



# Dundas Valley Secondary School

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

310 Governor's Road  
Dundas, Ontario L9H 5P8

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[www.hwdsb.on.ca/dundasvalley](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/dundasvalley)

August 25, 2017

Dear Dundas Valley Secondary School Students:

WELCOME and WELCOME BACK TO THE BEST SCHOOL EVER!!!! Dundas Valley Secondary School is the school where your dreams can come true...you need to do the hard part of finding a way to make your dreams a reality. WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU!!!! TOGETHER we can make this the BEST school; as your PRINCIPAL, I will ALWAYS give you HOPE and OPTIMISM to make it YOUR BEST!!!

The most important part of being a DVSS student, is our VISION STATEMENT:

***DVSS: AN EMPATHETIC CULTURE OF RESPECT AND LEARNING THROUGH THE LENS OF HUMAN RIGHTS.***

Our Vision Statement is the BIG IDEA behind our leadership, teaching and learning at DVSS. We believe that if you take all your high school learning, connect it to your passions and find ways to better the world; then, we can co-create a world where all HUMAN BEINGS ARE VALUED! Our goal is to support student and staff passions while supporting student and staff voice. Always remember to work within the school processes and school code of conduct as well as the HWDSB policies when creating your BEST version of who you are and how you can make DVSS the BEST! If you are stuck as to what your next step should be, please come to the office and see the administration for help and guidance! Please let your teachers and I know how you can use the curriculum in your classes and connect it to the Vision of the school. Perhaps you can do an inquiry on how that might look in your classes! Let me know how I can help!

I hope you are all well and equally excited as I am to return to school, in the hopes of living a life of passion and purpose. I want to welcome all of you to DVSS, especially our grade 9 students to the start of their high school experience. I know you will have the time of your lives. Please let me know how we can add to your rich experience. In fact, ALL STAFF (teachers, office, caretaking and administration) are here to support you in your high school career!

Your mastering of the Ontario Ministry of Education Curriculum will be taught by our teachers. ALL Grades will be assessed and evaluated via GROWING SUCCESS practices. PLEASE see your teachers to help you better understanding how to diagnose your learning needs and what teaching response is best for you to meet the OVERALL CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS.

(Please visit <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growSuccess.pdf>)

For our Grade 9 students, you will be assessed and evaluated through the GROWING SUCCESS process in which teachers will determine a grade based on evidence of learning to support their professional judgement of your learning. For our grade 9 classes, in each of your classes, teachers will be looking for evidence of learning that could be triangulated based on what teachers see you do in class (observations); conversations they have with you to assess and/or evaluate your learning measured against the criteria to meet the overall expectations; plus, all the products that you produce as evidence of you meeting the learning/overall expectations to earn the credit. Teachers will co-create with you learning goals and the success criteria you will need to meet that goal. At all times ask your teacher what you need to scaffold your learning to meet the learning goal/overall expectations. Our teachers have a variety of tools that they use to determine a grade, so please connect with your teachers to better understand what you may need.

curiosity.

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Along that learning journey teachers will be looking for evidence of that learning and measure it against the curriculum Overall Expectation(s). Through ongoing descriptive feedback, your teachers will help you meet that goal and tell you how you are doing and what your next step(s) might be to meet your learning goal/overall expectation. Once the teacher has all that “evidence of learning” they will be looking at their observations / conversations / products that you master the curriculum...specifically how you measured up to meet or exceed the overall expectations of the course...to meet with your potential. Teachers’ professional judgement will be used to determine a grade based on what the teacher triangulates from the “evidence of learning”. Your course outlines will explain what this looks like in every course with individual teachers. PLEASE start a great communication/dialogue process between your teacher, parents and school that supports you. The goal of being in constant communication with your teacher is so that you can show evidence of what you’re learning to meet or exceed the overall expectations of the course. WE want you to master the curriculum and our teachers will tell you how you are doing...please make sure you connect with your teachers so that they can help you and your family better understand how you are learning the curriculum. The goal is to create this learning, assessment and evaluation culture for your entire 4 years at DVSS! We are starting with grade 9s to make this culture as seamless as possible for our students. Your teacher is always the best person you can ask about your learning needs for the course.

