

Dear Students, Parents/Guardians of Westdale Secondary School:

Welcome to the 2021/2022 school year at Westdale Secondary School. If you are an incoming grade 9 student or a new student to our community, we especially welcome you to one of the most historic schools in the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board with more than 90 years of history, tradition and excellence!

Highlighted in this letter are some key pieces of information for all our students and their families. We want to assure you that the staff at Westdale Secondary School are outstanding and will be there to support you as you prepare for the path of your choosing.

Bell Schedule:

- Westdale Secondary School will be utilizing a Quadmester Model for the start of the 2021/2022 school year.
- Students, please show respect for yourself, your teachers and your peers by arriving on time for your classes.

Bell Schedule (Quadmester Model) September 2021

BLOCK 1 September 8 – November 12	
Period 1	8:00 – 10:30
Lunch	10:30 – 12:00
Period 2	12:00 – 2:30
BLOCK 2 November 15 – February 1	
Period 3/4	8:00 – 10:30
Lunch	10:30 – 12:00
Period 5	12:00 – 2:30

Lunch Period Expectations:

- If remaining in the building for lunch, students are to eat in their Period 1 classrooms. **There is no eating in the hallways--this is a fire code violation.**
- **School doors will be reopened at 11:55 to allow students that have gone out for lunch to access their afternoon classes.**

English as a Second Language Students (ESL):

- While we will have translators at key events, consider loading the Microsoft Translator APP on your phones as we can use this for conversations and assemblies. Any other needs, please contact our ESL Department Head, Tracy Kuder: tkuder@hwdsb.on.ca.

Student Services Information:

- 2021-2022 student timetables will be shared by HWDSB in late August.
- Grade 9 students are all automatically registered for the virtual Grade 9 Orientation Tuesday, August 31, 2021 from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. Please check your email or the school website for more details and instructions on joining the MS Teams meeting.
- Guidance Counsellors will be available the week beginning Monday, August 30. Students needing a course change for the reasons stated below can make a virtual guidance appointment on MS Teams by going to the Guidance course on the Hub and clicking on the “Book Appt” icon.
 - Students who were unsuccessful in a course during the 2020-2021 school year
 - Students who have a “SEEGUI” code on their timetable
 - Students whose summer school results impact their 2021-2022 timetable
 - Students who need a course change that will impact their post-secondary destination

- All other course changes can be made beginning Wednesday, September 8, 2021. Priority will be given to students with incomplete timetables.
- All students must attend the courses on their timetable until they are seen by a guidance counsellor. Spaces in courses are limited and we cannot guarantee that course changes will be possible.
- Stay connected and up to date with all things school related by following these links:
 - Westdale Website: www.hwdsb.on.ca/westdale/
 - HWDSB website: www.hwdsb.on.ca
 - Twitter: @WestdaleSS
 - Instagram: @whatsupwestdalewarriors
- In late September, Guidance counsellors will be conducting an information session to support Grade 12 students with their planning for graduation and post-secondary opportunities. More information will follow in September.
- All Ontario Universities will participate in a virtual university fair on the following dates:
 - Saturday, September 25 from 12-2pm
 - Tuesday, October 26 from 5-7pm
 - For more information about the virtual university fairs please use this link <https://www.ontariouniversitiesfair.ca/>
- Information about Ontario College Fairs will be available later in the fall.
 - For more information about the virtual college fairs please use this link <https://ontariocollegefair.ca/>
- Students should check announcements in the Guidance course on the Hub for dates when various colleges and universities will be conducting virtual presentations for Westdale students.

I-Pads:

- Students new to the HWDSB will be receiving an iPad for the year, in the first few weeks of September. Many teachers are incorporating lesson plans and activities on the iPad as well as posting course materials, assignments and information on the Hub. iPads will be collected in June and redistributed the following September.

