



Durham Catholic District School Board Safe, Caring and Healthy Secondary Schools



The Durham Catholic District School Board recognizes that a school should be a place that promotes responsibility, respect, civility, and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted. It is the responsibility of all members of the school community to work together to create a positive learning environment where all members feel supported.

Access to Premises

We are always pleased to have parents/guardians visit the school to discuss an issue with teachers or administrators. In keeping with the Board's Access to School Premises Policy, please remember that anyone coming into the school must first sign in at the office and obtain a Visitor's badge. All staff members will be wearing photo ID and will question anyone whose presence is not expected.

If a parent/guardian needs to pick up his/her son/daughter during the school day, this must be facilitated at the office. Members of the office staff will call the student down to the office to be signed out. If parents need to send a friend/relative/designate to pick up their child, please advise the school in advance and ask the designate to provide photo identification at the office. If the student returns to school before dismissal, he/she must sign back in at the office so his/her attendance can be monitored.

Attendance Matters

DID YOU KNOW?

- Students should miss no more than 9 days of school each year to stay engaged, successful and on track to graduation. That means no more than 4 ½ days per semester.
- Absences can be a sign that a student is losing interest in school, struggling with school work, dealing with a bully or facing some other potentially serious difficulty.
- Research shows that by grade nine, regular and high attendance is a better predictor of graduation rates than grade eight test scores.
- Missing 10 percent of a school year (or about 19 days), can drastically affect a student's academic success.
- Students can be chronically absent even if they only miss a day or two every few weeks.
- Good attendance is an important life skill that will help your child graduate from college or university and keep a job.

Make School Attendance a Priority

- Talk about the importance of showing up to school every day, make that the expectation in your family.
- Help your child maintain daily routines, such as finishing homework and getting a good night's sleep.
- Try not to schedule dental and medical appointments during the school day.
- Don't let your child stay home unless truly sick. Complaints of headaches or stomach aches may be signs of anxiety. Talk to your physician or ask someone at the school (guidance counsellor, principal or vice principal, school social worker or child and youth counsellor) where to go for help.

Help Your Teen Stay Engaged

- Find out if your child feels engaged by his/her classes and feels safe from bullies and other threats. Report any concerns to the teacher or principal or vice principal.
- Stay on top of academic progress and seek help from teachers or tutors if necessary. Make sure teachers know how to contact you.
- Stay on top of your youth's social contacts. Peer pressure can lead to skipping school, while students without many friends can feel isolated.
- Encourage meaningful afterschool activities, including sports and clubs.

Communicate With the School

- Talk to teachers if you notice sudden changes in behavior. These could be tied to something going on at school.
- Check on your child's attendance to be sure absences are not piling up.
- Ask for help from school officials, afterschool programs, other parents or community agencies if you're having trouble getting your child to school.

SAFE ARRIVAL – Automated Attendance System

In June 2018, The Durham Catholic District School Board adopted a new automated attendance system, called Safe Arrival, for reporting student absences. Safe Arrival reduces the time it takes to verify student attendance making it easier for you to report your child's absence and easier for staff to respond to unexplained student absences. Parents are able to report their child's absence quickly and conveniently using three different methods:

1. Parents can log into a website: go.schoolmessenger.ca to report student absences.
2. Parents can call into the automated interactive telephone system using the toll free number **1-844-288-7628** through which absences can be reported.
3. Parents can download the SafeArrival app for iOS and Android smartphones. Search for the keyword **school messenger** in the Google Play store or the Apple App store. Select Canada, select sign up, enter your email address that is on file with the school, enter a password.

All three methods are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Future absences, like doctor's appointments can be reported ahead of time. For more information, please visit the school website.

Restorative Schools

We believe that safety begins with positive connections between the students, staff and parents. To foster these relationships, staff in the Durham Catholic District School Board use restorative practices, including classroom circles and small group conferences to build community within the classroom and the school. Restorative Practice is rooted in the same philosophical approach as Canada's Native Aboriginal communities. It rests on the belief that it is best to do things with people, rather than to them. When conflict arises, using restorative practice engages students in a fair process that responds to behavior in ways that strengthen and repair the relationship. It is collaborative rather than adversarial in nature. The aim of restorative practice is to hold individuals accountable for their actions while restoring and repairing any relationships amongst each other and within the community that may have been harmed.

