



# Getting Ready for High School

January 2026

# Who Are We?

**Mr. Monteith**

*Principal*

**Mr. Nicholson** [snichols@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:snichols@hwdsb.on.ca)

*Guidance Counsellor (Last Names G-M)*

**Ms. Adams** [daadams@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:daadams@hwdsb.on.ca)

*Student Success Teacher*

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# Guidance Counsellors

*(Well-being & Career Planning)*

Ms. O'Sullivan (A-F)

Mr. Nicholson (G-M)

Mr. D'Aguilar (N-Z)

# Visit Us!

- A Day in the Life
- Friday Night Lights
- Theatre Production
- Sports Clinics
- Music Events
- Triathalon



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# Getting to Know Life in High School

- Headstart Program August 24 – 28
- Grade 9 Orientation – 2 Days in August
- Grade 9 Night in September



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# PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

HWDSDB

## **GRADE 9 COURSE SELECTION NIGHT for FAMILIES**

- January 15, 2026 from 6 – 7 p.m. in the auditorium
- Graduation requirements and recent changes
- Detailed information on high school courses, special programs, and pathways
- Out-of-catchment application process, transportation
- Q & A

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# TODAY'S PLAN

- How is High School Different?
- What do I need to graduate?
- Electives at Ancaster High School
- Special Programs
- Using myBlueprint



# How is Grade 9 different from Grade 8?



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# Over 30 Clubs

## Academic Clubs

Business & Investment Strategies Club  
DECA  
Homework Club/OSSLT Prep  
HOSA  
Math Club  
Peer Tutoring Club  
Robotics Club  
STEAM

## Athletic & Active Clubs

Ancaster Athletic Executive Council (AAC)  
Dance Team  
Sports Teams

## Altruistic & Social Clubs

Aerospace Club  
Announcement Crew  
Automotive Safety Club  
Best Buddies  
Blood Drive Heroes  
Chess Club  
Dungeons & Dragons Club  
Grad Committee  
Healthy Action Team (HAT)  
Knitting & Crocheting Club  
Make-A-Wish  
MedLife  
Positive Space  
Prayer Group  
Royal Gazette  
Student Council

## Arts & Creative Clubs

Auditorium (Aud) Squad  
Concert Band  
(NST) Drama Festival Club  
Musical Theatre Cast & Crew  
Photography & Video Club  
Rock Band  
Yearbook

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# Lots of Sports!

Badminton

Baseball

Basketball

Cricket

Cross Country

Dance Team

Field Hockey

Football

Golf

Gr. 9 Only Teams

Hockey

Soccer

Tennis

Flag Football

Track & Field

Ultimate Frisbee

Volleyball

Water Polo

Wrestling

# How is high school different?

- Two semesters (five months each)
- Four courses every day, 75 minutes each
- Students get to *choose* courses
- Students are granted “credit” for passing a course
- Final exams
- No recess ☹....but students are free to go outside at break and at lunch!

# Class of 2030!

Graduation depends on:

- **30** credits
  - 17 compulsory, 13 elective
- **40** volunteer hours
- Passing the Grade 10 Literacy Test
- Achieving **70%** or higher on the Financial Literacy Test in Grade 10 Math
- **Two e-Learning** courses (opt-out option)
- <https://www.ontario.ca/page/earning-your-high-school-diploma>

# Sample Grade 9 Timetable

Period and Time	Semester One (Sept. - Jan.)	Semester Two (Feb. - June)
Period 1	English*	Math*
Period 2	French	Arts & Crafts
LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
Period 3	Technological Education	Science*
Period 4	Geography	Sports & Games

\*We try to design only two per semester for balance

# Day 1 – Day 2 Schedule

Day 1 (Odd calendar days like February 1, 3, 5)	Day 2 (Even calendar days like February 2, 4, 6)
Period 1 – English	Period 2 – French
Period 2 - French	Period 1 – English
LUNCH	
Period 3 - Technology	Period 4 – Geography
Period 4 - Geography	Period 3 - Technology