And, welcome back to all our students as we co-create “magic” this year. This year will prove to be an amazing year as we create history and build a school culture that is reflective of our vision of what education means for us in the AWESOME town of Dundas! I am so thrilled to be the FIRST Principal of DVSS, Home of the Gryphons!! So now the HARD WORK of living our VISION STATEMENT BEGINS! I want to ask you to take some time as a family to reflect on these questions: ***“What can I do to make DVSS’s VISION STATEMENT a reality?”***; ***“How might I become a valuable member of the school community and take our vision beyond the walls and halls of DVSS?”***; ***“How might I work within the school processes and HWDSB policies and directives to influence change; and, “What can I do with our curriculum learning to go deeper with the connections we make in class and the school’s vision? How can I add or build on my knowledge so that we can create a peaceful community?”***. The greatest learning relationship is the relationship that students and parents make with their teachers. This important connection is what is needed to support all students with meeting their potential and passion! PLEASE connect with your teachers so that you can discover what processes are created in classrooms to support student learning and well-being. YOUR TEACHERS CARE!!!! Please connect with them so that you can grow and learn in a healthy learning environment! Our Student Services department has some mindful strategies to help you maintain focus and well-being when you are working towards your goals. Please see your guidance counsellor for suggestions or supports that you might need.

Your work, your actions, your voice and your thoughts will all help you live a life in which you can use the VISION STATEMENT as a filter. PLEASE let me know how we can help you. This is hard work, but it is life-changing work once you learn how to take your learning of the curriculum and act within the processes that are created to support student voice and learning! I will do my part as your leader by ALWAYS being your cheerleader and give you HOPE and OPTIMISM; you need to do your part in working within the school’s Code of Conduct and HWDSB policies to develop the change you wish to be and see. TOGETHER all of us at DVSS can create a healthy school once we accept that we work within policies to maintain our healthy direction.

As always, I am governed by my passions, talents, Ethical Standards of the Teaching Profession, the Ontario Leadership Framework and my values to promote confidence in public education. Please have a

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read of my Commitment Statements. These statements act as daily filters for my decision-making. My commitment statements are a reflection of our policies. Please understand that these statements help me to work through the “gray” when looking to support an educational institution while providing an educational direction reflective of The HWDSB Strategic Directions. These statements are not open to interpretation; but rather, they serve as a means of breaking down a situation and look toward a healthy resolution/action. Enjoy them as much as I have enjoyed living them!

This summer letter is intended to help you with all the information you need for a healthy start to a great school year. Keep this letter in a safe place so that you can access it to answer any of your questions. This letter is a collection of processes, information and schedules that came from your emails and your questions. Thank you to our awesome SCHOOL COUNCIL for advising and providing me with direction as to what you need. If I have missed anything, do not hesitate to email me ([edelsord@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:edelsord@hwdsb.on.ca)) with your question so that I can add it to this letter and update it on the school website. Thus, ALWAYS access the website first (DVSS website: [www.hwdsb.on.ca/dundasvalley](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/dundasvalley)) and let me know how I can continue to build meaningful communication. Accept this process as my commitment to you to communicate effectively in an open and transparent manner.

**FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER** @EmDelSordo or follow the school on TWITTER @Dundas\_ValleySS

To follow new legislation regarding spam email, the HWDSB and DVSS need consent to send you email updates. The following link allows you to subscribe to mailing lists for both DVSS and other HWDSB updates. <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/news/subscribe/> select Dundas Valley from the list of schools to sign up for the school list.

