

Bernie Custis Secondary School

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

2022-2023 Student Handbook

REGULAR DAY BELL SCHEDULE

Day 1 Schedule		Day 2 Schedule	
Breakfast	8:30 – 8:50	Breakfast	8:30 – 8:50
Program	0.30 - 0.30	Program	0.30 - 0.30
Period 1	8:50 - 10:05	Period 2	8:50-10:05
Nutrition	10:05-10:15	Nutrition	10:05-10:15
Break		Break	
Period 2	10:15-11:30	Period 1	10:15-11:30
Lunch	11:30-12:30	Lunch	11:30-12:30
Period 3	12:30-1:45	Period 4	12:30-1:45
Transition	1:45-1:55	Transition	1:45-1:55
Period 4	1:55-3:10	Period 3	1:55-3:10

IMPORTANT DATES

DATE	EVENT	
September 6	1st Day of School (sem. 1)	
September 12, 19 & 21	School Photo Days	
October 10	Thanksgiving Day	
October 14	Photo Retake Day	
October 20	Parents Night	
October 24	P.A. Day	
November 23	Photo Retake Day #2	
November 25	P.A. Day	
December 26 – January 6	Winter Holidays	
January 26- February 1	Semester 1 Exams/Culminating	
February 2	P.A. Day	
February 3	1st Day of School (sem. 2)	
February 15	2 nd Semester Photo Day	
February 20	Family Day	
March 3	P.A. Day	
March 13-17	March Break	
March 23	Parents Night	
April 7-10	School Spring Break	
April 11-14	Grad Photo Days	
May 22	Victoria Day	
June 21-27	Semester 2 Exams/Culminating	



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Principal: Timothy Powell-McBride • Vice Principals: Michael Grover (A-F), Sirio Vacca (G-N), Krista Brodersen (O-Z)

Address: 1055 King Street East, Hamilton, Ontario L8M1E2

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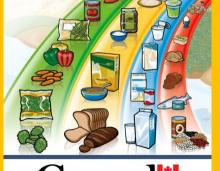
SCHOOL SERVICES

CAFETERIA

The cafeteria provides a variety of food to everyone at Bernie Custis. The cafeteria is open before school, during morning break, and at lunch periods. Students are responsible for proper disposal of their own garbage and return of their own trays, etc. Food is to be eaten only in the cafeteria and or atrium; eating or drinking elsewhere violates the Fire Code.

NUTRITION PROGRAM

The Nutrition Program is available to all students at Bernie Custis. A healthy breakfast/snack is provided free of charge to students and is served daily during morning break. All food must be eaten in the cafeteria or atrium.





STUDENT SERVICES

Counsellors are available to assist students with educational and career planning as well as with personal problems. Counsellors are assigned alphabetically by last name. Appointments can be made with the Student Services Office Administrator before school, after school, at lunch and at break.

HEALTH CLINIC

Bernie Custis is host to a health clinic with a resident nurse practitioner. The nurse is available to support student health concerns. The clinic located beside the main office.

SOCIAL WORKER

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board employs Social Workers who work with school staff and students to assist those experiencing challenges. Their services are available by referral through Administration and Student Services.

LEARNING COMMONS

The Learning Commons supports curriculum and literacy by providing resources for class assignments, current and varied options for recreational reading, and access to computers and electronic databases. Space is available for class instruction, independent study and collaborative learning. The Teacher-Librarian is available to assist students and classes with research and reading skills as well as to provide instruction on information and technological literacy.

RESOURCE ROOM

The Resource Staff gives assistance to students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) who require academic help, social and emotional support, and individualized programming. The Resource Room is located in the Learning Commons.

CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION

Co-operative education combines classroom instruction with practical work in the community. The work experience is monitored and evaluated by teachers and employers as students earn credits toward their graduation diploma.

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RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board acknowledges each individual's right to follow or not to follow religious beliefs and practices, free from discriminatory or harassing behaviours and is committed to taking reasonable steps to provide religious accommodations to staff and to students.

Bernie Custis follows the HWDSB policy where the school may expose students to all religious views, but will not impose any particular view. The school aims for student awareness of all religions.