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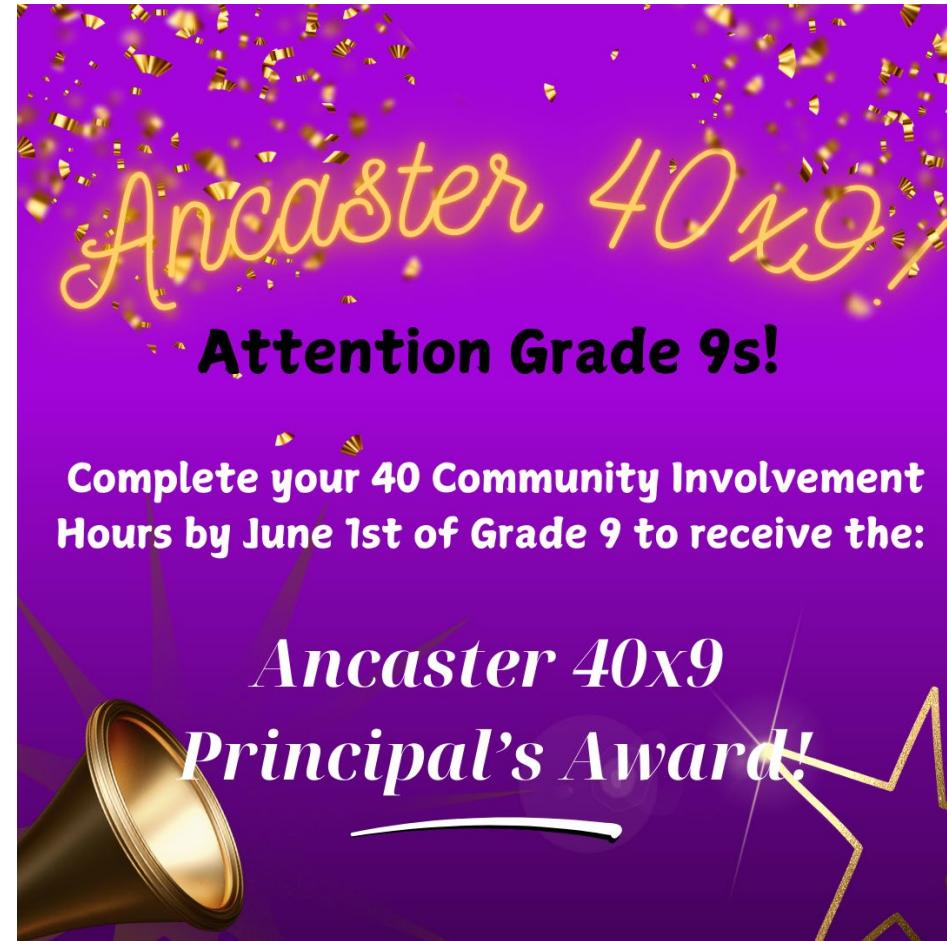
# Community Involvement

- The organization should be community-based
- The activity should be something for which a person is not normally paid
- Check [www.hwdsb.on.ca/cih](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/cih) for more information

ELIGIBLE	INELIGIBLE
Timekeeping a high school sport	Work an extra shift at McDonald's for "free"
Volunteering at a hospital	Filing at a doctor's office
Teaching language at a cultural school on Saturdays	Helping an elderly neighbour clean up their yard
Reading program at the library	Working with uncle renovating basements
Shovelling snow for a senior who is registered with "Snow Angels"	Teaching martial arts/dance to small kids who pay for lessons
Taking tickets at Hamilton WingFest	Volunteering at a pharmacy because it's a future career

# Ancaster 40x9 Award!

- Complete 40 hours of community service by the end of Grade 9 (40x9)
- Start volunteering in your community as early as July 1, 2026



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# Grade Nine Students Take 8 Classes

## Everyone Takes These 5:

- English, French, Geography, Math, Science

## Choose 3 More!

- Visual Art, Non-Traditional Art, Drama, Music
- Sports & Games, Sport Performance, Hockey
- Technology and the Skilled Trades
- Building the Entrepreneurial Mindset, Exploring Family Studies

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# Today's Focus – 3 Electives!

- Visual Art, Non-Traditional Art, Drama, Music
- Sports & Games, Sport Performance, Hockey
- Technology and the Skilled Trades\*
- Building the Entrepreneurial Mindset, Exploring Family Studies

We encourage one Art, one Physical Education, and one Tech course because they are mandatory to graduate.

Grade 9 is a good time to take them!

