



# Saint Dominic Savio C.E.S.



## Dragons Weekly Update #17 January 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>



**3 Westforest Trail, Kitchener, Ontario N2N 3A6**  
**Telephone: (519) 576-5503    Extended Day: (519) 575-6153**  
**School Website: [St. Dominic Savio Catholic Elementary School](https://stmarkcatholicparish.org)**  
**St. Mark Catholic Parish Website:**  
<https://stmarkcatholicparish.org>

**Principal:** Albert Simoes    **Vice Principal:** Karen De Jong  
**Administrative Assistants:** Ms. Bridgman and Ms. Luszczki  
**Superintendent:** Gerald Foran

**Safe Arrival Program:** [School Messenger](#) to report an absence. Call the toll-free number 1-833-251-3283  
Click Here: [Saint Dominic Savio Community Handbook](#)

**“Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage.”**

– Matthew 2:2

Welcome to 2026! With a new year it's important to take the time to reset and remember that our primary goal at school is to be kind and caring human beings that reflect the gospel values of our Faith. This means that every person, uniquely created in the Image of God, is to be loved and respected for exactly who they are, no more no less and we show this love through kind acts and words and by being caring family members. We are so blessed to be part of this amazing family at Saint Dominic Savio, and we look forward to continuing our work of making this a welcoming and loving place to walk into every day.



We look forward to welcoming everyone back tomorrow. The transition back to school in January can be challenging as we readjust to routines, schedules, and expectations. Getting into the swing of school routines may take a few days after a break. To help with a smooth transition, make sure to be prepared the night before with lunches, backpacks, and outerwear all ready to go to avoid any chaos in the morning.



To support all of our students, we will be holding Safe and Caring School Assemblies by division to review these expectations. We appreciate your partnership to support our messages of being builders of community and treating everyone with dignity, kindness and respect. To learn more about Progressive Discipline and our WCDSB Code of Conduct, please visit: [APC018-00 CodeConduct.pdf \(wcdsb.ca\)](#).



As we begin a new week, listed below are important information items and upcoming dates:

### Thank You ...



- For all of your support during the Advent and Christmas season, it is greatly appreciated. We truly appreciate the great energy and joy we experienced during this time. We are so grateful for our community's generosity, support, positive feedback, and love this Advent season. The magic and wonder

of Christmas, along with the spirit of giving and gratitude, have truly abounded in our classrooms and halls.

- In advance to our school community for the new year ahead. We are very excited for what lies ahead.
- Our community for ensuring that your child(ren) has a good night's sleep and arrives at school on time and ready to learn. Supervision begins at 9:00 a.m. for all our students, including kindergarten. We begin our day promptly at 9:15 a.m.
- Our parents/guardians for ensuring that your child(ren) come prepared for outdoor play with the appropriate winter gear. All students will have outdoor recess/play time unless the temperature falls below -28. Please ensure you pack extra mitts/gloves and socks, and be sure to label your child's clothing so that lost and found items can be returned.
- Our staff for welcoming all of our students back to school and being ready to engage our students in an exciting New Year!
- Our Grade 8 students are taking on an entrepreneurial endeavour with Popcorn Sales on Fridays. All proceeds will help support the end-of-year Grade 8 initiative.
- Everyone for the tremendous effort put into creating the Christmas cards and preparing the songs for our concert. Your hard work and dedication truly made this a special experience. [Here is the link](#) to the complete concert that was shared with Highland Place Retirement Residence.
- Our school council and families who made this Christmas Fun Night a successful event/fundraiser. We raised over \$1500 for our school community. This is amazing and will help support our students this year.
- Additionally, as a school community, we donated \$649 and a large box of toys to the **Knights of Columbus New Toys for Needy Kids Toy Drive** this year. Thank you to our families for their generosity in donating both toys and money.
- We would also like to thank the **St. Mark Vincent de Paul Conference** for providing Christmas hampers to some of our families in need. We truly appreciate the support and generosity that contributed to a meaningful Christmas program for our school community.