Catholic Restorative Schools will:

- Provide opportunities for someone who has done harm to determine the effect of his/her actions and make reparations
- Provide a voice for the victim
- Use a common set of restorative questions both in and out of our classrooms to give the victim a voice and enable the perpetrator to determine the effect of his/her actions. *"How do you think your actions had an impact on others?" "What do you think you need to do to make things right?"*
- Use circles, or small group conferences to build community, develop empathy and understanding, and when needed, to repair relationships
- Celebrate our Catholic community through the Catholic virtues and Catholic Graduate Expectations
- Use think papers and reflective discussion papers aligned with the restorative questions

School Code of Conduct

All schools base their individual school Code of Conduct on the Ministry of Education Code of Conduct. As per Board Policy and the Ontario Safe Schools Act, a school's Code of Conduct will be developed in consultation with parents, teachers and the Catholic School Advisory Council. All members of the school community will be responsible for adhering to the expectations as outlined in this Code of Conduct.

Schools within the Durham Catholic District School Board will focus on prevention, early intervention and progressive discipline as the key to maintaining a positive school environment in which students can learn and educators can teach. When inappropriate behaviour occurs, all staff members will utilize a range of interventions, supports and consequences that are developmentally appropriate, that include opportunities for students to learn from mistakes, and that focus on improving behaviour. In some circumstances, short term suspension may be the method of progressive discipline utilized. In the case of a serious incident, long-term suspension or expulsion, which is further along the continuum of progressive discipline, may be the response that is required.

Statement of Purpose

The provincial Code of Conduct sets clear provincial standards of behaviour. These standards of behaviour apply not only to students, but also to all individuals involved in the publicly funded school system whether they are on school property, on school buses, at school-related events or activities, or in other circumstances that could have an impact on the school climate.

The purpose of the Provincial Code of Conduct and the School Code of Conduct is:

- To ensure that all members of the school community, especially people in positions of authority, are treated with respect and dignity.
- To promote responsible citizenship by encouraging appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community.
- To maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility.
- To encourage the use of non-violent means to resolve conflict.
- To promote the safety of people in the schools.
- To discourage the use of alcohol, cannabis and illegal drugs.

Guiding Principles

- Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community.
- Active and engaged citizens are aware of their rights, but more importantly, they accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.
- Members of the school community are expected to use non-violent means to resolve conflict.
- Physically aggressive behaviour is not a responsible way to interact with others.
- The possession, use or threatened use of any object to injure another person endangers the safety of oneself and others.
- Alcohol, cannabis and illegal drugs are addictive and present a health hazard.
- The school will work cooperatively with police, drug and alcohol agencies to promote prevention strategies and, where necessary, respond to school members who are in possession of, or under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Insults, disrespect, and other hurtful acts disrupt learning and teaching in a school community.
- Members of the school community have a responsibility to maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility.

Standards of Behaviour

I) Respect, Civility, and Responsible Citizenship

All members of the school community must:

- Respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws;
- 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 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.

II) Safety

All members of the school community must not:

- Engage in bullying behaviours;
- Commit sexual assault;
- Traffic weapons, illegal or illicit drugs;
- Give alcohol, cannabis or illegal drugs to a minor;
- Commit robbery;
- Be in possession of any weapon, including firearms;
- Use any object to threaten or intimidate another person;
- Cause injury to any person with an object;
- Be in possession of, or under the influence of, or provide others with alcohol or illegal drugs;
- Inflict or encourage others to inflict bodily harm on another person;
- Engage in hate 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.

Consequences for Student Behaviour

Commensurate with the Durham Catholic District School Board's Progressive Discipline Policy, when inappropriate behaviour occurs, schools are required to utilize a range of interventions, supports, and consequences that are developmentally appropriate, provide opportunities for students to learn from mistakes, and focus on improving behaviour. In some circumstances, short-term suspension may be the appropriate consequence while in more serious incidents, long-term suspension or expulsion may be the response that is required.