*\*Technology and the Skilled Trades must be taken before Grade 11*

# Drama

- Improv, directing, acting
- Stage design, costume design
- Join the Drama Club, take Musical Theatre in Grade 11!



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# Visual Arts

- Sketch, paint, sculpt, use coloured pencils
- Digital and mixed media
- After grade 9, students specialize in ceramics, digital media, drawing & painting



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# Non-Traditional Art (\*\*NEW\*\*)

- Urban Art (graffiti & skateboard deck design)
- Crafts (carving, stitching, & pyrography)
- Outdoor Art (chalk murals & found object sculptures)
- Take any kind of art you want in Grade 10 – 12
- Special classes include Ceramics and Drawing & Painting



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# Instrumental Music

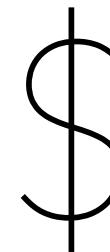
- Get an extra credit with repertoire/concert band
- Join the band just for fun!



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# Exploring Family Studies

- Sewing, cooking, raising a baby
- Managing your life
- Take Food & Nutrition, Hospitality & Tourism, Food & Culture, or Nutrition & Health in Grades 10, 11, and 12!



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# Technology and the Skilled Trades

Students explore five areas in grade 9:

- Communication
- Construction
- Design
- Manufacturing
- Transportation

In Grades 10-12, students can specialize in one of the above, in addition to:

Computer Engineering, Computer Science, Healthcare, Hospitality & Tourism



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# Building the Entrepreneurial Mindset

- Introduction to the world of business
- Focus on entrepreneurship
- Students will learn about making money by starting or running a businesses
- Financial risks associated



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# Physical Education – We Have 3 Kinds!

- Sports & Games  
*(Female Identifying)*
- Sports & Games  
*(Male Identifying)*
- Sport Performance (Co-ed)
- Hockey (Co-ed)



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# Sports & Games

## Activities

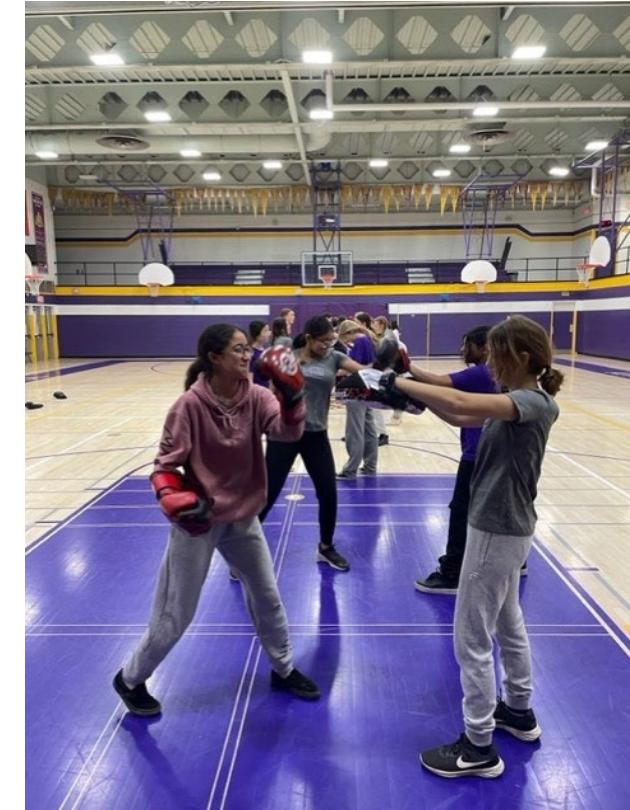
Traditional and non-traditional sports (i.e. archery, outdoor games and kickboxing)

## Fitness Training

Fitness for life – daily warm-ups, weekly fitness room workouts and circuits

## Health

Same in all 3 courses



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# Sport Performance

## Activities

Skill development in **volleyball, soccer & basketball**. Competitive environment, skill & drill focus



## Fitness Training

High level fitness cardio and conditioning and training (plyometric drills, interval training, circuit training)



## Health

Same in all 3 courses

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# Hockey

*\$40 fee applies + must provide own equipment*

## Activities

Skill development in hockey. 30 sessions on ice & specialized goalie instructor weekly. Dry land training and sports

## Fitness Training

High level fitness cardio conditioning

## Health

Same in all 3 courses



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# Ancaster High's NHL and OHL Pedigree

## Our Hockey teacher:

- Mr. Ryan Lounsbury, skate coach for the **OHL Guelph Storm**
- Former skate coach for the **NHL Vancouver Canucks**!