**SUPPORT OUR  
GRADE 8S!**

## **School Highlights**

- **Saint Mark Parish:** Keep up to date with all that is happening in our parish, including church mass times, by visiting their website - church bulletins found [HERE](#).
- A new year and new beginnings! As we enter a new year, this is the perfect time to remind students of the expectations and routines at school. Students should know what their home routine is and where to be picked up before they come to school that day. The office is very busy, especially first thing in the morning and at the end of the day. Students should not be coming to the office to call home for pickups or forgotten items. Writing a note in their agenda and/or having this discussion with your child will help us tremendously at the office. We truly appreciate your co-operation in this as we work together to keep our students safe and organized.
- **REPOST - ArtShine Winter II Program:** We are thrilled to announce the launch of the ArtShine Winter II program at our school. Parents can register and pay for the program through their website. Direct Registration can be found [here](#). Program dates: February 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Attached is a promotional flyer with full program details and registration instructions: [Art classes Flyer](#)



- We have the pleasure of introducing **Maria Grimaldos** to our school, who will be playing an important role in supporting families and students, especially new to Canada. Maria is part of the YMCA of Three Rivers and works through the Settlement Workers supporting WCDSB schools across the region. Her work will help create a more inclusive and caring environment, giving students the confidence to thrive in the new home. To meet with Maria, please call at 519-498-4309. For more information, please see [here](#).
- We are excited to introduce **Paula Rush** as the elementary chaplain who will be serving our school. Paula will be taking over for Andrew Zettel, who has accepted an exciting new role within the WCDSB. Andrew has helped Paula become familiar with the role, and she looks forward to getting to know our students and supporting them in every way she can. Please join us warmly welcoming Paula to our school community.

## **Important Reminders**

- A reminder that we have a PA Day to support report card writing on **January 16th, 2026**. There is no school for students on this day. Term One report cards go home on February 12<sup>th</sup>.
- We are excited to share that the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre in Toronto (FSWC) "Tour for Humanity" bus will be visiting our **Grade 6 students on January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026**. Participating students will participate in an age-appropriate workshop teaching students about historical and recent events, showing the connection between past and present-day hatred and its relevance on both a Canadian and global level. In the process, the content inspires students to raise their voices and act against racism, hate, injustice, and intolerance to build a more equitable society. Parents can visit and learn more about the T4H bus by visiting: [Tour for Humanity](#)
- **New Seat Belt Requirement on School Buses:** Starting January 1, 2026, all students will be required to wear seat belts while riding on school buses. This change is part of a new safety initiative to keep our students secure during transportation. Teachers are not responsible for fastening seat belts for students. Instead, they will play a role in, addition to parents, in teaching students how to buckle up properly.
- **Dragons Assembly:** Our monthly school assembly will take place this Thursday morning. During the assembly, we will recognise students who have demonstrated the December skill of BE CARING and Attentive. We will also celebrate other efforts and achievements across our school. We will introduce January's Ontario Catholic Graduate skill of being **a reflective, creative & holistic thinker!**

## **WCDSB Updates**

Please visit our School Board Website for updates and current information. Here is the link:  
<http://www.wcdsb.ca>

**REPOST:** **Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ Program** is the primary resource used in classrooms within our board. It is a fantastic Catholic-based resource that is engaging and designed to meet the learning needs of our students. The digital component is available for teachers and students to navigate the program and continue to explore and grow in their faith.



### **School Settlement Information Sheet:**

#### **What is a School Settlement Worker?**

The first few years in Canada are particularly difficult for newcomer students and their families. School settlement workers connect newly arrived families to services and resources in the school and the community in order to help families to settle well in their new homes and foster student achievement.

#### **How can a School Settlement Worker help my family?**

1. **School Related Support:** School registration and orientation, connection to school and staff, youth/student related issues, information about homework clubs, academic support, clubs/after school activities and information sessions on many topics.
2. **Settlement Support:** Referrals and information Rights and responsibilities, government documents and benefits, immigration and citizenship, credential assessment, health, housing, legal and social services, child, youth and family resources, community and recreation, personal finance and income tax, shelter, food and clothing, 3-month free YMCA health and fitness membership to families in need and much more.