**DVSS PHONE NUMBER** - The number 905-628-2203 will have voice mail options to leave messages regarding attendance, access the staff directory, contact the Student Services Office, and reach reception in the main office

## **DVSS BELL SCHEDULES**

Dundas Valley SS will operate on a **ROTATING DAY 1 and DAY 2 schedule**. This means that a calendar day that falls on an ODD NUMBER (1,3,5,7,9 ...) will follow a DAY 1 schedule, and a calendar day that falls on an EVEN NUMBER (2,4,6,8,10...) will follow a DAY 2 schedule. **PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL CLASSES WILL OPERATE ON A DAY 1 SCHEDULE OF CLASSES--SEPTEMBER 5TH AND DAY 2 on September 6TH.** We will always announce when we will change the DAY schedule so that we can optimize our time. (For example, see below under Grade 9 Transition Activities)

### **DVSS DAY 1:** (Odd number dates)

Period 1:	08:25 a.m. – 09:40 a.m.
Period 2:	09:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
LUNCH:	11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Period 3:	12:00 p.m. – 01:15 p.m.
Period 4:	01:20 p.m. – 02:35 p.m.



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## **DVSS DAY 2:** (Even number dates)

Period 2: 08:25 a.m. - 09:40 a.m.  
Period 1: 09:45 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.  
LUNCH 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Period 4: 12:00 p.m. - 01:15 p.m.  
Period 3: 01:20 p.m. - 02:35 p.m.

ASSEMBLY SCHEDULES will be created as we need them. Please listen to announcements for assembly information.

**For our GRADE 9 STUDENTS, WELCOME TO HIGH SCHOOL!!!!** I promise you all that I will do whatever I can to make your high school experience an AWESOME experience....and let me start by saying, **YOU HAVE THE BEST TEACHERS!!!!** I ask you to access the school website ([www.hwdsb.on.ca/dundasvalley](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/dundasvalley)) to access my **COMMITMENT STATEMENTS** for the students, staff, and parents/caregivers/guardians. I use these statements as filters to help me make the best possible decision to serve our kids! I use these COMMITMENT STATEMENTS to help me live and role model a life of passion, purpose and meaning! Let me start by saying: **I CAN'T WAIT TO SHOW YOU ALL THE GREAT NEW BEGINNINGS WE WILL START AS DVSS GRYPHONS!!!!**

## **GRADE 9 SMART START DAY AND CAMPUS TOURS**

DVSS is excited to offer a Smart Start program for all GRADE 9 STUDENTS on Wednesday, August 30th from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Grade 9 students will have the opportunity to meet new peers and connect with some of our student leaders who will be here to welcome them, mentor them, and to help support them in making a smooth transition to high school. Students will also be able to go on another school tour to see the locations of their first semester classes. A copy of your timetable will be handed out on Wednesday. LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED TO WELCOME ALL GRADE 9s to our AMAZING SCHOOL. All activities will be conducted by our GRYPHON GUIDES who are excited to support all our new students at DVSS!

I would like to welcome the following new staff to our already awesome staff:

Mr. D. Bielby (Math and Science), Ms. S. Clarke (Business), Ms. J. Hart (Family Studies), Ms. R. Misiti (Family Studies & French), and Ms. K. Pavic (English). We would like to thank Ms. B. Jackson (Arts) and Ms. K. Stringer (English and Science) for coming in as supply teachers to help us start the year.

### **1. LUNCH AREAS**

We ask that you please obey the school rules and do not block the egress to school; this means that there can be **no eating or sitting in the school hallways** (unless it is a designated bench area). PLEASE EAT either in the cafeteria or in designated teacher classrooms. **THERE IS PLENTY OF ROOM TO ACCOMMODATE THE SCHOOL POPULATION TO HAVE LUNCH.** Please use the garbage bin to discard your garbage. Help us to help you...keep the school looking clean and bright so that it is reflective of you!