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# Our Football Coach & Phys-Ed Teacher

**Mr. Dunbrack**

Toronto Argonauts  
Ottawa Renegades  
Hamilton Tiger-Cats





ROYALS



# myBlueprint – Log in and Explore!

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

HWDSB

The screenshot shows the myBlueprint student dashboard. On the left is a dark sidebar with icons and links: Home, Who Am I, High School, Continuing Education, Post-Secondary, Work, Money, Guides, and Favourites. The main area has a header with a red 'X' icon and the message 'Your courses are **Not Submitted**'. Below this are three steps: Step 1 Add Courses, Step 2 Review Courses, and Step 3 Submit Courses. Step 3 is highlighted in blue. A blue box with a blue arrow points to the text 'Will stay “Not Submitted” until February'. The main content area shows a grid for course selection across four years: Grade 9 Next Year, Grade 10 Plan Ahead, Grade 11 Plan Ahead, and Grade 12 Plan Ahead. Each year has a 'Plan Ahead' button. The Grade 9 grid includes courses: Grade 9 English (ENL1W1 • 1 Credit), Grade 9 Mathematics (MTH1W1 • 1 Credit), Grade 9 Science (SNC1W1 • 1 Credit), Grade 9 Exploring C... (CGC1W1 • 1 Credit), and Grade 9 Core French (FSF1D1 • 1 Credit). Each course has a plus icon to add it. To the right is a 'Graduation Indicator' section showing 8/30 REQUIRED CREDITS, with 8 Planned, 0 Earned, and 8 Total. A 'View Progress' button is below. At the bottom is an 'SHSM Planner' section stating 'Your school offers 5 Specialist High Skills Majors'.

Will stay “Not Submitted” until February

Grade 9 Next Year	Grade 10 Plan Ahead	Grade 11 Plan Ahead	Grade 12 Plan Ahead
Grade 9 English ENL1W1 • 1 Credit	+ English	+ English	+ English
Grade 9 Mathematics MTH1W1 • 1 Credit	+ Mathematics	+ Mathematics	+ Course
Grade 9 Science SNC1W1 • 1 Credit	+ Science	+ Course	+ Course
Grade 9 Exploring C... CGC1W1 • 1 Credit	+ History	+ Course	+ Course
Grade 9 Core French FSF1D1 • 1 Credit	+ Careers	+ Course	+ Course

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# Planning 30 Credits

<b>Grade 9</b>	<b>Grade 10</b>	<b>Grade 11</b>	<b>Grade 12</b>
English	English	English	English
Math	Math	Math	Elective – full choice
Science	Science	STEM (lots of choice)	Elective – full choice
Geography	History	Elective – full choice	Elective – full choice
French	Civics/Careers	Elective – full choice	Elective – full choice
Tech	Elective – full choice	Elective – full choice	Elective – full choice
Art (4 kinds)	Elective – full choice	Elective – full choice	Elective or Study
Phys-Ed (3 kinds)	Elective – full choice	Elective – full choice	Elective or Study

*Black Font = 17 Compulsories*

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# Special Programs Start in Grade 11

## Specialist High Skills Majors (We have five)

- Students will graduate with specialized skills, knowledge and certifications relevant to their chosen industry
- Students take a 2-credit co-op and a bundle of 5 credits in addition to English and Math
- No special preparation is needed in grade 9 or 10

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# Specialist High Skills Major – Arts & Culture

## Careers

- Actor, Musician
- Graphic Designer
- Visual Artist
- Technician for movies, broadcasting, performing arts, etc.



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# Specialist High Skills Major – Health & Wellness

HWDSDB

## Careers

- Medical Laboratory Technologist
- Nurse
- Educational Assistant
- Hospital Clerk
- Physician



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# Specialist High Skills Major - Hospitality