For many students and staff of the Board, there are a number of areas where the practice of their religion will result in a request for accommodation on the part of the school and/or the Board:

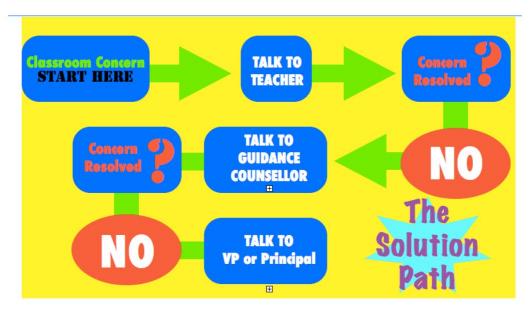
- School Opening and Closing exercises
- · Leave of Absence for Religious Holy Days
- Prayer
- · Dietary Requirements
- Fasting
- Religious Dress
- · Modesty Requirements in Physical Education Classes

The school will make reasonable efforts to accommodate individuals' requirement for daily prayer by providing an appropriate location within the building for students and staff to participate in religious activities. Ex. Accommodation for prayer at BCSS is provided in the school Community Room.

Parent School Council

The purpose of the Parent School Council is to act as a liaison between the school and the parent communities. The Parent School Council meets on a monthly basis. All parents are welcome to attend. Please contact the principal for more information.

CLASSROOM CONCERN? WHERE TO GO FOR HELP...



v. HWDSB

GENERAL INFORMATION

FREE TIME

Students on lunch or a scheduled spare period are permitted access to the Cafeteria, the Atrium, the Learning Commons, various classrooms where appointments have been made with teachers and the outside of the building. During the lunch periods, students are not permitted on the 3rd floor. Students are asked to stay out of the hallways occupied by classes on opposing lunch periods.

FIELD TRIPS

Parents must complete permission forms to take part in field trips. Payment for excursions need to be completed through School Cash on Line. No students may drive other students on field trips. The only exception to this is for eighteen-year-old students; they may drive other students once they have written permission on the appropriate "volunteer driver" form. If the other students are not 18, parental permission is required. Behaviour on field trips is expected to be the same as at school. This includes smoking and vaping restrictions.

VEHICLES AT SCHOOL

Students may park in the parking lot on Balsam Avenue North and Cannon Street East. Students are to drive with extreme care and caution around the school. Students are not to loiter in the parking lot.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and Found items are located in the Main Office. Students who believe items have been stolen are to report the suspected theft to the Office. Students are advised not to bring valuables to school. The school cannot accept any responsibility for the security or loss of belongings and valuables.

Do not leave valuables (including cell phones) unattended around the school or in places like the change rooms. If you have lost an item, please check the Lost and Found.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

Visitors are welcome to Bernie Custis only if they have official business with the school. Students are not to invite their friends from outside to visit them at school at any time during the school day. This is to protect the safety of students and prevent distraction by visitors. Visitors must report to the Main Office upon their arrival to the building. Visitors not on school business will be asked to leave and may be sent "no trespassing" letters which empower the school to have trespassers charged by the police.



ACADEMIC OPERATIONS

ADMISSIONS, WITHDRAWALS, COURSE CHANGES

All new admissions to the school must meet with an Administrator and Guidance Counsellor. Every student who plans to withdraw from school must complete a withdrawal form obtained from Student Services.

Students leaving school because of lack of school success and poor attendance will normally be required to demonstrate tangible evidence of their ability and intent to achieve school success before the school will re-admit.

A student may drop or change a course only with good reason and only with parental knowledge and Principal permission. Until such permission is obtained, the student must attend all classes on the original timetable. To correct errors, timetable changes will be permitted only at the beginning of a semester.

EXAMINATIONS & REPORTS

Final examinations and culminating activities are compulsory. Examinations will not be re-scheduled or waived to accommodate students who wish to start work early or go on vacations. Students and parents who require exams to be re-scheduled because of emergencies or other critical situations may request consideration in writing to the Principal. Teachers are not authorized to reschedule examinations.

