

St. Augustine Catholic Elementary School

Phone Number: 905-734-4659

*We are proud to be part of the Notre Dame Catholic Family
Of Schools*

Principal: Mr. Paul Moccia

Superintendent: Mr. Domenic Massi



September 2025

WELCOME BACK

It is with much excitement and anticipation that I welcome everyone back to St. Augustine Catholic Elementary School for the 2025-2026 school year. I am very pleased to have been named the new principal of St. Augustine Catholic Elementary School and I am most looking forward to working with the community. The staff of St. Augustine Catholic Elementary School would like to extend to all our students and parents, a warm and heartfelt welcome back! The staff of St. Augustine Catholic Elementary School will continue to work in partnership with the home and parish to foster academic, social and spiritual growth according to the teaching of Jesus Christ.

Mr. Paul Moccia-Principal

PRAYER FOR BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

Blessed are you, Lord God.
Creator of mind, body and spirit.
At the beginning of this school year
We ask for your mercy;
Bless the students, parents and teachers
So that together we may grow in faith, hope and love
As we learn from you and each other how to follow
Jesus. AMEN

SCHOOL DAY

1st Bell &
Announcements

8:35 am-8:45 am

Instructional Block 1	8:45 am-10:05 am
Nutrition Break 1 Inside	10:05 am-10:25 am
Nutrition Break 2 Outside	10:25 am-10:45 am
Instructional Block 2	10:45 am-12:45 pm
Nutrition Break 2 Inside	12:45 pm-1:05 pm
Nutrition Break 2 Outside	1:05 pm-1:25 pm
Instructional Block 3	1:25 pm-2:55 pm
Dismissal	2:55 pm

STAFF OF 2025-2026

Melanie Berardocco Nancy Cercone Ponting	Kindergarten
Maria Shany	ECE
Clara Giancola	Grade 1/2
Melissa Diogo	Grade 2/3
Noelle Di Iorio	Grade 3/4
Paul Kuczera	Grade 4/5
Lisa Arsenault	Grade 5/6
Suzanna Smodis	Grade 7/8
Jennifer Gaspar	Grade 8
Sue Gardner, Todd Nagy, Lori Patitucci, Denielle Newlove	EA's
Nancy Cercone Ponting	Primary Team Member
Geston Mule	Library Tech
Kylie Roesch	CYW

Jill Tham	Itinerant Arts teacher
Lori Ann Ricci Perrotta	ERT
Paul Moccia	Principal
Tricia Lee Ukrainetz	Caretaker
Kris Infantino	Secretary
Domenic Massi	Superintendent
Rev. Daniele Bertoldi	Parish Priest
Francesca Pagano	FSL

ST. AUGUSTINE CREED

That all students of St. Augustine Catholic Elementary School be equally accepted by each other. We have a right to be treated fairly and a responsibility to treat others with respect. We can make a difference by loving and caring for each other.

We believe:

It is important to respect each other's opinion and viewpoints in what we say and in what we do. We have a right to make appropriate choices and the responsibility to accept the choices of others. We should be equal in each other's eyes.

We believe:

We should learn in a non-violent school setting. We have the right not to be threatened physically or emotionally, touched in a harmful way, nor talked about unkindly. We have the responsibility to avoid fighting, gossiping, using bad language and spreading rumors. We can keep our school a happy, inviting and safe place.

We believe:

That our school property should be kept clean and maintained in a useful condition. We have the right to safe, clean equipment and property, and the responsibility to clean up after ourselves and handle equipment appropriately. We are the creators and keepers of our environment.

We believe:

We can assist good teaching practices and improve the conditions of our learning. We have the responsibility to keep from disrupting other students and cooperate as attentive learners. We have the right to a good Catholic education.

We believe:

That as students of St. Augustine Catholic Elementary School, we must commit to our school, our staff and

each other to continue to be a successful and proud place.

With God as our Leader, we recognize that we represent the future. Most of all we believe in being thankful for what we have.

OFFICE and SCHOOL ARRIVAL/ LEAVING/VISITOR POLICY

St. Augustine has an intercom / surveillance system that allows us to increase student, staff and community safety.



➤ Any student arriving after **8:35 a.m.** must report to the office for a late slip. Attendance is taken promptly at the

start of the academic day. To decrease office calls home, we ask parents and caregivers to phone in absences and lates prior to the start of the school day.