## Careers

- Event Planner
- Health Inspector
- Chef
- Flight Attendant



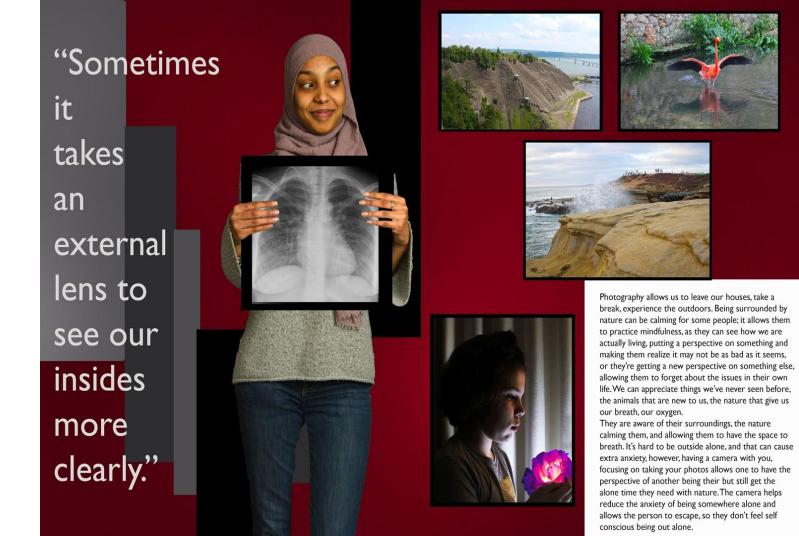
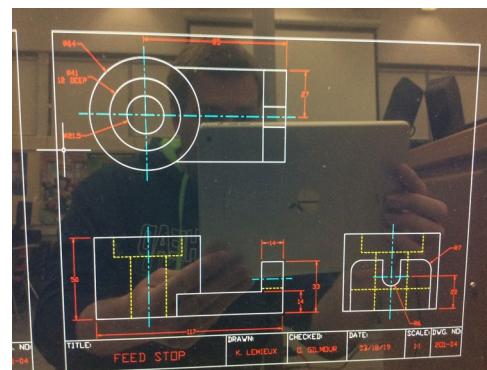
# Specialist High Skills Major – Information & Communication Technology

## Careers

- Programming
- Network Security
- Technological Design
- Media

```
    composite.setBounds(325, 54, 319, 482);
    composite.setExpandHorizontal(true);
    composite.setExpandVertical(true);

    senal = new Table(scrolledComposite, SWT.BORDER | SWT.FULL_SELECTION);
    senal.addSelectionListener(new SelectionAdapter() {
        public void widgetSelected(SelectionEvent e) {
            PersonalContact [] mypersonalcontact = new PersonalContact [];
            personalContact [] mypersonalcontact = new PersonalContact [];
            mypersonalcontact = myDatabaseConnection.getAllPersonalContact();
            String[] Titles = {"Contact ID", "First Name", "Last Name", "Person
            ScrolledComposite scrolledComposite = new ScrolledComposite(createShell, SWT.B
            scrolledComposite.setBounds(325, 54, 319, 482);
            scrolledComposite.setExpandHorizontal(true);
            scrolledComposite.setExpandVertical(true);
            scrollComposite.setLoopIndex = 0; loopIndex < titles.length; loopIndex++ {
                column = new TableColumn(table_personal, SWT.NONE);
                column.setWidth(titles[loopIndex].length);
                column.setHeaderLabel(titles[loopIndex]);
                column.setLabelProvider(new TableLabelProvider() {
                    public String getColumnLabel(TableColumn column, TableItem item) {
                        return mypersonalcontact[loopIndex].getContactName();
                    }
                });
            }
        }
    });
}
```



“Sometimes it takes an external lens to see our insides more clearly.”

Photography allows us to leave our houses, take a break, capture the outdoors. Being surrounded by nature can be calming for some people; it allows them to practice mindfulness, as they can see how we are actually living, putting a perspective on something and making us realize it may not be as bad as it seems or they can just sit back and relax and do nothing else, allowing them to forget about the insides in their own life. We can appreciate things we've never seen before, the animals that are new to us, the nature that give us our breath, our oxygen.