#### **If my school has a School Settlement Worker:**

My School Settlement Worker is: **Maria Grimaldos**

Phone Number: **519 498 4309**

Email Address: [Maria.grimaldos@ytr.ymca.ca](mailto:Maria.grimaldos@ytr.ymca.ca)

#### **If my school DOES NOT have a School Settlement Worker:**

To meet with a school Settlement worker at your school, contact us at:

Phone Number for School Settlement Office: 519-742-8220

Email Address: [itinerant@ckwymca.ca](mailto:itinerant@ckwymca.ca)

*Building healthy communities*





Here is your Waterloo Catholic Password Information

[Student-Home Website](#)

user name: wcdsb99

password: Student99

### Kindergarten Registration Now Open at WCDSB!

Kindergarten registration at the Waterloo Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) for the 2026-2027 school year is now open! Parents and guardians who are interested in registering their child for Kindergarten are invited to visit the WCDSB website for more information: [Entering Kindergarten \(wcdsb.ca\)](#). Please feel free to pass this information along to friends or neighbours with children entering Kindergarten next year.

**Born in 2022?** Register for Year One - Junior Kindergarten.

**Born in 2021?** Register for Year Two - Senior Kindergarten.



**GROWING IN FAITH  
GROWING IN CHRIST**

Our School uses the *Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ* program for Religious Education!

*Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ* features a Student-Home Website with videos, songs, bible stories, prayers, interactive activities and more—all designed for students and families to explore their faith together.

Log in at:  
[www.pearsoncanada.ca/growinginfaith/student-home](http://www.pearsoncanada.ca/growinginfaith/student-home)

Grades 1-8 available!  
Username: wcdsb99  
Password: Student99

Sponsored by the Catholic Bishops of Ontario, Alberta Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories.

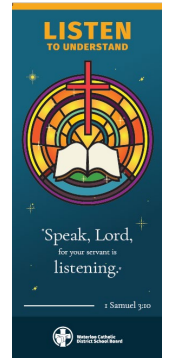


**Register for Kindergarten**

Ready to start your child's learning journey?

Ready, set, grow! Enroll your child in WCDSB Kindergarten — where playful learning meets Catholic faith, and every day is filled with wonder, joy, and discovery!

[Register for Kindergarten](#)



**LISTEN  
TO UNDERSTAND**

Speak, Lord,  
for your servant is listening.

— 1 Samuel 3:10

**Director's Annual Report 2024-2025:** The WCDSB Director's Annual Report showcases the Board's achievements, initiatives, and student success, highlighting faith, innovation, academics, and community, and is available at the link: <https://annual.wcdsb.ca/>

**Parent Workshop Series Supporting Students with LD/ADHD (Grades 7-8):** Join us for three virtual evening sessions designed for parents and guardians of students with learning disabilities and/or ADHD. Offered by the Regional Assessment and Resource Centre (RARC), this program provides practical strategies and guidance to help your child transition successfully from elementary to post-secondary school. Based on RARC's STEPS program, this series delivers the same valuable content in a convenient virtual format. For more information, please visit [here](#)

**Kindergarten Curriculum Update:** As part of the Ministry of Education's commitment to strengthen foundational skills in literacy, math, and STEM, and support Ontario's youngest learners for long-term success, the Minister of Education has issued a new *Kindergarten Curriculum (2026)* for implementation in the 2026-27 school year.



The revised *Kindergarten Curriculum (2026)* is now available to all Ontarians, including parents, educators, and students on the [Curriculum and Resources website](#). The new curriculum will replace the *Kindergarten Program (2016)*, which continues to be in effect for the remainder of this school year.

The intention of issuing the curriculum now is to give educators as much time as possible to familiarize themselves with the new learning in advance of implementation in the 2026-27 school year.

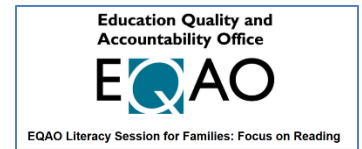
The *Kindergarten Curriculum* (2026) uses age-appropriate and evidence-based teaching methods. It takes a student-centered approach in providing children with the knowledge and skills they will need to succeed in Grade 1 and beyond. New learning in the curriculum includes evidence-based, systematic, and explicit instruction in reading, as well as strengthened learning in mathematics, science and technology.

Key features of Ontario's full-day kindergarten program, including play-based learning supported by teachers and early childhood educators, remain unchanged.

A [parent overview](#) is available.