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## 2. MEDIA CONSENT

Media Consent Agreement Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) is committed to protecting student personal information and helping to positively shape the “digital footprint” that students leave when they post personal information online. Please refer to our school’s website for our Parent/Guardian Letter on Personal Information for a full explanation for, and examples of, how we routinely handle student information and protect privacy while meeting legislative requirements. Classrooms have changed dramatically with the introduction of digital tools. In keeping with 21st century learning priorities, the board provides students with Google Apps for Education, access to the HWDSB App Catalogue, email and a calendar, as well as the Ministry of Education Virtual Learning Environment. In addition, students may also use online tools and social media such as wikis, blogs, podcasts, Skype, YouTube, Twitter, and other web apps, websites, and tools as deemed appropriate by the classroom teacher. Students receive age appropriate instruction on digital citizenship and the safe use of technology. For more information on our policies and directives governing 21st century learning, see Policy 7.3 21st Century Learning and Technology, along with the Privacy Directive, Ownership and Authorship Directive, and the Identity, Credibility and Positive Participation Directive. These policies and directives are easily found by using the search function on the board website ([www.hwdsb.on.ca](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca)). Students at HWDSB will use the internet at school and will learn how to make use of the tools that we provide to learn, create, share, and collaborate. They will participate in online spaces that are visible within the classroom, and possibly within the school and other sites across the board. Only with your consent on this form will online contributions that are public (i.e., visible outside of HWDSB) contain identifying information. We are asking for your consent to allow your child to fully participate online in ways deemed age appropriate by classroom teachers and directly related to their learning and accomplishments. This may include your child’s images/videos/audio recordings, written and creative work, and/or name appearing online beyond HWDSB schools, (i.e., publicly visible to the community or discoverable on the World Wide Web) involving, for example: • school electronic newsletters sent to our parent community • classroom websites, blogs, and video projects • classroom/school/board social media accounts (e.g., Twitter, YouTube, etc.) • school/community media publications or broadcasts • other educational platforms (please keep this page for your information)

## 3. TRANSPORTATION/ BUSING

Information about Transportation has been posted to the school website (<http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/dundasvalley/transportation-information-2/>). Families that will be eligible for bus transportation should have received a letter directly from the Hamilton Wentworth School Transportation Services (HWSTS) during the summer. If you have questions about transportation, **families must call the HWSTS directly** at 905.523.2318 or 1.800.691.6402

IF you would like COURTESY TRANSPORTATION, please download a courtesy transportation application: [http://www.hamiltonschoolbus.ca/public\\_v2/service-emptyseat-hwdsb.aspx](http://www.hamiltonschoolbus.ca/public_v2/service-emptyseat-hwdsb.aspx)

ALL courtesy transportation application approvals will be done by the PRINCIPAL at the end of September, pending seating availability on the bus. PLEASE submit your Courtesy Transportation application to Mrs. Sandra Kelly, in Student Services. All courtesy transportation applications will be date and time stamped, so that it is a first come first served basis pending bus seats.



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## 4. SCHOOL COUNCIL

The first meeting of the 2017 - 2018 School Council will be held on Tuesday, SEPTEMBER 19<sup>th</sup> in the Learning Commons at 6:30 p.m. At this meeting our School Council election will take place. Please go to the DVSS website to review the DVSS SCHOOL COUNCIL BY-LAWS. We would LOVE to have as many parents involved in our School Council so that together we can co-lead and co-create a community school reflective of our needs and wants and created with teachers and parents working side by side. Please come join our AMAZING parents as we see all parents/caregivers as a partner to our students' education.

## 5. STUDENT VOICE

We honour student voice and want to support all students with exercising within a process, their opinions. We have Student Council which is the vehicle for all students to voice ways to make our school a better place. The Student Council is the MOST EFFECTIVE way to collect student voice but you need to believe in them in order for them to support you within the school and HWDSB policies. Student Council also has a website that collects anonymous "voice"; plus, monthly forums for students to share their ideas/concerns/voice. We ask all students to work within the school processes so that we can help them express their voice as legitimate student voice which is informed within the school code of conduct and reflective of the HWDSB policies and directives. So please work through Student Council and/or administration.