Parents must notify the school promptly if students will be **absent from an examination or culminating activity** because of illness or serious emergency. A doctor's note will be required for an illness.

Cheating in any form on an examination or culminating activity may result in a mark of '0' and a referral to the office for possible further consequences.

A student or parent, if the student is under 18, may provide a written request to the Principal to receive a photocopy of a student's examination paper.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The OSSD is awarded to students who successfully complete thirty credits: eighteen are compulsory and twelve are optional. In addition, students must successfully complete the OSSLT (or the OSSLC if appropriate) AND forty hours of community volunteer work. The HWDSB community volunteer criteria can be found on our website. Be sure to consult with Student Services to ensure that you have met all the graduation requirements.



HWDSB HONOURS CRITERIA

In order to qualify for an Honour award, students can take courses from one or a combination of the following avenues: HWDSB Secondary School (day school), any school in the Province of Ontario that follows the Ontario Curriculum, e-learning, night school, and summer school (these courses also must meet Ontario Curriculum expectations).

Courses must be taken July through June of a school year. The calculation date will take place in June of the school year. Any course taken after June will count for the next school year.

Ontario Scholar Requirements: 480 = 80% 6 credits (480 marks) 477 = 79.5%

- Gr. 12 U, M, C, E or O courses
- awarded as a GRADUATE or POSTGRADUATE
- qualifying courses may be completed over more than 1 year
- any course shall be multiplied by its credit value (i.e. CO-OP mark will count 2X)

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ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

- A student who has been absent must, on return, provide a note from a parent/guardian to the office, unless a parent/guardian has called to inform the office of the reason for absence. The note must identify the student, indicate the day of absence, and should explain the reason for the absence.
- Students who reach the age of majority (18 years old) can communicate directly with the school rather than through their parents. Signing of notes is a privilege, not a right. Abuse of this privilege may mean the privilege is revoked.

EARLY LEAVING DURING THE DAY

- A note, properly dated and signed by parents/guardians or a student over 18, indicating the time and the reason for leaving early, must be presented to the Office. A doctor or dental appointment notice is acceptable.
- If any situation arises during the day that causes a student to be unable to attend class, the student must report to the Office. The Office staff will see that the student's needs are attended to, including making any necessary telephone calls to parents/quardians.
- Students who leave the school without reporting to the office will be considered as "skipping".

LATE ARRIVAL

Late for Class: A student who enters a class after the scheduled start of a class is late and will be dealt with by the teacher. Administration will meet with students who are chronically late to classes.

ASSIGNED WORK DURING ABSENCE

 Students are responsible for maintaining all work, including any work covered and assigned during any absence through illness, field trips, co-curricular activities. Students are expected to refer to their teachers and the courses on the HUB to complete all missed assignments. Students need to consult with their teachers on the manner to submit outstanding assignments.

VACATIONS

There are holidays in December and March for everyone. If you take a vacation during exams, no accommodations will be made. Please attempt to avoid vacations outside of school holidays. If you take a vacation during the semester, please notify the administration and each classroom teacher in writing by completing an Extended Absence form, at least one week in advance. All work missed is the student's responsibility.

UNEXPLAINED ABSENCES

Students who have unexplained absences from a class will be reported to administration. Students who have frequent unexplained absences will be counselled; however, chronic truancy may lead to suspension or withdrawal from school.

HWDSE

CODE OF CONDUCT

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) recognizes that it is the responsibility of all individuals to contribute to a positive school climate that is inclusive and accepting of all students and staff, and that promotes the prevention of bullying and harassment. The HWDSB Code of Conduct Policy sets out the expectations for behavior consistent with the Provincial Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct Policy applies to persons on school or board property, on school buses, at school related events or activities, or in other circumstances that could have an impact on school climate. Any person who enters into an agreement, or uses school board property (third party), must follow standards consistent with the Provincial Code of Conduct and with HWDSB's Code of Conduct Policy.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

HWDSB is committed to:

- Schools which promote responsibility, respect, civility and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment.
- Fostering positive school climates where all members feel safe, included and accepted.
- Standards of Behaviour as defined in the policy for all members of the school community (parents, students, school staff, visitors, volunteers).
- Relationships founded in mutual acceptance and inclusion, fostering a culture of respect when modeled by all.
- Prevention and early intervention strategies to address inappropriate behavior.