➤ **Due to the population of the school and the special requirements for the students to organize themselves, we ask that parents wait outside at arrival and departure times.**

➤ Students will be met and supervised at all entry and dismissal times including morning bus arrival at **8:20 a.m.**

➤ All students are required to remain at school during lunch period. Parents wishing to take their child off site at lunch must sign their child out at the office.

➤ Parents are asked to obey all parking signs (ENTER, EXIT) and to park only in designated areas. We ask for extreme caution while driving or parking near student exit doors.

We thank you for your understanding and cooperation. We believe these procedures will assist us in providing a safe and productive learning environment.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS

According to legislation, Catholic School Council elections are to be held in the first 30 calendar days of the school year.

I would encourage every parent in the St. Augustine Catholic School Community to consider being a member of the St. Augustine Catholic School Council. Through the council, community members can make a positive impact in the growth and development of the school community. It is one way of being an active partner in Catholic Education. More information is forthcoming.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

There is consistent evidence that parents' encouragement, interest, and participation affect their children's achievement. Students gain in personal and academic development if their families emphasize schooling, let their children know they do and do so continually over the years.

At St. Augustine Catholic Elementary School, we ask that parents follow basic responsibilities in supporting the school and helping their children become successful learners.

- Be sure your child attends school regularly and arrives on time.
- Stay tuned in to what's happening at school and help your child with homework.
- If a problem arises, try to resolve it by following the chain of responsibility:

-Classroom teacher

-Principal

-Superintendent

In order for us to be able to use every available moment for educating our students, we kindly ask parents to wait outside at dismissal time. Students have assigned entrance and exit doors.

SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS/TIME ON TASK

Each morning commencement activities (Prayer, O Canada) will take place at approximately **8:40 a.m.**. It is our goal this year to maximize the use of instructional time during the school day.

Research has proven that the greater the time on task and instructional use of time, the greater the success rate of students.

QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Please call your child's teacher with any questions or classroom concerns you may have. A quick call can alleviate anxiety. Compliments are welcome! Feel free to contact the office regarding school policies and programs. I will be involved in classroom activities throughout the day. Therefore, it is best that if you wish to contact me, an appointment can be requested through our secretary at **905-734-4659**. Please allow a 24 hour turn around for call backs. Appointments will be set up at

a mutually convenient time. Thank you for your understanding.

TERRY FOX

St. Augustine's will be walking together with their classmates to support the Terry Fox Foundation. Our Terry Fox walk has been scheduled for **Thursday, September 25**. Additional information will be forthcoming closer to the date.

BULLYING / INTERNET (MSN)

Over the years, there has been a growing concern over school bullying across the country, province and communities. This is a complex social issue that involves all community members and can have serious negative implications for all involved.

As educators, we continue to be cognizant and sensitive to arising situations. We have gathered a great deal of resources on the topic and endeavour to be proactive in reducing bullying. Through social skills programs such as Fully Alive and our Religious Education program and St. Augustine Student Creed, we have made great progress at educating students and the many forms of bullying. The Niagara Catholic District School Board has developed a Bullying policy that can be found on the board website at **www.niagararcatholic.ca**

What can make the concept of bullying rebellious at times is the distinction between actual bullying and single breakdown in student relationships. We find that through open and honest discussion and ownership on the part of students involved we can distinguish the extent of the behaviour.

Cyber-bullying is yet another form of inappropriate behaviour that has seen a rising frequency. The school board and school have very strict rules of use during school time. These routines should be taken into account during home use. We ask that parents closely monitor their child's use of the computer.

In the event of any form of bullying (even when it has originated from inappropriate computer use in the home) the school will enforce appropriate consequences that may include school suspension.

CELL PHONE AND VAPING RULES REMINDER

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 has 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.

RESPECTFUL INTERACTION

St. Augustine is rooted in Catholic and Christian values. Our goal is to create a safe, kind and loving environment for all who work, learn, and assist with our school community. Aggressive or hostile behavior or language toward staff, students or our community helpers will not be tolerated. While we welcome feedback, concerns and opinions it is the expectation that all staff, students, parents, guardians and community helpers communicate their needs and concerns with one another in a respectful and peaceful manner whether through email, on the phone or face-to-face. Adherence to this expectation is vital in order to create a community which can solve problems and help one another achieve success.