**EQAO Literacy Session For Families: Focus On Reading:** Join us for a free live webinar about how EQAO assesses students' reading skills at key stages of their education. EQAO staff will discuss reading samples and questions from the Primary & Junior Reading Assessments, and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test. Participants will hear how these reading passages and questions help assess the skills students are learning in class. Staff will also highlight valuable insights and resources that can help parents and guardians support their child's learning.

📅 January 20 at 6:00 PM 🖱️ **Click here to register:** [Registration Link](#)



**French Immersion Registration and Information Meeting:** Registration for the French Immersion program for the 2026–2027 school year is now open and will remain available until January 31st. [Here is a link to the website information.](#)

We invite you to attend an information meeting on:

📍 Location: Learning Commons at Holy Rosary

📅 Date: Tuesday, January 6th

🕒 Time: 5:00 p.m.



During this session, we will:

- Confirm that the French Immersion program will remain at Holy Rosary for the upcoming school year.
- Review the logistics of the program.
- Explain the lottery system used for registration.
- Answer any questions or wonderings you may have.

This is a great opportunity to learn more about the program and ensure you have all the details needed for registration.

## **Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations and Deep Learning Transferable Skill**

Transferable skills are the skills and attributes that students need to thrive in the modern world. Based on international research, the Ontario Ministry of Education has defined seven important categories of transferable skills – sometimes called “competencies” – that will help students navigate the world of work and meet with success in the future.



As we step into the month of January, our focus will be on fostering **Innovation, Creativity, and Entrepreneurship** among our students. These essential skills empower students to ask questions, share their opinions, and cultivate new ideas. We aim to inspire them to contribute solutions to real-world problems, nurturing leadership qualities, imagination, creativity, and the ability to motivate others. We encourage you to actively engage with your child at home by fostering an environment that supports these skills. Encourage them to explore, question, and share their thoughts, allowing their creativity to flourish. Thank you for your continued support and partnership in cultivating a dynamic and enriching educational experience for your child(ren).

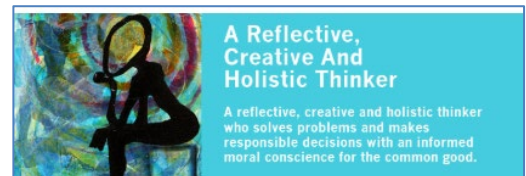
January's Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations is on being a **Reflective, Creative and Holistic Thinker** who solves problems and makes responsible decisions with an informed moral conscience for the common good. Students will engage in a range of classroom activities aimed at developing these skills throughout the month.



### Being a Reflective Thinker: I HAVE IDEAS

- I have thoughts and opinions that matter
- I make good choices
- I have hope for the future
- I solve problems with knowledge, understanding and prayer
- I know we are all equal and special

**Because I have ideas, I have a purpose, and I will live my life like Jesus.**



## January Innovation, Creativity, and Entrepreneurship

### Feast of the Epiphany

The Epiphany, celebrated on January 6th, marks the revelation of Jesus as the Son of God to the world. It is most commonly associated with the visit of the Magi, or Wise Men, who followed the star to Bethlehem to honour the newborn King. This feast reminds us of God's light shining for all people and calls us to seek Christ in our own lives, just as the Magi did. It is a beautiful opportunity to reflect on how we can share that light through kindness, faith, and love in our school community.



### Student Safety During Arrival and Dismissal

Please continue to exercise caution and safety. This time of year we can expect more snow and less favourable weather conditions, which often create additional safety concerns in our parking lots. Please review the following reminders to help keep everyone safe.

Helpful reminders and supports:

- **Victoria Street is a "No Stopping" zone.** Vehicles must not stop, park, or pull up to drop off or pick up students.
- **U-turns on Victoria Street are illegal** and create a serious safety hazard.



- **Sidewalks and school entrances must remain clear at all times.** Vehicles may not block these areas, even briefly.
- **City bus access must remain unobstructed** at all times.
- **Crossing Guard Support:** The City of Kitchener provides a crossing guard to assist students in crossing the roads safely.
- **Drive to 5 Program:** There are designated parking areas around the school within a 5-minute walk, allowing families to park safely and walk their children to school: [St. Dominic Savio Parking Map](#)
- **Drive with CAUTION!** There are lots of people on the road and lots of walkers. Please drive carefully and make good choices about drop-off areas.



