



NOTICE OF THE COLLECTION, USE AND DISCLOSURE OF STUDENT PERSONAL INFORMATION

The purpose of this notice is to explain how the Niagara Catholic District School Board (the Board) and your school use the personal information you provide to us. The *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA), the *Personal Health Information Protection Act* (PHIPA) and the *Education Act* set requirements that school boards and their schools must follow when collecting, using and disclosing students' personal information. Under MFIPPA, personal information refers to any recorded information about an identifiable individual.

[MFIPPA](#) contains specific exceptions that allow for personal information to be disclosed by school boards, including:

- to allow employees to access the specific information they need in order to perform their duties;
- to comply with a court order or subpoena, or to aid in an investigation conducted by a law enforcement agency;
- to meet legislated requirements, such as reporting to the Ministry of Education;
- the purpose for which it was collected, or for a reason consistent with that purpose;
- with the consent of parents/guardians, if the proposed use or disclosure of personal information does not fall under any of the above uses.

[PHIPA](#) specifies how health care practitioners and health information custodians handle personal health information. It confirms rules for the collection, use and disclosure of personal health information that protects the confidentiality of the information while facilitating the effective provision of health care.

The *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* (CYFSA) requires school boards to report to child protection services when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk.

The *Education Act* requires schools to maintain an Ontario Student Record (OSR) for each student. The OSR is an ongoing record of a student's educational progress through schools, and will be transferred when/if the student transfers to another school in Ontario. The Ministry of Education's Ontario Student Record (OSR) Guideline establishes the maintenance, use, retention, transfer, and disposal of the OSR. The Niagara Catholic District School Board follows this guideline, in accordance with the [Niagara Catholic's Ontario Student Record \(OSR\) Policy](#).

These Acts give school boards and their schools the legal authority to collect personal information for the purpose of planning and delivering educational programs and services which best meet students' needs, for operating schools and for reporting to the Ministry of Education as required. Accordingly, the Board collects the personal information it needs to fully meet its obligations as a school board.

To help you understand how the Board uses and/or discloses the information you provide to us, we provide the following examples of routine uses and/or disclosures of student personal information.

ADMINISTRATIVE USES AND DISCLOSURES

How we collect, use and disclose personal information to keep schools operating smoothly

- Student information collected at registration as well as other data such as attendance, timetables, and achievement is stored in an electronic database called a Student Information System (SIS). This system is where NCDSB staff can access the information they need to perform their duties and report to the Ministry of Education. Please see: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/collection-and-use-education-information> to learn more about what information the Ministry of Education uses to improve educational outcomes across the province.
- Student personal information such as home address, photo, life-threatening medical emergency information, accessibility and safety needs may be shared with the Niagara Student Transportation Services (bus consortium) and bus drivers for the safety of students.

- Personal information such as a child's name, birth date, grade, name of parents/guardians, home address and phone numbers will be shared with the Niagara Region Public Health Unit, in compliance with the *Immunization of School Pupils Act and the Education Act*. Communicable diseases and related student contact information are reported to the local public health unit, in compliance with the *Health Promotion and Protection Act*, and the *Education Act*.
- Student medical health information provided by parents/guardians or adult students is used by school staff to address student medical needs, plan for medical emergencies at school or during school activities. Medical emergency plans for students with life-threatening medical conditions may be posted in designated staff-only areas of the school for emergency response purposes.
- Student accidents that take place at school or during school activity are reported to the Board's insurer. Reports include the name of the injured student and details of the incident, as well as the name and contact information of witnesses to the accident.
- Student information will be provided to first responders in the event of a health incident or emergency, should such services be required.
- Phone numbers may be included in telephone lists for emergency and safe arrival purposes.
- The Board releases student information that is requested by the Ontario Ministry of Education and by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) for the purposes of development, planning and resource allocation.
- Niagara Catholic occasionally engages third-party service providers to whom personal information is provided. Examples of this include companies that take school photo composites and those that verify originality of school work (Turnitin.com) Niagara Catholic aims to ensure personal information is destroyed when it is no longer needed to provide the service.
- School pictures are used for administrative and archival purposes, for student cards, in school yearbooks, and are also offered for purchase to parents.
- Niagara Catholic releases personal information to the Niagara Regional Police Service and or Family and Children's Services Niagara where required under the authority of the *Education Act* and the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*.

INSTRUCTIONAL USES AND DISCLOSURES

How we collect, use and disclose personal information to meet the individual needs of all learners

- Information in the OSR and in the Student Information System is used by school and Board staff to support classroom teachers and early childhood educators to develop educational programs that best meet each student's needs. School staff that may work with a student and the classroom teacher include may be from the Guidance, Special Education or Student Success departments.
- Staff may take a photo or video without consent if it is for educational purposes, or if it is otherwise necessary to deliver education to the student.
- Teachers and staff may collect, record and save evidence of student learning and achievement, if it is for educational purposes, or if it is otherwise necessary to deliver education to the student. This is including but is not limited to digital documents, photos, audio and/or video recordings through Board-approved digital platforms and other digital resources, including but not limited to the Niagara Catholic Virtual Learning Environment (NCVLE), G Suite, emails, and audio and video conferencing.
- Student assessment and achievement information such as portfolios and report cards may be shared within a school to help address student needs as they progress through grade levels. Similarly, as part of the grade 8 to 9 transition student information is shared in an effort to help prepare incoming grade 9 students.
- Secondary schools will send information on graduates (contact information and transcripts) to the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC) and Ontario College Application Services (OCAS), to support post-secondary applications.
- As per Niagara Catholic's *Education Research Administrative Operational Procedures*, approved research will comply with MFIPPA, and include informed consent for participation in the research. Anonymity of students, schools and school personnel will be granted in reporting the results, unless permission has been otherwise provided through informed consent, The decision to participate in external (university research or community partner collaborations) and internal (for example, Board surveys, like School Climate Surveys and Student Voice Surveys) research rests with the participant and/or parents/guardians.
- First nation, Métis and Inuit students are given an opportunity to voluntarily identify themselves. This data is used by the Ministry, by the Education Quality Accountability Office (EQAO) and in the school board for allocating program resources and supports.
- In keeping with the requirements of the *Education Act* and the *Personal Health Information Protection Act* (PHIPA), parental/guardian consent will be sought prior to conducting intelligence or behavioural tests, or prior to the involvement of psychological or speech and language staff.

