



West Niagara

Secondary School

September 8th, 2023

Wolfpack and Families,

I have a few information items for you today.

1) **Safety Forms**

- a) Required safety forms for Science, Tech, Physical Education, and Family Studies classes are now available on SchoolCash Online for students enrolled in those classes - these must be filled out for students to complete the hands on activities in those classes

2) **Student Activity Fee**

- a) The student activity fee is now available on SchoolCash Online - this fee provides funding for the school to offer the large number of co-curricular activities we do, to minimize costs for formals and proms, to have guest speakers in, to offer most athletic programs at zero cost, to offer and subsidize a variety of student events (ie. Colour Wars, etc), and to minimize fundraising
- b) Most, if not all, secondary schools ask families to pay a similar fee, and the amount of the student activity fee at WNSS is very low compared to other schools
- c) The alternative to a student activity fee would be individual charges for playing sports, events, etc. and various fundraising campaigns. In the past, the student activity fee has been preferable to most families.

3) **Creed Diversity**

The Niagara Region is growing more diverse in creed and religious beliefs and practices. The District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) is committed to fostering diverse, equitable, and inclusive learning and working environments that promote acceptance and protect individuals from discrimination and harassment based on the protected grounds under the Ontario Human Rights Code. Creed and/or religion is one of the grounds that is both an individual right and a collective responsibility. The DSBN

recognizes and embraces the creed diversity represented in its students, staff, and community members.

As we start our school year, I invite you to share with me your family's most significant creed-based holiday(s). We will work together through the accommodation request process as West Niagara Secondary School recognizes the importance of families celebrating their creed and/or religious beliefs and practices.

The DSBN has created a [Family Guide: Recognizing and Respecting Creed Diversity](#) to support families in requesting accommodations. This guide has also been translated into the following languages; Arabic, French, Hungarian, Korean, Mandarin, Spanish, Urdu and Vietnamese, which can be viewed on the [DSBN Equity webpage](#). For a list of Days of Significance, please refer to the [Days of Significance Calendar](#).

4) Climate Control

- a) A few questions have come in regarding the nature of our climate control system.
- b) I have also seen a number of questions and comments online. I would strongly caution people from taking online and non-credentialed media comments as fact, as they tend to be forums for rumours and false information. If there is a question - please pass it along to me and I will be happy to provide you with accurate information in a timely fashion.
- c) Our school has an Air Cooling System (also known by some as "tempered air"). It is technically different from air conditioning, but works as effectively. An air conditioning system operates by circulating a refrigerant such as Freon through a set of coils, while an air cooling system utilises a network of pumps and pipes, and a chiller, to cool the air. Thank you to WNSS parent DWB for the articulation of this information.
- d) As the building is brand new, it will take a bit of time to get our system balanced and functioning optimally - thank you for your patience as we do this work.

5) Town of Grimsby Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee

- a) Any students who are Grimsby residents would be eligible and encouraged to apply
- b) We want to have a strong WNSS representation on the council - we encourage any Grimsby resident students between 13-19 to apply
- c) Applications are due by September 15th - www.grimsby.ca/myac

6) Lunch

- a) Students, as always, are strongly encouraged to bring their lunch
- b) There will be food offerings for purchase next week, but the number of them will be reduced from this week - please plan accordingly and consider bringing your own food

All in all, a very successful first week! Thank you to students, families, staff and the community for such a positive start to the year.

Have a great weekend.

Mat Miller
Principal, WNSS