Standards of Behaviour

Respect, Civility and Responsible Citizenship: All members of the school community must recognize that a whole school approach is required, and that everyone including trustees, Board employees, students, parents/guardians, Home and School, School Council, visitors, volunteers, contractors, community members on school premises, while on school buses, at school related events or activities, or in any other circumstances that could have an impact on the climate of the school must:

- respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws
- comply with the Equity and Inclusion Policy and other Board policies
- · demonstrate honesty and integrity
- respect differences in people, their ideas, and their opinions
- treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is disagreement
- respect and treat others fairly, regardless of, for example, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, creed, sex, gender

- identity, gender expression, marital status, family status or disability
- · respect the rights of others
- show proper care and regard for school property and the property of others
- take appropriate measures to help those in need:
- seek assistance from a member of the school staff, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully
- respect all members of the school community, especially persons in positions of authority
- respect the need of others to work in an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching
- not swear at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority
- follow standards consistent with the Provincial Code of Conduct
- promote the prevention of bullying



Safety: All members of the school community must not:

- engage in any bullying behaviours including the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written, or other means of bullying
- engage in any hateful behaviours (physical, verbal, electronic, written) that are based on racist, anti-Semitic, Islamophobic, sexist, homophobic, transphobic and other hateful ideologies.
- engage in gender-based violence and incidents based on homophobia, transphobia or biphobia
- commit sexual assault
- traffic weapons or illegal drugs
- give drugs, alcohol or cannabis to a minor
- commit robbery
- be in possession of any weapon, including firearms
- use any object to threaten or intimidate another
- cause injury to any person with an object
- be in possession of, or be under the influence of, or provide others with alcohol, illegal drugs and cannabis (unless the individual has been authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes)
- provide others with alcohol, illegal drugs or cannabis (unless the recipient is an individual who has been authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes)
- inflict or encourage others to inflict bodily harm on another person
- engage in propaganda and other forms of behaviour motivated by hate or bias,
- commit an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property or to property located on the premises of the school.

Bernie Secondary School complies with the Safe Schools Act and other HWDSB procedures and provincial legislation regarding Safety and Equity. BCSS promotes positive student behaviour and progressive behaviour will be used towards all violations of the Act.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

The Education Act requires regular attendance. As well, good attendance and punctuality are necessary to be successful in school and on the job. Therefore, you must attend all classes and arrive on time. Absence from school must be reported to the school upon your return and with a reason for the absence stated.

Consequences

You will be required to make up work missed if you are absent. Your parents will be notified of your absence if you are under 18 years old. Persistent absence from a class may be cause for your removal from that class. Persistent absence from school may result in suspension.

DRESS CODE

Safe and respectful learning environments allow both teaching and learning to occur. Expectations for appropriate dress must be consistent with the Charter of Rights and the Human Rights Code.

- No clothing, hats, or jewellery will be worn that bears any of the following:
 - o sexual or racist comments, suggestive or objectionable messages;
 - o any representation or an advertisement for alcohol, drugs or tobacco;
 - o any representation of violence;
 - o any offensive/inappropriate language.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Students must come to school free from the influence of alcohol or other mind-influencing chemicals. Therefore, you are forbidden to use or be in the possession of such substances in the school, on school property, in school buses or at any school activity.



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RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY

All students deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. With this as a foundation, teachers are responsible for keeping order in their classrooms, in the school and on school-sponsored events. Therefore, you are expected to comply with the rules of the school, accept the authority of school personnel and treat all staff with respect. For security reasons, you must provide your name when asked-failure to do so will result in a suspension.

