual events and conditions as regular procedures that may change due to inclement weather and/or bus cancellations.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

The classroom teacher will:

- input a student’s late arrival or absence in the student management system in a timely manner as determined by the school principal;
- provide any documentation received from parents/guardians for an absence that exceeds five (5) or more days (i.e. vacation, medical procedures) to the school administration.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL SECRETARY

The school secretary will:

- confirm the attendance taken by classroom teacher(s);
- initiate the call-out;
- enter the specifics of the student’s late arrival or absence;
- contact the parents/guardians/emergency contacts of students with unverified absences in a timely manner;
- ensure accurate and timely tracking of attendance throughout the day;
- ensure accurate record keeping of home, work and emergency contact information and phone numbers;
- record and retain any documentation received from parents/guardians for a student’s absence that exceeds five (5) or more days (i.e. vacation, medical procedures).

References:

- [*Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum 123*](#)
- [*Education Act, \(21.5\)*](#)
- [*Niagara Catholic District School Board Policies/Procedures*](#)
 - [*Code of Conduct Policy \(302.6.2\)*](#)
 - [*Safe and Accepting Schools Policy \(302.6\)*](#)

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