



St. Andrew Catholic School

September 2025

School Information

Principal: Mrs. M. Ruggi Dietsch

Superintendent of Education: Mr. Domenic Massi

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

Instagram: @standrewjags16

Location: 16 St. Andrew Street Welland L3B 1E1

Phone: 905-732-5663

Prayer to begin a New School Year

Lord Jesus, we ask for Your help as we begin this new school year.

Allow us to experience Your presence in the many blessings You put before us.

Open our eyes to the new challenges and exciting opportunities that this new school year brings.

Open our hearts and minds to new friends and new teachers.

Give us a generous spirit to be enthusiastic about our studies and the courage to accept new opportunities.

Help us to be attentive to our teachers and let us experience Your presence in our new friends.

Jesus, inspire us to do our best this year!

Amen

Author Unknown

Welcome Back!

The staff at St. Andrew are excited to be back and can't wait to make this year an amazing one! We welcome back all of our families and extend a warm welcome to our new families. We pray that this year is filled with spiritual, academic and social growth and fun! We are ready to make this a great school year.

As a community of Christian believers, we ask God's blessing on all our students, families, staff and all individuals who are a part of the St. Andrew Catholic community. As a staff, we are committed to Catholic Education and determined to continue to provide exemplary education at St. Andrew. Our continued strong partnership of home, school and church provides our children with a solid foundation for their spiritual, emotional, academic and physical lives.



We welcome the input of all members of our community so that we can continue to grow in a positive way. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mrs. M. Ruggi Dietsch

Front Entrance: CLOSED

We're excited to share that St. Andrew School has undergone significant construction over the summer, including a brand-new Kiss & Ride area and parking lot located at the side of the school, as well as a redesigned front entrance. While the Kiss & Ride and parking lot will be fully operational for the start of the school year, our new front office and entrance area are still under construction. In the meantime, our main office has been temporarily relocated to the back of the school, next to the kindergarten play area. An intercom is installed at the door—please buzz, and Ms. Tiffany will greet you.

Please note that **only school buses will use the parking area between the school and the church**. This change is designed to keep all our students, parents, and staff safe. We kindly ask for your patience and understanding during this transition. These improvements will enhance safety and create a more beautiful environment in the months ahead. For drop-off and pick-up, please use the new Kiss & Ride and parking lot.

St. Andrew Balanced Day Schedule

9:00 am - Supervision Begins

9:15 am - Entry Bell

9:15 am-11:25 am Instructional Block 1

11:25 am -11:45 am Recess

11:45 am -12:05 Nutrition Break1

12:05 am- 1:25 pm Instructional Block 2

1:25 pm - 1:45 pm Recess

1:45 pm-2:05 pm Nutrition Break2

2:05 pm - 3:25 pm Instructional Block 3

3:35 pm Dismissal

St. Andrew Catholic Staff

Secretary: Ms. DeRuiter

ERT: Mrs. Levert

ERT Special Assignment: Ms. Brzozowski

Kindergarten: Mrs. Burns & Mrs. Humphries

Kindergarten: Mrs. Lesco & Mrs. Holten

Grade 1: Mrs. Naccarato

Grade 1/2: Mr. Dosa

Grade 2: Mrs. Infusini
Grade 2/3: Mrs. Felice
Grade 3: Miss Mirabella
Grade 3/4: Miss Tornabuono
Grade 4: Mrs. Kennedy & Miss. Spence
Grade 4/5: Mrs. Capitano
Grade 5/6: Mr. Jakovljevic
Grade 6: Mrs. Ciccone
Grade 7/8: Mrs. Roe
Grade 7/8: Miss Stoddart
Music: Mrs. Wilson
MLL: Mrs. Morgan
FSL: Grade 7/8: Mrs. Biega
FSL: Grade 3/4 - 6: Miss Spence
PTM: Mrs. Oakes-Flegg
PTM: Mrs. Gaspari
Library Tech: Mr. Schuler
Educational Assistants:
Miss. Chmielewski, Mrs. De Souza, Mrs. Lever, Mrs. Lewis, Miss Moore, Mrs. Petrecca, Mrs. Purdy, Mrs. Ventresca
CYW: Mrs. Perron
Head Caretaker: Mr. Jones
Caretaker: Ms. Taylor
Principal: Mrs. Ruggi Dietsch

Parking Lot Procedures & New Kiss & Ride Drop-off



All Parents dropping off children are to use the NEW Parking lot at the side of the school:

- If you are walking your child to their door you will need to park in a parking spot in this new parking lot.
- Parents are to walk their student to their proper entrance door at the back of the school unless they are arriving late (after 9:15 am). Then they are to proceed to the back door in the Kindergarten play area (NEW OFFICE ENTRANCE until further notice)

Kiss & Ride Drop off (New Parking Lot at the side of the school):

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.