- Niagara Catholic follows the legislative requirements of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* for students accessing social work. Informed or written consent from a parent/guardian is encouraged for social work services for students who are under 18 at the Niagara Catholic District School Board.
- As directed in the [Anti-Racism Act \(2017\)](#) and [Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan](#), all school boards collect identity-based data of students. This data is collected with parental/guardian consent and student assent.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT USES AND DISCLOSURES

How we use personal information to create safe schools where students are valued and their accomplishments celebrated

- Student work, including student names, may be displayed in the classroom or in school hallways, and at the Board office. It may also be shared publicly at community events outside the school setting.
- Birthdays and student accomplishments may be announced over the PA system and/or in the classrooms. Photos and recordings of students may be shared for the purpose of celebrating student accomplishments.
- Class lists with student first names and last initial may be distributed to other parents for the purpose of addressing greeting cards or invitations in connection with holidays, birthday parties, etc.
- School events and activities may be reported in classroom, school and Board newsletters, websites and social media sites, and may include photos, videos and/or names of students.
- Student names and/or photographs will be included in school programs, student yearbooks, on student awards lists and honour rolls.
- As per *Niagara Catholic's Video Security Surveillance Administrative Operational Procedures*, video security surveillance systems are used at selected schools and sites within the Board's jurisdiction to ensure the ongoing safety of students, staff, community members and property.
- The names of the graduates are shared with the offices of our elected official (e.g., mayor, MP, MPP) when requested for printing congratulatory certificates.

Embracing the Future with 21st Century Learning

- Niagara Catholic offers students access to a variety of digital learning tools, including some online, that are designed to support and enhance their classroom learning. Student names, school, and classroom designations may be shared with NCDSB-approved third-party web applications or online tool providers for the purpose of registration and authentication so that students have their own accounts to use the applications. Student work may be stored on NCDSB approved third party servers for the purpose of on-line student collaboration, creation, and presentations. NCDSB promotes safety online and students are taught safe online practices and how to be good digital citizens.
- Similar to the use and disclosure of student personal information on paper, digital personal information that students create (e.g., their work, their group projects, submissions to student discussion forums) sometimes goes beyond the classroom walls when using approved digital learning tools and is visible online within the school or throughout other schools across the school board.
- Students may participate in video conferencing via Google Classroom to support classroom learning. Students may see and be seen, as well as speak with students from other NCDSB schools, students in other countries, and subject area experts from around the globe. We ask that parent(s)/guardian(s) exercise discretion and be respectful when monitoring/assisting with children's participation in video conference learning. Any video conferencing needs to be a safe and welcoming environment for all that protects everyone's privacy. Parent(s)/guardian(s) should follow these guidelines:
 - Avoid participating in spaces like bedrooms or sharing personal items/details that would not normally be shared with teachers and other students. Please consider having a private conversation with the teacher if concerns arise.
 - Please respect the privacy entitlements of our students and staff and refrain from recording audio or video or taking photos of the video conferencing without the prior written consent of all participants. Unauthorized recording or copying of video conferencing (including of learning materials) violates the privacy rights of others and potentially copyright laws.
 - Please be careful and do not unintentionally walk into the range of your child's webcam during video conferencing. Please note, from time to time, we do encounter exceptional circumstances where parent(s)/guardian(s) need to assist students with technology issues.

MEDIA USES AND DISCLOSURES

What media exposure to expect and how we protect student personal information

- The Board remains vigilant regarding contributing to student digital “footprints” or information that students leave online. Only unidentified student work and non-identifying photos of groups of students (without names) at events will appear on school board-related websites, in electronic newsletters and on social media. Identifying information such as photos of individuals, small groups in which faces are recognizable, and names will be posted only if the Parent/Guardian consent form (first page in this set of documents) is signed.
- The media, such as newspapers, web-based news services, television and radio, may be invited to the school to take photos of students and/or cover newsworthy events or activities such as student achievements/awards, and current events. Their reports may include group photos of students. Identifiable and individual student photographs would only be taken and/or names used with consent.
- Students participating in extra-curricular activities or school events that are open to the public or that take place in public places such as on field trips may be photographed by the school community, news media or public. This may result in photos or videos being posted on social media sites and in electronic or print news media sites. The Board/ school have no jurisdiction over how and where these images will be posted. However, parents and students are asked to practice good digital citizenship by being respectful when they post photos of others, by obtaining consent before posting.
- Events inside the school, such as performances, awards assemblies, and commencement that are typically attended by family members are often photographed and video recorded by family members. We ask those in attendance to respect the privacy rights of all students and their families by obtaining consent before images and videos are shared or posted online.

Please communicate any concerns you have regarding the sharing of personal information in any or all of the above-mentioned by contacting the school Principal or Vice-Principal as soon as possible.