Suspension

The infractions for which a suspension may be considered by the principal include:

- Uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person;
- Possessing alcohol, illegal drugs or cannabis (unless the pupil is a medical cannabis user);
- Being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or cannabis (unless the pupil is a medical cannabis user);
- Swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority;
- Committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property at the pupil's school or to property located on the premises of the pupil's school;
- Bullying
- Uttering a racial slur or comment;
- Sexual slurs or harassment;
- Possession and/or use of tobacco products;
- Disrespect towards or desecration of the religious dimension of the school;
- Conduct deemed to be unacceptable: e.g.,
 - Fighting/Violence
 - Use of profane or improper language
 - Persistent opposition to authority
 - Persistent tardiness and/or truancy including "skipping" classes
 - Theft
 - Inappropriate use of Social Media
 - Any other behaviours deemed to be contrary to the school Code of Conduct.

A student may be suspended for a minimum of one (1) school day and a maximum of twenty (20) school days.

Expulsion

The infractions for which a principal shall suspend and may consider recommending to the Board that a pupil be expelled from the pupil's school or from all schools of the Board include:

- Possessing a weapon, including possessing a knife or a firearm;
- Using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person;
- Bullying, if the pupil has previously been suspended for engaging in bullying, and the pupil's continuing presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of another person;
- Committing physical assault on another person that causes bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner;
- Committing sexual assault;
- Trafficking in weapons or restricted or illegal drugs;
- Committing robbery;
- Giving cannabis to a minor;
- Giving alcohol to a minor;
- Any activity listed in the Code of Conduct for which a suspension must be considered that is motivated by bias, prejudice or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other similar factor;
- Engaging in activities or patterns of behaviour on or off school property that cause the pupil's presence in the school to create an unacceptable risk to the physical or mental well-being of other person(s) in the school or Board;
- Engaging in activities on or off school property that have caused extensive damage to the property of the Board or to goods that are/were on Board property;
- Conduct deemed to be unacceptable:
 - Any act considered by the Principal and Family of Schools Superintendent to be a serious violation of the Board or school Code of Conduct.

Mitigating Factors

Before the principal or vice principal makes a decision to suspend or recommend an expulsion he/she must consider all mitigating circumstances.

- Whether the student has the ability to control his or her behaviour;
- Whether the student has the ability to understand the foreseeable consequences of his or her behavior; and
- Whether the student's continuing presence in the school does or does not create an unacceptable risk to the safety of any person in the school.

Other Factors to be Considered

- The student's academic, discipline and personal history
- Whether a progressive discipline approach has been used with the student;
- Whether the activity for which the student may be or is being suspended or expelled was related to any harassment of the student because of race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation or to any other harassment;
- The impact of the discipline on the student's ongoing education;
- The age of the student;
- In the case where the student has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or disability-related needs:
 - Whether the behaviour was a manifestation of a disability identified in the student's Individual Education Plan;
 - Whether appropriate individualized accommodation has been provided, and
 - Whether the suspension is likely to result in aggravating or worsening of the student's behaviour or conduct.

Roles and Responsibilities

School Boards

School Boards provide direction to their schools to ensure opportunity, academic excellence, and accountability in the education system. It is the responsibility of the School Board to:

- Model Christian behaviours founded in Catholic tradition;
- Develop policies that set out how their schools will implement and enforce the provincial Code of Conduct and all other rules that they develop that are related to the provincial standards that promote and support respect, civility, responsible citizenship, and safety;
- Review these policies regularly with students, staff, parents, volunteers, and the community;
- Seek input from school councils, their Parent Involvement Committee, their Special Education Advisory Committee, parents, students, staff members, and the school community;
- Establish a process that clearly communicates the provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct to all parents, students, staff members, and members of the school community in order to obtain their commitment and support;
- Develop effective intervention strategies and respond to all infractions related to the standards for respect, civility, responsible citizenship, and safety; and
- Provide opportunities for all of the staff to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to develop and maintain academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment; and wherever possible, Boards should collaborate to provide coordinated prevention and intervention programs and services, and should endeavor to share effective practices.

Principals

Under the direction of their School Boards, principals take a leadership role in the daily operation of a school. They provide this leadership by:

- Modeling Christian behaviours founded in Catholic tradition;
- Demonstrating care for the school community and a commitment to academic excellence in a safe teaching and learning environment;
- Holding everyone under their authority accountable for his or her behaviour and actions;
- Empowering students to be positive leaders in their school and community; and
- Communicating regularly and meaningfully with all members of their school community.

