

Dear Students, Parents/Guardians of Westdale Secondary School:

Welcome to the 2022/23 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 of 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.

For a full listing of school expectations, policies, and procedures, please see the Student Handbook posted on our school website <https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/westdale/>

#### **Bell Schedule:**

- Westdale Secondary School is a semester school with a 5-period day. Sr. (grades 11 and 12) lunch is during period 3, Jr. (grades 9 and 10) lunch during Period 4.
- Students, please show respect for yourself, your teachers, and your peers by arriving on time for your classes.

#### **Bell Schedule**

Period 1	8:00 – 9:15 am
Period 2	9:20 – 10:35 am
Period 3 (Jr classes/Sr lunch)	10:40 – 11:55 am
Period 4 (Sr classes/Jr lunch)	11:55 – 1:10 pm
Period 5	1:15 - 2:30 pm

#### **Lunch Period Expectations:**

- If remaining in the building for lunch, students are to eat in the cafeteria. **There is no eating in the hallways/stairwells as this is a fire code violation.**

#### **Grade 9 Students Specifically:**

- **Grade 9 Orientation will be Wednesday August 31 9:00 am-3:00 pm**
  - **Timetables and locker distribution (bring a lock)**
  - **iPad deployment – download and bring the: [Digital-tools-Evaluation-Permission-Form.pdf](#) signed by parent/guardian. Paper copies will be available on site as well.**
- Our Student Success teacher, Annette Tonogai ([atonogai@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:atonogai@hwdsb.on.ca) 905-522-1387 Ext. 3762) is always available to support all 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.

#### **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 app for conversations and assemblies. For any other needs, please contact our ESL Department Head, Tracy Kuder: [tkuder@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:tkuder@hwdsb.on.ca).

#### **Student Services Information:**

- 2022-2023 student timetables will be shared by HWDSB in late August.
- Grade 9 students are all automatically registered for the Grade 9 Orientation Wednesday, August 31, 2022 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Please check your email or the school website later this summer for more details and instructions for this in-person event.

- Guidance Counsellors will be available the week beginning Monday, August 29. Students can make a guidance appointment by accessing the Guidance course on the Hub and clicking on the “Book Appt” icon in the navigation bar. Students may attend appointments in the Guidance office in-person or on MS Teams.

**Counsellors will meet with students who meet the criteria below the week of August 29:**

- *Student needs a timetable change based upon Summer School results*
  - *Student was unsuccessful in a course during the last school year*
  - *Student’s schedule contains an error (e.g. five courses in one semester)*
  - *Student’s timetable shows a SEEGUI code in any period*
  - *Student is missing a pre-requisite for a course in their schedule*
  - *Student requires a change impacting post-secondary admissions or goals*
  - *New registration to Westdale Secondary School*
  - *Student who has left Westdale Secondary School deciding to return*
- **All other course changes can be made beginning Tuesday, September 6, 2022. 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/](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/westdale/)
    - HWDSB website: [www.hwdsb.on.ca](http://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 fair-style (no presentations) university fair on the following dates:
    - October 1-2 from 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre
    - For more information about the virtual university fair, and virtual presentations, please use this link: <https://www.ontariouniversitiesfair.ca/>
  - The Ontario College Fair is returning in-person on the following dates at the Enercare Centre in Toronto:
    - October 19 from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
    - October 20 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
    - 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 presentations for Westdale students.

**iPads:**

- 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 products, conversations, and observations. Evidence of the most consistent level of achievement of the

Overall Expectations will also be utilized. 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 semester-end dates in January 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 occur 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. Using 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](https://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 student 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 student. If your youth 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 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of scheduled month. Our first meeting is Tuesday, September 27th at 6:00 pm. Details on location will be messaged home shortly.

#### **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](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/westdale) ; even better, follow us on Twitter at @WestdaleSS as all school announcements are tweeted out. Additionally, important dates and events are displayed on our digital sign in front of the school.

**As the new Principal, I am honoured and excited to join the Westdale community! I am looking forward to supporting the ongoing work of our amazing staff as we nurture learning environments that honour the unique experiences, interests, and talents of our students. As a staff, we are committed to providing the conditions for all our students to, as our school moto highlights, “Each Reach for the Stars in Their Own Way”.**

**To our students, I encourage you to get involved, do your best in every activity you engage in, and demonstrate respect. Please know that there is always someone here to help you: teachers, educational assistants, guidance counsellors, our social worker, our grad coach, office staff, and our administrative team. I can’t wait to meet the 1500 plus Westdale students that make this school such an exciting place to be. Please enjoy the rest of your summer and stay safe!**

Sincerely,

Mr. B. Goodram  
Principal