SAFETY & SUPERVISION

Yard duty supervision begins at **8:20 a.m.**. On days of inclement weather, students will be indoors for classroom supervision.

ADULT SUPERVISION DOES NOT BEGIN UNTIL THAT TIME.

FIREDRILLS

Fire drills must be conducted a minimum of **six (6) times** each school year, three per term at various times of the day. Our first fire drill will be conducted on **Tues, September 10-weather permitting.**

LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Lockdown drills must be conducted a minimum of twice. 1 per term. Our first lockdown will take place on **Thurs, Sept 18.**

TRANSPORTATION

Bus route information can be accessed through the NSTS (Niagara Student Transportation System) website at www.nsts.ca. Routes have been established according to home addresses. If you need to make changes to your child's bus schedule please contact Niagara Student Transportation services direct at 905-357-6787.

VOICEMAIL

Due to the school's fast paced day, callers may get the voicemail recording. Please leave your name, number, and the time of your call and a brief reason for your call. **If the message is urgent, please continue to phone until someone answers.** Calls will be forwarded to the appropriate staff member on the secretary's return to the office.

CASH ONLINE-PLEASE SIGN UP

St. Augustine is pleased to announce that we are currently still using "School Cash Online". With school cash online, parents have the convenient and secure option of paying for school items online, 24/7. To access online payments, please register at <https://ncdsb.schoolcashonline.com>; it takes less than 5 minutes. Registered parents can see their payment history, print receipts and receive email notifications whenever new student fees are posted. School cash online will limit the amount of cash and cheques handled in school, reduce paperwork and result in more focused instructional time in the classroom.

USE SCHOOL MESSENGER to REPORT your CHILD's ABSENCE

<https://go.schoolmessenger.ca>

The first time you use the website, select Sign Up to create your account using your email address. After logging in, select the Attendance tab to Report an Absence.

Using your mobile device, download and install the SchoolMessenger app (blue logo) from the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store (or from the links at <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca>). Use your new login information to access your account. Select Attendance to Report an Absence. If you would like to receive attendance notifications on your mobile device please enable that in the Settings area of the app.

The current toll-free number 1-844-287-6287 will still allow you to report your child absent.

LATE SLIPS/ABSENCES

Students arriving at school after the bell must proceed directly to the office for a late slip. Students who proceed directly to class without obtaining a slip will be sent to the office for one. This procedure will ensure that your child's attendance is accurately documented. **All students must endeavor to arrive at school on time for the entrance bell at 8:35 a.m.**

If your child will not be in attendance, a call *must* be made to Safe Arrival, by calling **1-844-287-6287** or visit <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca>. **We ask that you please report any absences by 8:35 a.m..** As well, if your child will be late and not in the classroom for the first period or afternoon attendance due to appointments or delays you must report their time missed to avoid unnecessary calls home in order to locate your child. This is a requirement under the Ministry of Education's "Safe Schools Policy" to maintain Safe Arrival and be able to discern as priority those children who may be in danger and whom should be reported missing.

MEDICATIONS IN SCHOOL

Parents should be aware of the strict guidelines established by the Niagara Catholic District School Board for medication in schools.

1. The medication must be in the container prepared by the pharmacist and the label must include: the name of the doctor, student and the name and strength of the medication.
2. The school must have written request from the physician indicating the frequency and dosage of the prescribed medication.
3. The school must have written permission from the parent or guardian to administer the medication (this form is available at the school office.)
4. Deliver prescribed medication directly to the school office. Please do not send them with the child.

N.B.: Contagious/infectious diseases, e.g. Chicken Pox or Fifth's Disease, must be reported to the school immediately.

ALLERGY ALERT

At the beginning of every school year we remind all students and parents/guardians of our Board's Anaphylaxis Policy. At St. Augustine we have Emergency Guidelines which clearly state what medical procedures must occur for those students who have various life-threatening medical conditions.

We are reminding all students and parents/guardians that we have students in our school who are known to have a potentially life-threatening allergy called Anaphylaxis. Anaphylaxis is a severe life-threatening form of allergic reaction. It may begin with severe itching of the eyes or

face, a sense of constriction in the throat, then other symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea and difficulty with breathing may develop. This may lead to coma and death. Foods such as peanuts, other nuts, fish, shellfish, eggs, milk, and wheat as well as insect stings from bees and wasps, latex products and medication are the most common allergies that produce anaphylaxis.