## 6. NO SMOKING ON SCHOOL PROPERTY (this includes e-cigarettes and/or vaporizers)

NO SMOKING in or on school property is a CITY by-law that all school buildings and property follow. We ask all students and staff NOT to smoke on school property as the By-law officer will come in and the consequences could lead to fines issued by a by-law officer. For your safety, too, all smokers are asked to be mindful of their environment and respect all neighbouring properties and school property.

DVSS does not allow any e-cigarettes or vaporizers in or on school property. The consequences for smoking in or on school property will be exercised by the administration should students be found smoking with e-cigarettes or vaporizers.

## 7. LOCKERS

Lockers will be assigned by your PERIOD 1 teacher. You must bring in a combination lock, in which you show your teacher the combination and open the lock in front of your teacher. ONCE you open your combination lock, your PERIOD 1 teacher will assign you a locker. SO PLEASE NOTE that you MUST ONLY take a locker that is assigned to you. IF you take a locker that is assigned to someone else, you will be asked to remove the lock or your lock will be cut off. The goal is to support you in being close to your first period class. IF you wish to change your locker, then come see a VP and they will re-assign you your locker. PLEASE FOLLOW THIS PROCESS. It will make your life and those who work in the school a lot easier.



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## 8. ONLINE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE/ SCHOOL CASH ONLINE

With the support of School Cash Online, we're making paying for school related expenses easier. You can now make online payments through our school website or using your credit card. This is a win-win by making it safer and more efficient for everyone by reducing the amount of cash and cheques coming into our school. While parents will still have the option to send cash or cheques for school related expenses, we encourage you to get on board with our new service and register today and begin receiving notifications by email. If your child is moving to another HWDSB school in September, by registering now, your payment history and registration will move with you to the next school. Please connect with our ACCOUNTS Office Assistant, Ms. Judith Smith at 905-628-2203 extension 263.

## 9. TIMETABLES

Students are welcome to come in to school during the week of August 28<sup>th</sup> between 08:30 a.m. – 01:00 p.m. to pick up your timetable for September from the Main Office. Otherwise, your timetable will be with your homeroom teacher on the first day. Homeroom class lists will be posted the first day of school in the cafeteria. Students will then report to the new homeroom indicated on the class list.

## 10. STUDENT PARKING

Student parking is limited to the parking lot next to the tennis court and the last row near Bridlewood. Bringing your vehicle to school is a privilege; therefore, please respect all the vehicles around you and any pedestrians who may be nearby. PLEASE avoid speeding and driving recklessly...your life and the lives of those around you matter. IF you are found being careless in/with your vehicle, this administration will ask you NOT TO BRING YOUR CAR ON SCHOOL PROPERTY. We state this seriously so that you can respect the lives of those around you. STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO PARK IN "STAFF ONLY PARKING" AREAS. PLEASE RESPECT the adults who work in the school, as this will support the spirit of the school.

As always, I am here to help you in any way! I am philosophically aligned to Servant-Leadership and therefore I believe in dialogue, discussion and collaboration. In the end, as your Principal I need to make the final decisions to help run our school and make it THE BEST! Your trust and confidence in me and our teachers will help us build this school!!! Please call and make an appointment to come and introduce yourselves and share with me any information you believe might help me assist you as a learner, as a family, as a DVSS student and as a person who will change the world for the better! I look forward to meeting all the Grade 9s and making them feel welcome as new members of our awesome Gryphon family! AND of course, I am excited to continue to joke around with all returning students. I look forward to lunch with you all!

WELCOME to all our GRADE 9 students and WELCOME BACK to all our Grade 10-12 students!!!

Yours in education,

*E. Del Sordo*

Mr. E. Del Sordo  
DVSS Principal

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