RESPECT FOR PEERS AND OTHER PEOPLE

All students are entitled to an environment that is safe. welcoming and free of violence. This means such things as intimidation, weapons and hate literature are not to be part of school life. Therefore, you are expected to be courteous and considerate in your dealings with all staff and students. Physical, verbal, sexual or psychological abuse, bullying, cyber bullying or discrimination on the basis of race, culture, religion, gender, language, disability, sexual orientation or any other attribute is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

RESPECT FOR NEIGHBOURS AND COMMUNITY

Every time a student is out in the community, he/she is a reflection of his/her family values and our school values. Students should strive to make us all, as well as themselves, proud of their behaviour. Respect neighbours and their property. Watch language while walking to lunch. Be respectful in restaurants, etc.

RESPECT FOR PROPERTY

The school is property paid for by your parents and others through taxes. The taxpayer assumes the cost associated with vandalism, until the responsible person is found. Therefore, you are expected to treat the school grounds, school buses and the school building and equipment with the same respect you would give to your personal property and that you would expect others to give to your property. You are expected to keep the grounds and building clean and free from discarded food and food wrappers.

SMOKING AND VAPING

To support the health issue, the Ontario government has banned smoking anywhere on school property. Therefore, you are not permitted to smoke in the school building, on school property or in a school bus.

The Smoke Free Act -2017 SFOA

- It is illegal for anyone to smoke or vape tobacco or cannabis at school, on school grounds, and all public areas within 20m of these grounds
- Prohibits the use of medical cannabis and electronic cigarettes (vaping) inside enclosed workplaces, enclosed public places and other places where tobacco smoking is banned
- Recreational cannabis will be treated the same as alcohol from the perspective of schools. Suspensions will be considered for a student possessing or under the influence of cannabis.
- Smoking or vaping cannabis will not be permitted at schools, even for medical cannabis users. Edibles are not permitted at schools.



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LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

A code lockdown is a safety procedure designed to ensure that students and staff are safe from a source of danger (internal or external). Students are to listen to all staff instructions and follow the guidelines set out for them during training sessions. Students should be aware of the following terminology:

- Hold and Secure: used when the school is secured due to an
 ongoing situation outside and not related to the school. The school
 continues to function normally, with the exterior doors locked until the
 situation is resolved.
- Shelter in Place: used for an environmental, or weather-related situation, where it is necessary to keep all occupants within the school to protect them. Examples may include chemical spills, blackouts, explosions or extreme weather conditions. If the "shelter in place" lasts for a prolonged period of time, emergency personnel and HWDSB staff will arrange for relocation of students. This information will be posted on the board website and Synrevoice will be utilized as the situation unfolds.
- Lockdown: used when there is a major incident or threat of school violence within the school, or in relation to the school.

FIRE EVACUATIONS

Throughout the year we will also practice several fire evacuation drills. These drills will be conducted randomly during school hours. All students are required to follow the directions of staff regarding the procedure during this time.

MEDICAL HEALTH CONCERNS

Any student who has life threatening medical/health issues (Anaphylaxis, Diabetes, severe allergies, etc.) must inform the office and fill out an individual Emergency Medical Plan form, so that a plan of action can be created to respond to a medical emergency.

SCHOOL LOCKERS

Students will be assigned a locker and are to put a secure **combination** lock on it; for safety and security reasons, students must give the combination to the office (via their homeroom teacher). Students are to keep their combination secret to prevent theft of their belongings.

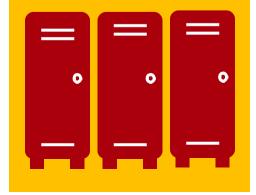
Students are not permitted to change lockers without permission from the Vice Principal and must not share lockers.

The school will cut locks and empty improperly claimed lockers.

Students must keep their locker clean and clear of graffiti; locker damage is associated with vandalism consequences.

Lockers must be cleared out by the last exam day in June; any items left in lockers at the end of June will be disposed of.

Lockers remain the property of Bernie Custis and may be accessed at any time.



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The Ministry of Education introduced **Growing Success**, a provincial assessment and evaluation policy in 2010, based on longstanding guidelines developed to inform our Assessment and Evaluation practices. The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board began implementing a board wide assessment and evaluation policy based on this provincial policy in September 2011. Details of the HWDSB Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting Policy are available for students and parents on the board website (www.hwdsb.on.ca).