Teachers and Other School Staff Members

Under the leadership of their principals, teachers and other school staff members maintain order in the school and are expected to hold everyone to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour. As role models, teachers and school staff uphold these high standards when they:

- Model Christian behaviours founded in Catholic tradition;
- Help students work to their full potential and develop their sense of self-worth;
- Empower students to be positive leaders in their classroom, school, and community;
- Communicate regularly and meaningfully with parents;

- *Maintain consistent standards of behaviour for all students;*
- *Demonstrate respect for all students, staff, parents, volunteers, and the members of the school community; and*
- *Prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship.*

Students

Students are to be treated with respect and dignity. In return, they must demonstrate respect for themselves, for others, and for the responsibilities of citizenship through acceptable behaviour.

Respect and responsibility are demonstrated when a student:

- *Models Christian behaviours founded in Catholic tradition;*
- *Comes to school prepared, on time., and ready to learn;*
- *Shows respect for himself or herself, for others, and for those in authority;*
- *Refrains from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of others; and*
- *Follows the established rules and takes responsibility for his or her own actions.*

Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians play an important role in the education of their children, and can support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents fulfill their role when they:

- *Support the values of our Catholic school system;*
- *Conduct themselves in an appropriate manner;*
- *Take responsibility and support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students;*
- *Show an active interest in their child's school work and progress;*
- *Communicate regularly with the school;*
- *Help their child be neat, appropriately dressed, and prepared for school;*
- *Ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time;*
- *Promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival;*
- *Show that they are familiar with the provincial Code of Conduct, the Board's Code of Conduct and school rules;*
- *Encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour; and*
- *Assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child.*

School Code of Conduct on School Bus Vehicles

All school bus vehicles are considered an extension of the classroom and all school policies such as Safe Schools, and School Code of Conduct apply to the school bus. All transported students whether on a field trip or home to school transportation are expected to behave in a manner on the bus that ensures that everyone remains safe. Since the bus is an extension of the school, students are accountable to the school principal who has the authority to ensure that student conduct on the school bus is appropriate.

Due to the nature of the activity of riding a bus, the following are expectations for all methods of school transportation as per the School Code of Conduct.

All students must:

- **Respect other people's property and belongings while waiting for the school bus;**
- **Treat the driver with respect and follow his/her instructions;**
- **Be courteous and respectful to others on the bus at all times;**
- **Act appropriately in a manner that does not endanger the safety of oneself or others including, but not limited to:**
 - **Not engaging in any activity that interferes with the safe operation of the bus**
 - **Remaining seated at all times, facing forward while the bus is in motion**
 - **Keeping hands, arms, feet, head and belongings inside the vehicle until the student has exited at his/her stop**
 - **Not distracting or speaking to the bus driver except in the case of emergency**
 - **Refraining from inappropriate behavior on the bus, e.g., throwing items, swearing, fighting, or bullying**
 - **Not bringing alcohol, drugs or weapons onto the school bus**
 - **Not touching safety equipment or emergency exits except in the case of an emergency**
 - **Not eating or drinking on the bus**

Parents and students are encouraged to report incidents of bullying or other school safety concerns as soon as they happen by contacting their teacher and/or school administration. We recognize that bullying affects a student's sense of safety and security, and some people may not feel comfortable reporting bullying or other school safety incidents. To help ease this worry, students and parents are welcome to use the **Report It** page available on the school website to report incidents of bullying or other safety concerns that have not already been reported. School safety concerns can be reported anonymously or contact information can be given so that appropriate follow-up can occur. The information provided will be forwarded to the school principal for action and a follow-up response if requested.

Community Threat Assessment and Intervention Protocol– Fair Notice

The Durham Catholic District School Board is committed to providing safe learning environments for all students, staff, school visitors and community members. When student behaviours pose a potential threat to safety or serious harm to self or others, all schools in the Durham Catholic District School Board follow the Community Threat Assessment and Intervention Protocol (C-TAIP), which outlines how a school responds immediately to threatening behaviour. This protocol involves supports from various partners, including community agencies, hospitals and police services. Personal information shared throughout this process will always respect and balance each individual's right to privacy while ensuring the safety of all. For more information, please refer to the school website or ask the principal for more information.