Respectful Interaction at St. Andrew

St. Andrew 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 behaviour 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.

Before School Supervision

Please be advised that before-school supervision does not begin until 9:05 am. Also note, if you are dropping off your child after 9:15 am they will need to go in the main entrance.

Cell Phones at School



Earlier this spring, the Ministry of Education issued new requirements for school boards to follow to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of everyone in our schools. This involves the use of cell phones and vaping.

At St. Andrew, students from Kindergarten to Grade 6 will not be required to use cell phones for academic purposes. Therefore, there is no need for these students to bring a cell phone to school. Each classroom as well as the main office, has a telephone for issues that require a more immediate response.

Grade 7 & 8 students who bring their cell phones to school must have the phone stored out of view and turned off during the instructional day. They may only use it if their teacher permits it for learning.

Any student that requires a cell phone for health or medical purposes, or to support special education needs are permitted to use their cell phone as necessary with prior permission.

At St. Andrew, each Grade 7 & 8 teacher will have a place for students to store their phone for safe keeping during non-instructional times. If a teacher sees a cell phone that is not stored out of view, students will be required to hand in their device in for the instructional day. The cell phone will be placed, by the student, in a secure storage area designated by the principal.

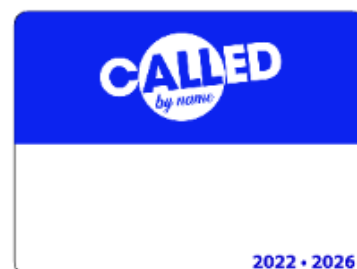
If a student refuses to hand in their personal mobile device, the Ministry requires that the student be sent to the principal's office. Consequences for failing to hand in their phone is at the principal's discretion.

School boards are now required to disable access to social media platforms on school networks and board devices. This is intended to limit the number of interruptions in class and to benefit the mental health and well-being of students. Niagara Catholic already blocks access to some social media sites. Now all will be unavailable to students.

Called By Name

Our Niagara Catholic's new theological theme for 2022-2026 will be "Called by Name". Our theological theme will direct us through daily prayer, faith formation sessions and school and system faith-centered events for the upcoming years:

2022-2023 Called by Name: You are Mine



2023-2024 Called by Name: Hear My Voice

2024-2025 Called by Name: Follow Me

2025-2026 Called by Name: Go and Make Disciples

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!

Standardized Dress Code

A reminder that students are expected to adhere to Niagara Catholic's Standardized Dress Code. An additional copy of the Dress Code is attached below. According to the Standardized Dress Code, the following items are **not permitted**:

- Black Pants
- T-shirts of any kind (spiritwear exempt)
- Faded or torn Jeans. (Jeans must be dark blue and in good condition)
- Shorts and Skirts must be knee length

Your cooperation is important and appreciated.

Spirit Wear



Big Bear Spirit Wear, a board-approved supplier for spirit wear items will now supply St. Andrew School Spirit Wear. They offer a wide range of dress-code approved items through their online store at: <https://www.bigbearspritwear.com> Students are allowed to wear the Jaguar hoodie to school and these are a worthwhile purchases for the cold weather months. **Please label all clothing**

items that come to school so that we can return all misplaced items to the correct person.

Please note items may not yet be visible on the website.

Indoor Shoes

Please ensure that your child(ren) have a pair of indoor running shoes at school. Students are expected to change their footwear when they enter their classroom. This will not only keep the floors dry but also clean. Students that do not have indoor running shoes will not be permitted to participate in gym.

MEET THE TEACHER OPEN HOUSE

We are excited to invite you to attend St. Andrew's Meet the Teacher Open House on Thursday, September 25, 2025, from **4:30 pm to 6:00pm**. This will be an opportunity for you to meet your child's teacher as well as see your child's classroom.

School Masses

We are blessed to begin this school year by being able to celebrate school masses together. This school year we will continue with having two classes attend Mass every Friday and attend Mass as a whole school every other month.



