

August 2019

Dear Dundas Valley Secondary School Students:

On behalf of Ms. Kindree, Mr. Schinkel and myself, a heartfelt welcome to Dundas Valley Secondary School to all our new and existing DVSS Gryphons! A special welcome goes to all of our Grade 9 students. We are so excited for you and know you will love your high school experience! We hope you had an amazing summer during which you explored, relaxed and had fun in the sun...safely, of course. We are here to help you to be and become the best version of you. The best way for us to help you with this goal is make sure you know more about our school, our expectations for you and how to live and learn within these to make your voice stronger.

The most amazing thing about our school is that we have a vision that was created by students, the community and staff that is more important in 2019 than it has ever been. Our words, thoughts and actions are guided by this vision statement:

An empathetic culture of respect and learning through the lens of human rights.

This vision is meant to guide how we interact with each other and the world. Imagine having a vision statement that could take you from the lovely valley we call Dundas to be relevant and impactful in the big world! Imagine a world where all are treated with empathy, compassion and equity! This is a pretty lofty vision....but we are confident you and our staff, along with our leadership team can aspire to learn, live and work this way. One way we do this is by valuing your voice and our staff voice to continually refine and improve our school. Please let us know how you can use the curriculum in your classes and connect it to the Vision of the school. Consider the following:

- How can you become a valuable member of the school community and take your learning and experiences with the DVSS Vision Statement beyond our halls? How can you influence positive change?
- What are you wondering about? How does the vision relate to your learning? What are you doing with your learning to make real connections to the school vision? When you do, this is authentic learning that will last a lifetime. It is this exact degree of authenticity that all of us at DVSS wish for each of you!

Let me and our staff know how we can help! We want to empower you and give you voice to make our school and beyond a better place.

All students will be assessed and evaluated via Growing Success practices. Please work with your teachers to help you better understand how you learn best, where your learning needs and gaps still exist and what response is best for you to show your learning based on overall curriculum expectations.

Our emphasis has been on assessing and evaluating based on the learning journey. This means your teachers are continually gathering evidence of your learning based on their conversations, observations, as well as products you submit....in other words, it all matters and is important to help teachers determine a grade. You are an important partner in your learning because you and your parents/caregivers are the experts on you. We want to work with you and your parents/caregivers. Our teachers will work with you to create learning goals and success criteria so that you know when you have triumphed at showing your learning of overall curriculum expectations. For more information about what this means for you as a learner, please visit <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growSuccess.pdf>

Always remember to work within the school processes and school code of conduct as well as the HWDSB policies. Ultimately, these processes are created to ensure the safety and well-being of all. If you are stuck as to what your next step should be, please come to the office and see administration for help and guidance as our roles are to help you navigate all of the “sticky” areas!

This summer letter is intended to help you with all the information you need for a healthy start to a great school year. Our communication with each of you, our families and staff will make our school stronger as it is so important to hear and value each other.

COMMUNICATION

My role as Principal is to make sure your voice is valued and heard. Please come see me whenever you have an idea you wish to share or a concern about how to make our school better.

You can also reach me at gciprian@hwdsb.on.ca or follow me on Twitter @Gail_Cipriani. I truly want to be responsive to your needs and can only do so when we open up communication.

School Website - Please access our website for information at www.hwdsb.on.ca/dundasvalley for upcoming events or information to support your learning. 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: <https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/about/media/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 to access the staff directory, contact the Student Services Office, and reach reception in the main office. If you have messages regarding attendance, please contact Safe Arrival at 1-844-506-4350.

DVSS BELL SCHEDULES

DVSS operates on a rotating bell schedule based on the day of the month.

Day 1 – all odd days e.g. 1, 3, 5, etc.

Day 2 – all even days e.g., 2, 4, 6, etc.

Please note the first day of school, Tuesday, September 3rd will be a Day 1.

DVSS DAY 1: (Odd number dates)

Period 1: 8:25 a.m. – 9:40 a.m.

Period 2: 9:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

LUNCH: 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Period 3: 12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.

Period 4: 1:20 p.m. – 2:35 p.m.

DVSS DAY 2: (Even number dates)

Period 2: 8:25 a.m. -9:40 a.m.

Period 1: 9:45 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

LUNCH 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Period 4: 12:00 p.m. -1:15 p.m.

Period 3: 1:20 p.m. -2:35 p.m.