Search and Seizure

According to the Police/School Board Protocol for Durham Catholic District School Board, it is the right and authority of the Principal or designate to search school and personal property, such as lockers, desks, backpacks, purses, etc., without notice or permission of any person as long as the Principal or designate has reasonable grounds to believe that there has been a breach of school regulations and that the search would reveal evidence of that breach. Police may from time to time be invited onto school premises to conduct their own searches, also without prior notice to or permission of any member of the school community.

Community Partners

Through outreach, school and community partnerships already in place may be enhanced and new partnerships developed with community agencies and other groups within the community (e.g., Kinark Family and Child Services, Aboriginal Elders). Community agencies are important resources that schools can use to deliver prevention or intervention programs. Protocols are effective ways of establishing connections between boards and community agencies and formalizing the partnership. These partnership agreements must respect all applicable collective agreements and Board policies.

Durham Regional Police Service Partnerships

The Durham Regional Police Service plays an essential role in making our schools and communities safer. The police investigate incidents in accordance with our Police/School Board protocol. This protocol is based on the provincial model developed by the Ministry of Education. The Durham Regional Police Service are instrumental in supporting our schools with all emergency preparedness procedures and Safe Schools initiatives. Each of our schools has regular access to a School Liaison Officer.

Emergency Response Plans

Each September, as part of our Police/Board protocol we practice our emergency response procedures so all staff and students are well prepared in the event of a real emergency. Using newsletters and the school website, we will provide all families with details of our practices and the role that parents play in supporting a school's emergency response.

Emergency response practices include:

Fire Drills: Students practise the appropriate way to exit the building when they hear a fire alarm. Practices are held when students are in class, at recess and where an exit might be blocked.

Lockdown: Students practise the appropriate way to respond to a threat of danger inside the school using the R-SAFE acronym. Students are taught to get to the nearest and safest location as quickly as possible, what to do when they get there and the importance of remaining quiet.

Goal for students when a **LOCKDOWN** is called.

- R** - Remain Calm
- S** - Secure Location
- A** - All Quiet
- F** - Find The Safest Spot
- E** - Electronic Devices Off

Hold and Secure: Students practice how to respond to a threat of danger outside the school. In the case of a Hold and Secure, all exterior doors remain locked and students remain inside, away from exterior doors and windows until

the Hold and Secure has been lifted. In most cases, the need for a Hold and Secure is at the request of the police, based on a situation in the neighbourhood. In these cases, the school must wait for the police to lift the request for a Hold and Secure

Shelter in Place: Students practice how to respond to an environmental danger, like a hurricane. In most cases, the response will be a Hold and Secure with specific directions based on the environmental concern.

Bomb Threat: Students are taught the appropriate response to a bomb threat which includes never touching a suspicious package, and listening carefully to the directions of the teacher or the administration if an evacuation is warranted.

How can parents help?

Parents can help by following the procedures associated with each of plans should they be present during a drill or should a real situation occur. School administration must follow the direction of the police as soon as they become involved in an emergency response. As such, Parents must understand that schools are unable to release students during an emergency response without the expressed permission of the police.

Parents can also assist the school by emphasizing with their children the importance of closely following the direction of the staff during a drill or a real emergency. Parents should encourage their children to share any information they may have about a threat of violence toward a school or information they may have after a violent incident. It is everyone's responsibility to help keep our school safe.

Permission for Photo and Video Sharing at School

As we try to keep pace with social media that is so much a part of our students' lives, it is important to be reminded of people's right to privacy. While taking photos or videos at various school events, please be mindful that it is illegal to post/upload/share photos or videos of anyone other than yourself your child on the internet or anywhere without the expressed consent of the person or their guardian. Sharing photos or videos of others without their consent is a privacy violation.

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)

BYOD allows students to bring electronic devices to school for educational purposes. Students are expected to use devices responsibly, and only with the permission and direction of teachers or other staff members. Research indicates that the use of technology increases engagement, which leads to improved student success. The following are reasons why BYOD works well:

- Students are usually experts in their own device and can customize it to suit their learning needs
- Students can use it to learn anytime, anywhere;
- Students can collaborate and work anytime; before school, after school, and at lunchtime; and
- Student-owned devices are often more up-to-date than those provided by the school due to the cost of replacing hardware for the entire system.