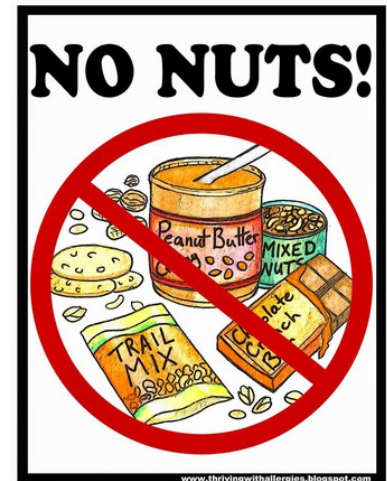
St. Andrew Catholic School Council

The St. Andrew **Catholic School Council** will be busy planning and getting organized for all the things that make St. Andrew School so special. Our **first meeting** will be on Tuesday, September 23rd at 6:00 pm in our school library. 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 St. Andrew Catholic School Council. Get involved and make a difference. Self-nomination forms will be emailed through School Messenger.

Medications & Allergies

Regulations state that school personnel cannot administer any drugs, without written permission from the parent and a doctor. If there is a need for such medication, please contact the school to obtain the forms which must be filled out and signed by both the doctor and the parent. This record is required by School Board Regulations and must be kept on file. Please notify the school if medication distribution stops so that all medication can be returned to the family as soon as possible.

Please remember that St. Andrew School is an Allergen Aware School. Please do not send products with nuts or nut traces with your child.



Nut Free School Lunches and Tips for Packing Lunches

The challenge for all parents is to send foods that are nutritious and nut free and that will keep our kids energized and alert at school all day. They also need to be tasty, so that our kids will actually want to eat them! Those can feel like competing goals at times. Here are tips for making school lunch easier:

1. Try to include a variety of colours and textures to make the food appealing to kids. You want them to actually eat what you've packed!
2. Use up those dinner remnants. Brown rice can be tossed with black beans and served at room temperature. Cooked pasta can be transformed into a pasta salad. Chicken can be sliced and

wrapped up in a tortilla with lettuce and veggies.

3. Include a sweet treat that is healthier than pre-packaged foods. Homemade granola bars, whole wheat muffins, or even homemade doughnuts are fun treats that are worlds better than anything you can buy at the store!

4. No matter what, always make sure lunch is balanced by including fruit, vegetable, protein, and carbohydrate!

Student Attendance and Safe Arrival

St. Andrew School and all schools throughout Niagara Catholic use the Safe Arrival program to manage student attendance reporting. The Safe Arrival program reduces the time it takes to verify student attendance by making it easier for you to report your child's absence and easier for staff to respond to unexplained student absences. The Safe Arrival program allows parents to report their child's absence quickly and conveniently in one of three ways:

1) Use the SafeArrival website, <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.

2) Using your mobile device, download and install the SchoolMessenger app 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 Push Notifications in the Settings area of the app. The document Using the SchoolMessenger app will give instructions for using the App.

3) The toll-free number 844-287-6287 will allow you to report your child absent without creating an account.

Please do not call the school to report your child's absence.

Terry Fox Walk

On Friday, September 26th all students at St. Andrew School will be participating in The Terry Fox School Day Walk. This will also be our first Spirit Day. All students are welcome and encouraged to wear red and white. It is an Alternate Dress Code Day. A monetary donation can be made using our schoolcashionline. 100% of the money raised will be donated to the Terry Fox Foundation.

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation formerly Orange Shirt Day

All students and staff are invited to wear the colour orange on **Tuesday, September 30th, 2025** in support of National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. In recognition of the harm done to generations of children by the Residential Schools, September 30th has been declared Orange Shirt Day throughout Canada.

All schools throughout Niagara Catholic; including St. Andrew will support Orange Shirt Day. Teachers will provide age-appropriate educational activities to students regarding the significance of Orange Shirt Day.

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 a healthy eyes and good vision.



[The Eye See...Eye Learn®](#) program is for students in junior and senior kindergarten to have a full eye exam (covered by OHIP) with a [participating optometrist](#). 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](#).

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.

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

2. 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.

3. 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/food-safety/default.aspx

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>

REMINDER- No single serve plastics available

Parents are reminded to ensure that their child(ren) have the required utensils needed to eat their snacks/lunches as well as a **reusable water bottle** they can fill at the hydration stations. We are no longer permitted to distribute plastic/styrofoam spoons, forks or cups to students that do not have them.



School Cash Online

Please ensure that use of School Cash online for the purchase/payment of food days, field trips, donations etc. This is a safe and easy-to-use online program that allows you to make convenient and secure payments from the comfort of your own home. To register, please click [here](#). All lunch orders are to be ordered through School Cash Online.



Maria Ruggi Dietsch

Maria is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters