



Wednesday, December 16, 2020 - Volume 13, Issue 9

Message From the School Administration

The holidays may look a little different this year, but we hope the important things remain: spending time with loved ones and sharing joy however we can.

On behalf of the Administrative team we would like to wish each of you and your families the joy and happiness of the Christmas Season. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank our entire community for the on-going support as we journey together through these uncertain times.

A special note of gratitude to all who supported our Toy Drive and to the SAC students for the engaging virtual Christmas activities this week. The community is indeed missing the multitude of activities that fill our calendars at this time of year. May we look forward to 2021 with anticipation and hope. May it bring a year of health, happiness, wisdom and peace to all.



Director's Report

A highlight of every year for the WCDSB is the release of the Director's Annual Report.

Every school board in the province is required to produce such a report, and ours is always a comprehensive and wide-ranging look back at the previous year's many accomplishments.

More than perhaps anything else we produce, it provides a multi-faceted illustration of what we mean when we say our schools are "Heart of the Community".

View the report here: <https://annual.wcdsb.ca/>



School Schedule and Calendar

Quick Link to Our Calendar -

<https://stbenedict.wcdsb.ca/parents/current-students/school-year-calendar/>

Our calendar (with Cohort info and key dates) can be accessed through our school website -

<https://stbenedict.wcdsb.ca/>.

You can then access the calendar by going to ABOUT US > School Year Calendar

New Store Hours

Tuesday: 10am – 6pm

Thursday: 10am – 6pm

Saturday: 10am – 6pm

OR VISIT: www.mccarthyuniforms.ca

1-800-668-8261

Parent/Student/Teacher Interviews tomorrow!

Interviews will be done virtually tomorrow from 2:00 to 4:00 in the afternoon and 5:00 to 7:00 in the evening. You still have time to book an appointment. To do so, please visit the school website, go to the "About Us" tab and select [Staff List](#). Click on the icon beside teachers' names to book an appointment.

If you are not available Thursday, but would like to discuss your child's progress, please email your child's teacher directly to arrange for an interview at a later date. Teachers' email addresses can be found on their interview booking pages.

Christmas greetings from CSAC

Dearest Parents / Guardians of the St. Benedict Family,

The St. Benedict Catholic School Advisory Council (CSAC) would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to the SBCSS Administrators, Teachers and Staff that tirelessly provided support, guidance and encouragement over the last calendar year. Thank you for being approachable, resourceful and resilient. WCDSB is in the second year of our Pastoral Plan; we are "Gathered to Become". Like the butterfly, we have an opportunity to grow from our current challenges. We have had the opportunity to reflect on how we interact with the world around us and each other. We all have a part to play.

Thank you to all past, current, and future CSAC participants. Your insights and contributions have helped bridge the gap between the School, Home, and Church communities. Through these efforts we have, in a small way, helped foster our caring and nurturing community. We are hopeful that, through the reflection and learnings of 2020, we will use our fresh eyes to identify the things that connect and empower us to continue to “become” one family.

Let's look forward to virtually reconnecting on February 9th, 2021 @ 6PM (please email Melanie.Baker@wcdsb.ca to be added to the meeting/conference).

Stay safe, Merry Christmas, and warmest wishes,
CSAC

St. Benedict looks to purchase live streaming equipment

Plans are in the works to purchase a system to allow us to record and live stream events in the school. We hope to purchase some of this equipment with funds made possible through the generous partnership with the Cambridge Bingo and Gaming Center. Thanks to CSAC for their support of this initiative! There will be more information about this exciting project in the New Year... stay tuned!



Giving Mother Earth 3,000,000 reasons to smile

With today's issue of the BENN--our 293rd issue--we have reached a new milestone. Since its inception in 2008, our e-newsletter has now saved an estimate **three million sheets of paper**.

To put it into perspective, the palette pictured here contains **200,000 sheets**. We have reduced **fifteen times that amount** of paper by going electronic. Not only that, but with a bi-weekly newsletter information is provided to you in a more timely manner.

We think that is #WCDSBAwesome and we are #SBCSSProud to do our part to save the environment!



Inclement Weather Days



While the first official day of winter is still a few weeks away, the early snowfall has given us pause to plan early for inclement weather and potential bus cancellations. As student safety and well-being is always our priority and given the unique and additional challenges that Covid19 presents (such as cohorting) there are important changes to our process when student transportation has been cancelled.

For the 2020/2021 school year in the circumstance when transportation is cancelled due to weather and road conditions, all schools will be closed to both students and staff.

As each classroom teacher has established a Google Classroom or D2L site, teachers will utilize their LMS (Learning Management System) to post work by 10am on the closure day. Students will be provided with asynchronous student work. The normal bell times will be followed to allow students to contact their teacher on the closure day either through the LMS or through other appropriate means, such as email.

Thank you for everyone's understanding and support as we continue to provide learning for our students.

Students and families relying on STSWR (Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region) busing



Please check your times/dates/route details on the STSWR website to ensure that you have the proper information for your routes. Many efforts continue to be made on their end to give safe, healthy and dependable transportation to and from school. To access the website please feel free to click on the following link - [Student Transportation Website](#).

As an added note, please ensure that all students are sitting in their assigned spots on provided School Transportation. Seating plans have implications for any Covid tracing that may need to be done. The school has updated our records with respect to the bus seating plans within the past week. By maintaining those assigned seats, we can give more accurate information and potentially limit the number of people that are to

be contacted by Public Health in the event of a Covid case. We truly appreciate everyone's attention to this matter.

Graduation requirement changes for the 2020-2021 school year

By WCDSB Staff

There are two recent updates regarding graduation requirements for the 2020-2021 school year:

Community Service Hours: Graduates for 2020-2021 have a reduced requirement for 20 hours rather than the usual 40. This is in recognition that gathering CSH is a challenge for students during the ongoing pandemic. These hours can be generated in typical ways, also at the principal's discretion students can use hours:

1. earned during the school day
2. earned by performing household or community-based tasks
 - no max hours for duties performed at home, but this is at the principal's discretion
3. 10 hours paid employment at principal's discretion
4. flexibility and principal's discretion can be applied to international students
5. co-op experience, either paid or unpaid, could also be considered at the principal's discretion

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT): The requirement for the successful completion of the OSSLT has been removed for students graduating in 2020-2021. This mirrors what happened last year during the school closure period. Most of the current Gr. 12 cohort would have successfully written the OSSLT last time it was offered in Spring 2019; however, there are students who are currently registered in OSSLC this year that may no longer require it if they have their 4th English.

Cambridge High School Students

Get a Free EasyGO fare card



Loaded with

\$25*

- Visit grt.ca/cambridgehs to learn how to get your fare card
- Complete the online consent form by June 1, 2021

* Terms and conditions apply. Part of the Transit Supportive Strategy for the City of Cambridge.



Region of Waterloo

grt.ca

519-585-7555

Deaf and Hard of Hearing (TTY): 519-575-4608

GRT

GRAND RIVER TRANSIT



Frequently Asked Question

Is there a cohort-specific schedule?

YES THERE IS!

Cohort A **Cohort B**



COVID Test/Screening and Outbreak Protocol

All students (or guardians on their behalf) will be asked to engage in a daily self-assessment before reporting to school and anyone feeling unwell or identifying a concern based on their self-assessment should not report to school. [COVID-19 self-assessment \(Ontario.ca\)](#)

Once at the school, all students will be required to wear mask at all times. Students are to sanitize their hands upon entering and leaving the classroom.

[Operational guidance: COVID-19 management in schools \(Ontario.ca\)](#)

What to do when my child isn't feeling well?

[Click here to view the memo for Parent/Guardians from the Region of Waterloo Public Health Unit.](#) The document provides direction for parents and caregivers regarding the role of families, Public Health and schools.

Message from Guidance

Grade 8 Transitioning to Secondary School and Pathway Presentations

Coming to you Virtually in 2021!

Every year we look forward to welcoming our Grade 8 students and their families to our school for our Information Evenings and Pathway Presentations. St. Benedict is currently working hard to adjust our event plans to the ever-changing environment as we prioritize the health and safety of all. It is our hope to provide pre-recorded virtual events to showcase our amazing St. Benedict programs, community spirit and answer your questions. Updated will be shared as they are available and posted on the elementary school websites under NEWS.

Post-secondary application reminders

Grade 12's applying to University

Just a reminder that the deadline to apply to OUAC is January 15, 2021.

Students are reminded to apply well before the January 15th deadline to avoid technical issues.

The OUAC office is closed from December 23 - January 1st. If you have any issues (i.e. tech issues) while completing your application, contact OUAC directly at applicant services - 519-823-1063. Have your OUAC reference number or your username handy when calling.

Grade 12's applying to College

As a reminder, the deadline to apply is February 1st. We encourage you to get your applications in well before the deadline as well. Set up and complete your application at OntarioColleges.ca. You will need your OEN and Student Number, both of these are located on your report cards.



Are you looking to change learning environment?

The next opportunity to switch learning environments to enter the St Isidore Virtual Learning School or to return to in-person learning at SBCSS will be: Monday, January 4th, 2021 from 9am - Wednesday, January 6, 2021 at 6pm.

Visit the website for further information: <https://stisidore.wcdsb.ca/>

Academics

Join us for Homework Club

Wednesdays - 1:45 - 3:00pm **ONLINE**

Google Classroom Code: [ojocdyl](#)

Meet with Mrs. Borba for all your **LITERACY** needs:

[Click here for: Borba Literacy Meet](#)



Meet with Mr. Chaves for all your **NUMERACY** needs:

[Click here for: Chaves Numeracy Meet](#)



We got your learning needs covered :)

Every Wednesday, join Mrs. Borba (Literacy) or Mr. Chaves (Numeracy) **ONLINE** from 1:45-3:00pm!

JOIN the Google Classroom <https://classroom.google.com/c/MjM2MzY1NjE0NDI5?cjc=ojocdyI>
or simply CLICK on the Teams Links!!

[Click here for: Borba Literacy Meet](#)

[Click here for: Chaves Numeracy Meet](#)

Can't WAIT to see you SAINTS online!

Hello from Student Success!

We have had a few changes to Student Success and wanted to share an amazing ONE STOP shop for making an appointment with your IEP or SST monitor, ELL monitor, or Youth Care Worker!

Students may book appointments with their IEP Support/Student Success/ELL Monitor directly from the school website under PROGRAM SUPPORT: IEP, or by clicking on this link:

<https://stbenedict.wcdsb.ca/student-services/program-support/>

Remember that we are here to help!

Clubs

Bennies Eco Club Christmas Tips

Christmas Tip #1

Wrapping paper that is metallic, has glitter on it, or has texture to it, is NOT recyclable!
Use paper-based wrapping, brown wrapping paper, fabric wrapping or even newspaper!

Christmas Tip #2

Instead of sending Christmas cards, why not send E-cards!

OR

Choose Christmas cards made from recycled paper and ones that don't have glitter on them.

Christmas Tip #3

Cut food waste: transform leftovers into new meals, freeze them, donate to a food bank or soup kitchen!

OR

Go meat-free! The meat and dairy industry is responsible for more emissions than all the world's planes, trains, cars and boats put together.

Join Eco Club:

Contribute your eco ideas virtually and help spread awareness!

[Email Mrs. Kirk-Elleker if interested](#)

Student Activities

Christmas Toy Drive a success!

This year, St. Benedict participated in a toy drive competition with another St. Mary's in Kitchener. All proceeds from the drive went to CTV **Toy Mountain** to ensure that less fortunate children in the community still wake up on Christmas with toys under the tree.

Each cohort was given five days each to bring in toys for donation and there was also the opportunity to donate money through SchoolCashOnline.

Both schools were able to gather excellent amounts of donations which will benefit many children in the Waterloo Region. St. Benedict would also like to give a special thank you to the Barillari family for their generous donation of over 300 Teddy Bears! Thank you for your excellent generosity Saints!



PROPER MASK DISPOSAL

Please make sure you cut the straps on your disposable masks to help protect the animals in our community.

Invest in reusable masks if you can to reduce waste!



Other News

News from the Library

The PostCard Project

Would you like to earn volunteer hours AND help lift the spirits of people in our community this winter? This December be a part of the Postcard Project. This project has two parts.

In Part One pick up a pack of three blank postcards from any Idea Exchange location and create on the front of each a compelling and one-of-a-kind image. Each package includes 3 blank postcards to be decorated, a submission form/instruction sheet for Part One of this project and an envelope to return the decorated postcards to any Idea Exchange location. St. Bennies students/staff can pick up and return their postcards at Clemens Mill library.

In Part Two, people can pick up a 3-pack of decorated postcards and add a personal and uplifting note on the back. Then return the now completed postcard to an Idea Exchange location.

In late January, postcards will become available for the public to select and deliver personally to those in need. They will also be distributed to seniors in retirement homes through our Visiting Library Service.

All materials will be quarantined between times of human contact.

If the region moves into the grey zone, post cards will be available through curbside pick-up at our locations.

For each 3-pack of postcards returned, community members can receive 2 volunteer hours. Anyone can participate: staff, students and even family members.

Postcards are available December 1.

For those teachers who might want their class to be involved and who would like a large number of postcards, please contact Shannon Markle at smarkle@ideaexchange.org or the school librarian, Patricia Pilon at ppilon@ideaexchange.org

Are you in need of support?

Christmas Hampers and Supports

<https://christmashampers.ca/>

WCDSB Mental Health and Wellness

<https://www.wcdsb.ca/programs-and-services/mental-health-and-well-being-at-wcdsb/>

Langs Youth Wellness Hub offers a variety of programs and services for youth and teens including free counselling and groups for teens.

Tech Centre & Study Space: Need a quiet space to study with a friend or two? Text or call to reserve your space at 519.807.1855 open Mon & Wed 3-8p and Tue, Thu, Fri 10-4p

Hoops: Work on your basketball skills on Mon & Wed 6-8p and Thu from 2:30-3:30p

STEAM at Home & Kitchen Kreations

Call Darcy at 519.653.1470 ext. 357 for more information about virtual and face to face programs.

Email is darcy@langs.org

BEACON Digital Therapy is now available free of charge to support individuals through stress and well-being concerns – funded by the Government of Canada. This is a personalized digital course/intervention guided by a therapist. [Click here to find out more](#)

WHAT'S UP AT THE YOUTH WELLNESS HUB?		WHAT'S UP AT THE YOUTH WELLNESS HUB?	
	MONDAY DEC 21 TECH CENTRE 10A-4P		MONDAY DEC 28 TECH CENTRE & PIXEL ART 10A-4P
	TUESDAY DEC 22 TECH CENTRE 10A-4P		TUESDAY DEC 29 TECH CENTRE 10A-4P
	WEDNESDAY DEC 23 TECH CENTRE 3P-8P HOOPS 6P-8P		WEDNESDAY DEC 30 TECH CENTRE 3P-8P HOOPS 6P-8P
GRADE 6-12 SAVE YOUR SPOT BY TEXT 519.807.1855	THURSDAY DEC 24 TECH CENTRE 10A-2P	GRADE 6-12 SAVE YOUR SPOT BY TEXT 519.807.1855	THURSDAY DEC 31 TECH CENTRE 10A-2P MOVIE 12P-2P
	FRIDAY CLOSED		FRIDAY JAN 1 CLOSED

Calendar of Events

Thursday, December 17

8:00am: Period 3 Cohort B Face to Face
11:15am: DECA meeting
12:25pm: Period 4 All students Distance learning
2:00pm: Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences

Friday, December 18

8:00am: Period 3 Cohort B Face to Face
12:25pm: Period 4 All students Distance learning

Sunday, December 20

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Monday, December 21

Winter Solstice
Christmas Break begins

Thursday, December 24

Christmas Eve

Friday, December 25

Christmas Day

Thursday, December 31

New Year's Eve

Friday, January 1

New Year's Day

Monday, January 4

Classes resume
8:00am: Period 3 Cohort B Face to Face
12:25pm: Period 4 All students Distance learning

Tuesday, January 5

8:00am: Period 3 Cohort B Face to Face
12:25pm: Period 4 All students Distance learning

Wednesday, January 6

8:00am: Period 3 Cohort B Face to Face
12:25pm: Period 4 All students Distance learning
2:00pm: 2020 Grad Diploma Pick Up (Last Chance)

Thursday, January 7

8:00am: Period 4 Cohort A Face to Face
11:15am: DECA meeting
12:25pm: Period 3 All students Distance learning

Friday, January 8

8:00am: Period 4 Cohort A Face to Face
12:25pm: Period 3 All students Distance learning

Monday, January 11

8:00am: Period 4 Cohort A Face to Face
12:25pm: Period 3 All students Distance learning

Tuesday, January 12

8:00am: Period 4 Cohort A Face to Face
12:25pm: Period 3 All students Distance learning

Wednesday, January 13

Civvies Day
BENN Newsletter release
8:00am: Period 4 Cohort A Face to Face
12:25pm: Period 3 All students Distance learning

Thursday, January 14

8:00am: Period 4 Cohort B Face to Face
11:15am: DECA meeting
12:25pm: Period 3 All students Distance learning
6:30pm: Grade 8 Night

Friday, January 15

8:00am: Period 4 Cohort B Face to Face
12:25pm: Period 3 All students Distance learning

**Be sure to check out
the calendar on the
school website for
updates and changes!**

The BENN Newsletter

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