There are consequences for cheating, plagiarizing, submitting work late, or not submitting work.

DETERMINING A GRADE

Teachers will take into account various considerations before making a decision about the grade to enter on the report card. Determining a report card grade will involve teacher's professional judgment and interpretation of evidence (conversations, observations, products) and should reflect the student's most consistent level of achievement for each overall expectation, with special consideration given to more recent evidence.

MISSING EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Students are responsible for:

- Providing evidence of their learning by completing all tests, demonstrations, projects, presentations and assignments to the best of their ability within established timelines.
- Using organizational and time management strategies to meet deadlines.
- · Working collaboratively with their teachers to get extra help and support and manage their time when required.
- Ensuring that the evidence they provide is their own work, not the result of cheating or plagiarism.

If a student has not participated in learning activities in the classroom, and the teacher has not been able to evaluate the student through observations, conversations or student products, the teacher may not be able to evaluate student achievement of the overall expectations for a unit, subject or course. In such situations, the teacher will communicate with parents and seek the support of the student success team, student services and/or administration. In the case where a student is not attending, the school social worker will be involved. If after strategies for support have been put in place and the student has still not demonstrated achievement of the overall expectations of a course, the teacher will use "Lower Limits" on the report card to indicate where the student is on the continuum of learning. Lower Limits are as follows:

- 40 Additional learning required. Focus on remediation, revision and completion. Recommend credit recovery or summer school
- 30 Significant additional learning required. May require additional supports, interventions or changes to program. May need to repeat course.
- 25 Used for grades 11 & 12 only. Means a student has had no opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the overall expectations due to unique circumstances (student just joined course or has been ill).
- I Used for grades 9 & 10 only. Means a student has had no opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the overall expectations due to unique circumstances (student just joined course or has been ill).
- 0 No evidence of learning.



LATE SUBMISSION OF EVIDENCE

If a student has not submitted evidence of learning on the due date, the teacher will use a series of strategies as appropriate to facilitate the completion and submission of the work. These strategies may include: conferencing with the student; requiring the student to complete an alternate task; reviewing the need for extra supports; contacting parents and developing a credit rescue plan for completion. If a student still does not submit any evidence of learning ultimately, a mark of zero will be given for the product. Also please refer to the "Missed Evidence of Learning" section of our policy.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense and one that must not be taken lightly. When students submit evidence of achievement that is not their own, cheating or plagiarism, the expectation being assessed will be treated as missing (please refer to the "Missed Evidence of Learning" section of our policy).

Cheating is defined as "to violate rules dishonestly" according to www.merriam-websster.com. Student must follow "rules" that are implicit in the tasks that have been assigned to assess and evaluate their learning. Some of these rules include:

- Tasks must be completed independently unless otherwise instructed
- Products to demonstrate learning should not be shared with other students Tests require students to use only the information they remember and they must not use other resources (unless explicitly provided with resources / otherwise stated by the teacher).

Plagiarism is a form of cheating. The Ministry "Growing Success" document defines plagiarism as "the use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another without attribution, in order to represent them as one's own original work." Plagiarism can occur in different ways including:

- Improper paraphrasing or paraphrasing without acknowledgement of the source;
- Quoting from a source without acknowledgement (copying);
- · Cutting and pasting from an electronic source without acknowledgement, including graphic
- · representations;
- Representing as his/her own a product that a student did not produce.