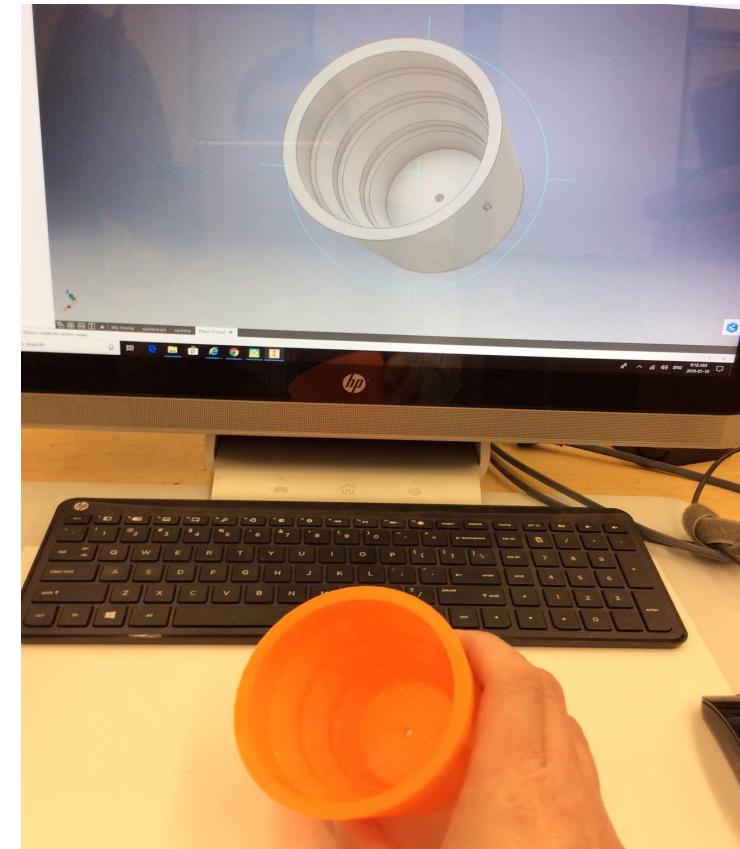
They are also great reminders, they can calm us down, taking deep breaths, and allowing them to take the space to breath. It's hard to be outside alone, and that can cause extra anxiety; however, having a camera with you, focusing on taking your photos allows to have perspective of all the things around them, but still get the above time to meet with nature. The camera helps reduce the anxiety of being somewhere alone and allows the person to escape, so they don't feel self conscious being out alone.

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# Specialist High Skills Major - Manufacturing

## Careers

- Engineer
- Machinist
- Welder
- Industrial Designer
- Technologist



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# International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme

- A challenging two-year curriculum (Gr 11 & 12)
- Includes studying six subjects
- Provides a global perspective with cross-cultural understanding
- Leads to a qualification recognized by the world's universities
- Students graduate with an Ontario Secondary School Diploma AND the IB Diploma
- E-mail our IB Coordinator Ms. Toor at [mtoor@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:mtoor@hwdsb.on.ca) with your questions



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# Important Dates Ahead

## February 2026

- Grade 8 students enter options into myBlueprint with help from Mr. Nicholson & Ms. Adams

## March 30 – April 2, 2026

- Parents/guardians approve course choices in Parent Portal (web version only)

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

**Grade 8** :::::::::::::::::::::  
**Summer Reach Ahead**  
**Course Registration**  
**OPENS FEBRUARY 2**

*Civics and/or Careers*  
Cosmetology  
Construction

CLICK HERE FOR

MORE INFORMATION



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# Summer School Reach Ahead *for Credit*

## July 2 – 29, 2026

HWDSB

Grade 8 students can register for Civics (2 weeks) or Careers (2 weeks) or **both** (4 weeks). These are offered via **e-Learning only**

*OR*

One technology course **in-person** at one of our secondary schools

*NOTE: some students qualify to take a learning strategies course for credit but need to talk to their grade 8 teacher before registering*

To register, go to **myBlueprint.ca/hwdsb** and log in using your HWDSB credentials, then, click on Continuing Education on the left-hand-side.

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# Summer School Programs (*Non-Credit*)

There are programs designed to help students improve their skills but do not grant a credit:

- International Languages
- Skill Builder
- ESL Literacy

Please talk to your Grade 8 teacher about these programs

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# Questions?

1. Ask your grade 8 teacher
2. Check the Grade 8 section of our Student Services' website:  
*[www.hwdsb.on.ca/ancasterhigh/student-services/grade8](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/ancasterhigh/student-services/grade8)*
3. Contact Ms. Adams at [daadams@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:daadams@hwdsb.on.ca)
4. Please direct questions about specialized services (exceptional and non-exceptional IEPs) to Ms. Baker at [dbaker@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:dbaker@hwdsb.on.ca)