We kindly ask families to allow enough time during arrival and dismissal so that rushed decisions do not compromise safety. **By-Law Officers will continue to monitor the area and issue tickets as required** to ensure compliance with posted regulations. Our children's safety is our highest priority. We ask all adults to model patience, kindness, and courtesy in both words and actions. Our students are always watching, listening, and learning from us. Thank you for your cooperation and for helping keep our school community safe for everyone.

### **Promoting Mental Health and Well-Being:**

Healthy New Year's Resolutions for Children and Teens Making resolutions together.



We encourage you to sit down with your child(ren) and, together, pick maybe one or two goals they want to set as their New Year's resolutions. If it's too overwhelming to think of them as resolutions, then just talk about them as goals and make it fun.

If your 8-year-old meets that goal of reading every day for a week, maybe they get to pick the family movie during the weekend. Maybe your preschooler can eat more vegetables by drinking them in smoothies that the whole family enjoys. Involving kids in the decision-making and making these fun for the entire family can help turn these resolutions into long-lasting habits.

For more healthy and positive goal-setting resolution ideas you can suggest to your children according to their age, [click here](#).

### **Mabel's Label Fundraiser**

Click [HERE](#) and enter Saint Dominic Savio Fundraiser (Kitchener) from the drop-down list to support our school when you purchase labels through MABEL'S LABELS.



### **Looking Ahead To Next Week**

[St. Dominic Savio Catholic Elementary School](#) (please use this address to access our school calendar)

**Monday, Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>**

**First Day of School for Students After Christmas Break**

**Ribbon Shirt and Skirt Day:** A celebration of Indigenous culture and traditions. Students are welcome to participate by wearing ribbon shirts or skirts if they wish.

**Tuesday, Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Pizza Lunch:** Order - [school cash on line](#)  
**Epiphany**





Wednesday, Jan. 7<sup>th</sup>

Thursday, Jan. 8<sup>th</sup>

Friday, Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>

Sunday, Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>

Monday, Jan. 12<sup>th</sup>

Tuesday, Jan. 13<sup>th</sup>

Wednesday, Jan. 14<sup>th</sup>

Thursday, Jan. 15<sup>th</sup>

Friday, Jan. 16<sup>th</sup>

**SCHOOL SPIRIT DAY** – wear Dragons spirit wear and show your pride

**Pita Pit Lunch Order** - [pitapitstanleypark.schoolfuel.ca](http://pitapitstanleypark.schoolfuel.ca)

**OCGE/Deep Learning/Be Kind Assembly @11:15 a.m.**

**Health Canada Presentation – Grade 4 (Ms. Courville)**

**Popcorn (pre-ordered)** - [school cash on line](http://schoolcashonline.ca)

**Confirmation Prep Session 1:00 p.m. St. Mark Church**

**Ordinary Time – Church Calendar Begins until February 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Girls Volleyball Game @St. Luke**

**Pizza Lunch:** Order - [school cash on line](http://schoolcashonline.ca)

**SCHOOL SPIRIT DAY** – wear Dragons spirit wear and show your pride

**Holocaust Bus Tour – Grade 6**

**Pita Pit Lunch Order** - [pitapitstanleypark.schoolfuel.ca](http://pitapitstanleypark.schoolfuel.ca)

**Professional Development Day – no school for students**



### Official Catholic School Council Instagram Site:

Stay up to date with fundraising, events and ways to get involved on Instagram @stdomsparentcouncil.



# WINTER WALK DAY

FEBRUARY 4

**STSWR** Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region

Walk or roll!

**LET'S GET OUTSIDE!**

Walk for a chance to win \$25 at Indigo

Everyone can qualify! Walk or wheel:

- all the way to/from school
- all the way to/from your bus stop
- park a distance away and walk the blocks to/from school

Enter the contest here!  
<https://tinyurl.com/56a8yum5>

[www.stswr.ca/walkzone](http://www.stswr.ca/walkzone)

## A PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

May the Lord  
*bless you and keep you.*

May the Lord make his face  
to shine upon you and  
*be gracious to you.*

May the Lord lift up his  
countenance upon you and  
*give you peace.*