



Welcome Back Message from NPSC's Board Chair and Director of Education

August 29, 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians and Staff:

On behalf of our Board of Trustees and senior team, it is our honour to welcome all of our students, families, and staff back to the 2022-2023 school year. We hope you and your families enjoyed a blessed, safe, and relaxing summer filled with memorable times with family and friends.

It is with great hope, optimism, and excitement that we welcome back our students to learning in our Catholic school communities. Over the past two years of the COVID pandemic, our Catholic school communities have modelled tremendous flexibility, creativity, perseverance, and resilience that will serve us well as we continue to renew learning and well-being. We are proud of and celebrate all of the successes achieved by our students and staff during this very challenging and unpredictable period.

As we walk forward together with hope on a renewed path, we look forward to the opportunities that are ahead to develop strong relationships and support your child to reach their full potential. We are pleased to be planning a regular school experience for students that fully engages them in activities that support their holistic development: spiritually, socially, emotionally, academically, and physically including extra-curricular and experiential learning activities.

As we begin this new school year, the Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board continues its commitment to achieving our strategic [ENDS](#) focused on the priorities of Faith, Well-Being, Learning, Equity, Indigenous Education, and Innovation. We look forward to working collaboratively with our staff and our parents to live our mission and vision and provide a rich Catholic education that is *Rooted in Faith and Alive in Spirit*.

We would like to provide you with some highlights as we prepare for the new school year:

First Day of School

The first day of school for Senior Kindergarten to Grade 12 students is **Tuesday, September 6**. Families of Junior Kindergarten students will be contacted with their confirmed start date by their home schools. NPSC schools will be open beginning **Monday, August 29** to assist with any registration or transportation inquiries.

Health & Safety Measures in Schools

At NPSC, we continue to operate with a focus on the health, safety, and well-being of our students and staff. Following the advice of Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, we are pleased to confirm most health and safety requirements remain unchanged from the end of the 2021-2022 school year.

Below are a few key highlights regarding health and safety measures for schools for 2022-2023:

- Masks will be optional for students, staff, and visitors in schools, school board offices, and on student transportation.
- High-quality masks for students and staff and eye protection for staff will be provided by the government for those who choose to wear them.
- Students and staff will have access to rapid antigen tests.
- For students with special needs, all health and safety protections continue to be fully adhered to, with additional support in staffing and mental health.
- It is recommended that staff, students, and visitors continue to self-screen every day before attending school using the [COVID-19 school and child care screening tool](#) in alignment with provincial requirements. Following public health guidance, anyone feeling unwell should stay home to prevent the spread of illness.
- [Hand hygiene](#) and respiratory etiquette will continue to be promoted and modelled in our Catholic schools.
- Enhanced cleaning protocols continue, with daily cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces.

As we move through the school year, any necessary changes to the health and safety measures that may be required by Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health or our local public Health Unit due to COVID-19 will be communicated to our parents and staff community.

Vaccine Clinics

Please visit the [North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit's website](#) for information on vaccine clinics in the area.

Mental Health & Well-Being

All students will continue to have access to mental health services and supports provided by our outstanding Student Support Services team. Resources and timely tools for students and parents are also available on the [School Mental Health Ontario website](#).

School Facilities

Our plant and custodial staff have been working diligently over the summer months to prepare our school facilities for the arrival of our students. [Ventilation](#) has been enhanced and improved at all of our school sites.

Technology

Our Information Technology staff have been working over the summer to enhance infrastructure, perform necessary maintenance, and ensure our students and staff have access to modern, reliable technology. We greatly appreciate their commitment and efforts over the summer months in the service of our students.

Conclusion

As a Catholic community, it is essential to continue to respect differences and comfort levels as we move into another school year. We will continue to work with our local public health unit and community partners to ensure that our NPSC Catholic schools continue to be safe, secure, inclusive, and healthy learning centres of excellence.

We would like to express our gratitude and deep appreciation to all of our incredible NPSC education and support staff for their care, compassion and dedication to our students and families over the past two years and for the preparations they are making to welcome our students back to school this September.

Finally, we extend our heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to all our parents and families for choosing the Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board and Catholic education - an education with a difference! We are humbled and privileged that you have entrusted the care of your child to our Board. Whether you are new to our Board or returning, we look forward to welcoming your child to our inclusive Catholic learning centers of excellence and to working with you in partnership to support your child's Catholic education journey.

Should you have any questions regarding the new school year, we invite you to contact your child's [school](#) Principal.

On behalf of our Board of Trustees and senior team, we extend our prayerful best wishes for a safe, exciting, and successful school year ahead!

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Sincerely,



Paula Mann
Director of Education



Leo de Jourdan
Chair