Anaphylaxis requires immediate first aid response and immediate medical intervention. If your child has severe allergies, please inform the school secretary of this. **We ask all parents for your cooperation in keeping our school a "nut-free" environment.**

DRESS CODE POLICY

Students are reminded of our board dress code and the requirement is to be in full compliance daily.

ELECTRONIC POLICY

Personal cell phones, digital assistants (PDAs), audio or video recorders and players or other personal electronic devices are prohibited for use by students in all Niagara Catholic elementary and secondary schools unless specifically approved by staff for instructional or co-instructional purposes. Students are NOT to have cell phones out in class unless under the DIRECT supervision of their teacher. Students are not allowed to have their cell phones out at recess, in the hallways, or any other areas of the school. If students need to contact their parents at any time, they are ALWAYS allowed to call from the office. Parents, please support staff in adhering to these expectations. Students must remain focused during class to reach their potential. Thank you for your support.

The Board assumes no responsibility for the safety and security, loss, recovery, repair or replacement of a personal electronic device when carried on to Board premises. The secure storage of these devices is the sole responsibility of the owner/user.

VALUABLES AT SCHOOL

Children should not bring to school expensive articles of clothing, jewelry, shoes, toys, CDs, Laptops, I pads, I-Pods, cell phones, video games, etc. Occasionally things get ripped, stolen, and broken. At times it can be very difficult to determine who is at fault and to assess blame. Therefore, we ask that all of these items be left at home. **The school will not be held responsible for any damage to these personal items.**

NEWSLETTERS ONLINE

Parents are kept informed of school, school board, and local activities through our monthly newsletter/calendar which is now located on the Niagara Catholic Website.

If you require a hard copy of the newsletter we will kindly send one home to you. Please advise your child's teacher or call the school office.

Accessing Our New Online School Newsletter

From the board's website www.niagararcatholic.ca

CLICK on the following tabs:

**SCHOOLS
ELEMENTARY
ST. AUGUSTINE NEWSLETTER**

LOST AND FOUND

All student possessions should be labeled with their names in order to provide for easy identification if lost. A "Lost and Found" box is available and should be checked on a regular basis by students. Students are advised to leave valuables, especially large amounts of money, at home. Unclaimed items are donated to Charitable Organizations.

WASTE FREE LUNCH CHALLENGE

FACT: School lunches are a major source of waste in Ontario with the average student's lunch generating a total of 30 kilograms of waste per school year, or an average of 8500 kilograms (18,700lbs) of waste per school per year.

GOAL: Each classroom reduces waste from school lunches and learns about the three R's-Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.

Take the **WASTE FREE LUNCH CHALLENGE** and reduce the amount of waste from lunches into the landfill.

Here are some **things to look for** in a waste free lunch:

- A reusable lunch bag or box (not a throw-away, single-use plastic or paper bag).
- Reusable containers for packing food (no plastic wrap, foil, plastic bags, single-serving containers, pre-packaged foods). Hard plastic food containers or re-use of plastic tubs are suitable options.
- Reusable drink containers e.g. thermos, or reusable bottle (single-use pop cans, water bottles, juice boxes). Recyclable containers (pop cans) are discouraged, but acceptable as long as the student ensures they go into the recycling bin.
- Organic waste like apple cores, orange and banana peels, other leftovers etc. that can either be

composted through a school composting program or at home.

- Non-disposable cutlery (silverware) and a cloth napkin.

ST. AUGUSTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH MASSES

We are blessed to be a part of the St. Mary Church Community under the guidance of Father Daniele Bertoldi. We are looking forward to many opportunities to enrich our children's faith experiences at school, Church and in the community. We appreciate the efforts of parents to attend Sunday Mass with the family on a weekly basis.

FINALLY.....

Thank you to the entire staff for preparing for our students. Many thanks to Ms. Infantino for preparing and organizing the office at the school. Thanks to Mrs. Tricia Lee Ukrainetz for maintaining and cleaning the school over the summer months. This year promises to be a very successful year as we all work collectively and cooperatively for your children.