Assessment and Evaluation:

- Students are assessed and evaluated on the overall expectations of the Ontario Curriculum. The report card represents a student's achievement of overall curriculum expectations as demonstrated to that point in time. Determining a report card grade will involve a teacher's professional judgement and interpretation of product, conversation and observation evidence of the most consistent level of achievement of the overall expectations. Students caught plagiarizing or cheating on an assignment and/or test will receive a zero on that assignment and/or test and will be required to demonstrate that expectation in an alternative manner. Please note that cheating on an exam will result in a zero on that component of the course.

Exams:

- When planning family vacations please avoid quadmester-end dates in November, January, April and June as culminating activities, in-class and final exams occur during these times. **Please Note: A medical note is required for a missed exam otherwise a student will receive a zero on this component of the course. If there is an extenuating circumstance, such as a summer work contract or training camp, a discussion needs to be had with the administration of the school and documentation verifying the circumstances must be provided.**

Parent Portal:

- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to sign up for Parent Portal: A web-based attendance-tracking system that will enable parents to track attendance, view marks, and assist with the selection of courses. Parent Portal is also where parents can update student information and access documents such as the Media Consent

Agreement. Parents with their photo I.D. can drop into the Student Services office starting in October from 8:00 to 3:00 to sign up.

SafeArrival Attendance Reporting:

- With SafeArrival, families report a student absence in one of three ways:
 1. Use the SafeArrival website, <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca/>. The first time you use the website, select Sign Up to create your account. Select Attendance then Report an Absence.
 2. Using your mobile device, download and install the SchoolMessenger app from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store (or from links at go.schoolmessenger.ca). The first time you use the app, select Sign Up to create your account. Select Attendance then Report an Absence.
 3. Call toll-free 1-844-506-4350 to report an absence using the automated phone system. Using this method does not require setting up an account. These options are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can report a future absence any time.
- Please note: As always, parents are expected to report absences as soon as possible – and then you will not receive notification about unexplained absences. Calls for unexplained absences will be made home after 6 pm. If you have questions, please speak with our office staff. Find more resources on SafeArrival at <https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/secondary/supports/safearrival/>.

Prevalent Medical Health Conditions:

- If your child has a life-threatening prevalent medical condition such as, epilepsy, asthma, diabetes and/or anaphylaxis, or a non-life-threatening medical condition that requires an emergency response, please contact the office so a plan of care can be put in place for your child. If your child already has a plan in place, please call the school to discuss how to complete the renewal form.

School Council:

- Westdale School Council generally meets 6x a school year (Sept., Oct., Nov., Jan., Mar., & May) and meetings are generally the 3rd Tuesday of scheduled month. Our first meeting is Tuesday, September 21st at 6:00 pm details on location will be messaged home shortly.

Grade 9 Students Specifically:

- **Grade 9 Orientation will be Tuesday August 31 9:30 am-12:30 pm**
- Our Student Success teacher, Annette Tonogai (atonogai@hwdsb.on.ca 905-522-1387 Ext. 3762 is always available to support all of our students, but particularly to support our students transitioning into high school. Parents/Guardians, if your student is struggling, please reach out for help right away.

Stay up to date:

- A great way to stay aware of happenings at Westdale is to look at and subscribe to our website which is updated regularly at www.hwdsb.on.ca/westdale ; even better, follow us on Twitter at @WestdaleSS as all announcements are tweeted out; or see the school sign.

Students of Westdale Secondary School, you are WARRIORS! On behalf of the entire Westdale Staff we hope your high school days as Warriors will be engaging, successful and happy and that our school moto of "Each Reach for the Stars in Their Own Way" will hold true for all of you. If we work together as a team to the best of our abilities, get involved in school activities and keep the values of Respect, Achievement and Accountability in our minds, it will be impossible not to have a fabulous high school experience. Please remember, there is always someone available to help you: guidance counsellors, classroom teachers, office staff, Vice-Principals, and, of course, the Principal. I'm personally looking forward to getting to know you as is the entire Westdale community. Enjoy the rest of the summer and be safe!

Sincerely



Mr. J. Connor
Principal