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 our school population to have lunch. Please respect our school by cleaning up after yourself and using the garbage bins to discard any garbage. Help us to help you...keep the school looking clean and bright so that it is reflective of you!

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 access to a multitude of learning tools, websites and applications to support learning 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).

TRANSPORTATION/ BUSING

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 they have Transportation questions.

If you would like courtesy transportation, please download a courtesy transportation application:

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. Daniela Indelicato, in Student Services. All courtesy transportation applications will be date and time stamped, so that it is a first come-first serve basis pending bus seats.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The first meeting of the 2019-20 School Council will be held on Tuesday, September 17 in the Learning Commons at 6:30 p.m. At this initial 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 as possible so that we create a school community together with our parents as partners in education.

STUDENT VOICE

We honour student voice and want to support all students to have a voice in their education and our school culture. Having a voice means we do this with respect to our individual differences and ensure we work within the processes and policies of HWDSB. We have Student Council which is the vehicle for all students to voice ways to make our school a better place. 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.

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

No smoking in or on school property is a City of Hamilton by-law that all school buildings and properties follow. We ask all students and staff not to smoke on school property as the By-Law Officer will come and the consequences could lead to fines issued and school-based consequences. 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 with e-cigarettes or vaporizers.

LOCKERS

Lockers will be assigned by your Period 1 teacher. You must bring in a combination lock, share the combination with your teacher and open the lock in front of your teacher. Once you open your combination lock, your Period 1 teacher will assign you a locker. 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 your locker.

SCHOOL CASH ONLINE

With the support of School Cash Online, 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 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 for more information or support.

TIMETABLE

Timetables are available for pick up the week of August 26 – 29 from 8:30 am – 1:30 pm. If you need to make a timetable change, please note that all timetable changes will start the week of September 3rd.

Grade 10-12 timetables will be with students' homeroom teachers (if you have not picked it up during the last week of August). Homeroom class lists will be posted the first day of school in the cafeteria. Students can find their names and go to their homeroom to pick up their timetables.

The Guidance Office and counsellors will be available Monday, August 26 - Thursday, August 29 from 8:30 am - 1:30 pm for new registrations. Counsellors may also be available for timetable conflicts and changes if time permits. Students may drop in to see if they can be assisted between registration appointments or wait until the first week of school to make timetable changes. The best thing to do is make all the changes you want to your timetable as soon as possible so that you do not miss any class time.

GRADE 9 ORIENTATION PROGRAM

Grade 9 Orientation Program

Continuing Education, in partnership with HWDSB's Secondary Schools, is pleased to offer a Grade 9 Orientation Program for all students commencing grade 9 in September 2019. Students who have registered for the three-day Grade 9 Orientation program at DVSS should report to the main lobby on **Tuesday, August 27th by 8:45 am** where they may pick up their timetable, verification & media consent agreement forms to be signed and returned to the student's homeroom. The program will run from 9 am to 1 pm Tuesday, August 27th to Thursday August 29th. Please bring sunscreen, nut-free snacks, water, comfy clothing and school supplies.

All grade 9 students who have not registered for the above programme are welcome to pick up their timetable & forms from Monday, August 26th to Thursday, August 29th from 8:30 am to 1:30 pm.

STUDENT PARKING

Student parking is limited to the parking lot next to the tennis court and the last row near Bridlewood (in the circle part of the school). Please do not loiter in your vehicle. 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 your vehicle or not abiding by school rules, 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 permitted to park in the Staff Parking areas. Please respect the adults who work in the school, as this will support the spirit of the school. Respect all signage in the parking lot. By-law officers are invited to come into the school and will ticket any car that does not respect the school rules around parking.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS/VISITORS PARKING

Parents/guardians/visitors please respect the parking lot signage around the school parking lot and entrance. In order to best protect our students, we ask that all drivers wait for their child(ren) either on the parking lot near Bridlewood, or in the parking lot next to the tennis courts. Please do not stop or park in the fire route areas by the front doors or any other prohibited area. By-law officers will be invited to the school property and will tickets drivers who do not follow the Parking Lot signage.

As always, we are here to help you in any way! We look forward to getting to know our new Gryphons to help you feel welcome at DVSS and to seeing all of our returning students. Please share any information you believe will help us to support you as a learner, a family or individuals so that we can continue to build a school community of which we are all proud! We are thrilled to welcome all of you back to DVSS and look forward to our learning journey and to making our DVSS Vision come to life.

Sincerely,

Ms. Gail Cipriani
Principal
Dundas Valley Secondary School