Our students are going to live and work in a world where people use electronic devices regularly. They need to learn how to use devices in a respectful, responsible and ethical manner. The Durham Catholic District School Board's BYOD procedures, School Codes of Conduct and Ontario Graduate Expectations will guide teachers in the process of teaching students what it means to be good digital citizens.

Not every parent can, or wants to send their child to school with an electronic device. Teachers will continue to plan lessons that do not require the use of a personally owned device. Teachers are encouraged to give advanced notice when they plan to incorporate electronic devices into a lesson. Students without devices will have the opportunity to work collaboratively with other students or borrow a school device.

Students are required to use the Board's wireless network, which they can access at no cost while at school. They will not be permitted to access their paid data plans while in school. The Durham Catholic District School Board's network filter will help prevent students from accessing inappropriate web content while they are logged in at school.

Schools will have plans in place to help students keep their devices secure. Ultimately, students are responsible for lost, stolen, and/or damaged personal electronic devices, just as they are for other personal items brought to school.

Secondary School - Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement

- I will respect the dignity of others and contribute to the common good.

- I will only use social media in a manner that respects the dignity of others.
- I will use the internet, computers and personally owned electronic devices in a manner consistent with the Catholic Graduate Expectations.
- I will respect the intellectual property rights of others and not pirate or plagiarize.
- I will protect my digital identity, my passwords, and others' right to privacy online.
- I will only use personally owned electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, tablets, iPods) during class time when it is allowed by my teacher.
- I will not take pictures, videos or audio recordings of people without their permission.
- I will not use an electronic device in private areas (e.g., washrooms, change rooms, and administrative offices).
- I understand that inappropriate use of personally owned electronic devices make me subject to discipline as noted in the Board's Acceptable Use of Information and Communication Technology Administrative Procedure, Code of Conduct Policy and Student Discipline Policy.
- I will remember Jesus' message ***do unto others as I would have done to me.***

Durham Catholic District School Board Concussion Policy

All school boards in the Province of Ontario are required by law to have a Concussion policy and school board administrative procedures in place so that students, school staff and parents/guardians understand their role in preventing, managing and reporting suspected or diagnosed concussions.

A **concussion** is the term for a clinical diagnosis that is made by a medical doctor or a nurse practitioner. The definition of *concussion* below is adapted from the definition provided in the **concussion protocol** in the Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines.

A concussion:

- is a brain injury that causes changes in the way in which the brain functions and that can lead to symptoms that can be physical (e.g., headache, dizziness), cognitive (e.g., difficulty in concentrating or remembering), emotional/behavioural (e.g., depression, irritability), and/or related to sleep (e.g., drowsiness, difficulty in falling asleep);
- may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face, or neck or by a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head that causes the brain to move rapidly within the skull;
- can occur even if there has been no loss of consciousness (in fact most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness);
- cannot normally be seen by means of medical imaging tests, such as X-rays, standard computed tomography (CT) scans, or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans.

A specific concussion protocol and tool now exists in all Durham Catholic District School Board schools that includes responsibilities for Board and school staff, students and parents/guardians. Additionally, health units and sports and fitness organizations in Durham are using this protocol to raise awareness to help prevent and manage concussions.

It is **important** to note that all suspected concussions must be reported and a medical doctor or nurse practitioner make a diagnosis and participate in the ***Return To Learn and/or Physical Activity*** documentation process.

The concussion tool noted in this student agenda is a resource for school staff, parents/guardians and students.

Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to contact your school principal for more details about the new concussion management and prevention safety protocols that exist to promote student safety and success.



AGENDA REVIEW SIGN OFF

By signing below you are indicating that you have reviewed the information contained in the student agenda and that you agree to abide by them. For further information, the related Board policies are available on the Board's website: <http://www.dcdsb.ca> and in the school office

- School Code of Conduct (PO 431)
- Fair Notice of Community Threat Assessment and Intervention Protocol
- Acceptable Use of Information and Communication Technology Policy (PO431)
- Concussion Policy (PO614)

Student's Signature	
Date:	

If student is younger than 18 years of age: I have discussed the information contained in this agenda with my child.

Parent/Guardian's Full Name (Please Print):	
Parent/Guardian's Signature:	
Date:	