RESPONDING TO ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Consequences of academic dishonesty may include the following:

- · Student/teacher conference;
- Parent / Administration notification;
- Confirmation of student understanding of academic honesty;
- Completion of the task under supervision
- Revision and resubmission of the task OR the completing of a new task (this is at the discretion of the teacher)

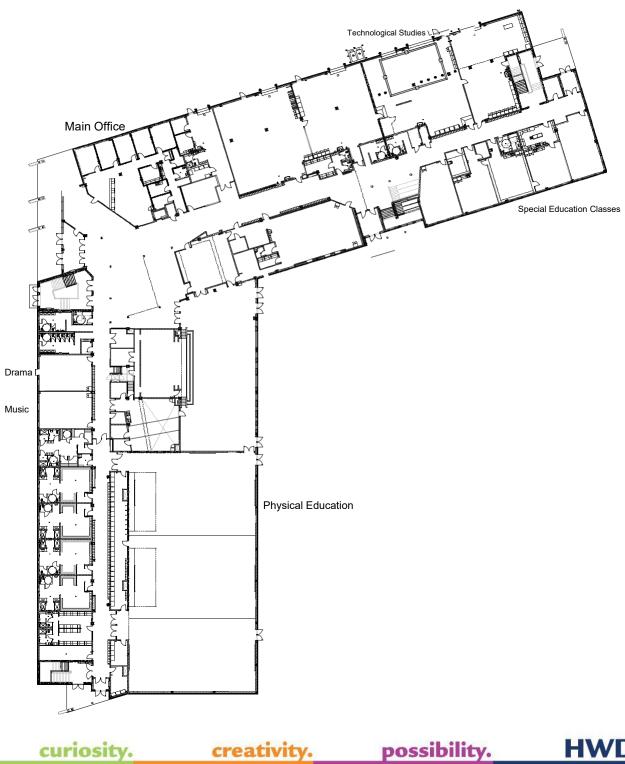
Repeated actions of academic dishonesty will be treated as a violation of the Code of Conduct and will be referred to administration. The student and his/her parents will be made aware that this behaviour constitutes lying and or theft and progressive discipline actions appropriate to these infractions will ensue.



CO-INSTRUCTIONAL (EXTRA-CURRICULAR) POLICY

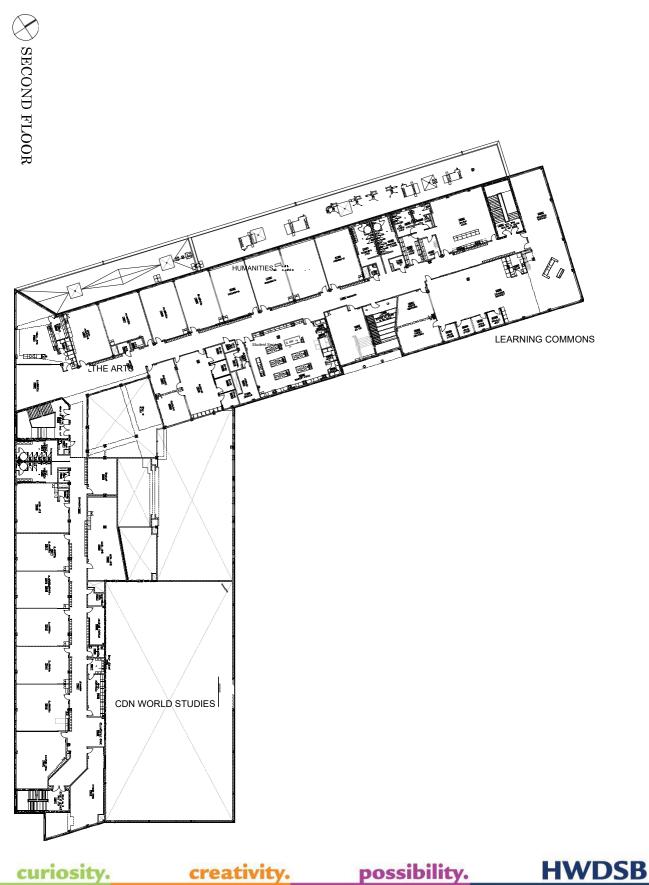
- ❖ To participate in any co-instructional activity (sports, school organizations, clubs, dances, etc.) a student must be in possession of a valid Student Card.
- The privilege of participating in activities may be withdrawn or restricted under the following circumstances:
 - 1) The student does not attend all classes on the day of a scheduled event or game
 - 2) The student is consistently failing a course/courses, or has excessive absenteeism
 - 3) The student breaches the Code of Conduct (e.g. inappropriate behaviour, etc.)





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