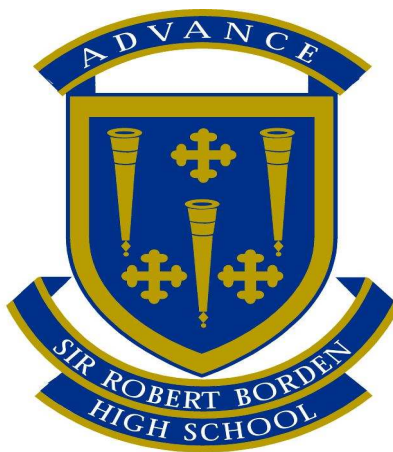


SIR ROBERT BORDEN HIGH SCHOOL GRADE 9 PARENT GUIDE



Our Mission Statement

The students and staff of Sir Robert Borden High School are a community of learners dedicated to creating an environment in which learning and growing is highly valued.

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PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

Making the transition from elementary school to high school can be an anxious time – for students and for their parents/guardians. Research shows that a strong partnership between parents/guardians and the school results in more academic success for students. We understand that a successful partnership depends on communication and we welcome input from parents about their children. No one knows your child better than you do. You may provide some insight that will help the teacher or guidance counsellor work more effectively with your child at school. Many parents say that they don't know what the school expects from their children-or from them. It is our hope that this Parent Guide will help you better understand what to expect at high school and offer you suggestions on how we can work together to support the academic success of your son or daughter. Should you require additional information, or if you have any questions, please contact your child's guidance counsellor.

MAKING THE MOVE TO HIGH SCHOOL

How is high school different from elementary school?

For Students	For Parents/Guardians
More independence and personal freedom	Less day-to-day communication about school
More responsibilities such as time management and self-advocacy	More responsibility for decisions regarding programs and course selection
More leadership opportunities, including fundraising	Very little involvement in fundraising
More complex social demands	More school staff to get to know
More extracurricular activities	Less direct involvement in school activities
More opportunities to learn and have fun	More opportunities to be proud of your child

Our Transition Program: *Link Crew*

Link Crew is an opportunity for senior students to earn a credit while helping grade 9 students make the transition to high school. Link Leaders help new students get oriented to the school and act as mentors, role models, tutors and friends to their assigned group of grade 9 students for the entire school year. The majority of this work is done in the first semester however ongoing opportunities are available throughout the year. Link Leaders start communicating with grade 9 students in August.

OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Our school community is comprised of many dedicated individuals. In total, we have 65 teaching staff and 22 support staff, as well as a number of other professionals who offer specialized services to students, parents/guardians and staff.

- School Psychologist – the role of the school psychologist is to assist staff in the assessment of students, consult on educational planning and provide short-term counselling, as needed. Referrals may be made to outside agencies.
- School Social Worker – the social worker can help students who have personal, family, school, or relationship concerns. Referrals may be made to community resources.
- Pastoral Care Worker – we have a pastoral care worker joining our school community once a week. The role of a pastoral care worker is to provide spiritually centred counseling to those who seek it.
- School Resource Officers – constables work closely with staff to make SRB safe and inviting. Officers may provide legal advice and counselling, formal presentations, and/or assistance in police matters.
- Public Health Nurses – qualified Public Health nurses are available one day each week to advise students with respect to questions on health and sexuality issues. Confidentiality is assured.
- Multicultural Liaison Officers (MLOs) – MLOs are available to provide assistance in a variety of languages to help address the integration needs of new Canadians and their families

COMMUNICATION

Typically, teenagers do not share a lot of information with parents/guardians; they tend to tell you what they want you to hear. And the reality is that the “backpack system” of sharing information between school and home tends to break down by high school. We understand that sharing information is essential, and both teachers and parents are responsible for making it happen.

At SRB, we communicate with parents/guardians and students in a number of different ways:

- School website – our website includes important dates, School Council information, sports, clubs, and lots more. We urge parents to check it regularly. www.sirrobertbordenhs.ocdsb.ca/
- Synervoice – an automated voice system that sends phone messages to parents/guardians regarding attendance (i.e. lates and missed classes) and other important information. The effectiveness of this system is dependent upon the accuracy of phone numbers; please let us know if your phone number changes.
- Regular mail – depending on the nature of the information, we may do a direct mailing to parents/guardians, so it is important we have current information.
- SRB Student Planner – the student planner provides information on a number of topics such as school policies and procedures, awards, bursaries, and Students' Council. Each student is given a student planner at the beginning of the school year. Please consider looking at it with your child.
- SRB Newsletter – an online version of the *Bengal Tales* newsletter available shortly after report cards are sent home. Paper copies are available for those who request them. Otherwise the information can be found on the school website.
- Report cards – reporting occurs two times per semester with a midterm report card and a final report card at the end of the semester
- Parent-teacher interviews – interviews are held twice a year and are a maximum of 10 minutes in length. They follow progress report cards
- “Wikis” – Some teachers have created web pages that contain information such as homework and upcoming tests which can be accessed through the SRB website from home.
- School Council – regular meetings throughout the school year will help to keep you informed about what is happening at the school and in our Board (check the School Council section of the school's website)

What if my child is having difficulties in a course?

If you have a concern about your child's progress, *the first person to contact is the teacher*. Department heads are also available to respond to parental inquiries regarding curriculum, and assessment and evaluation. And depending on the nature of your concern, you may wish to contact your child's guidance counsellor.

How do I contact my child's teacher(s)?

Teachers can be contacted by e-mail, or phone, although e-mail is preferred.

The standard format for staff e-mail addresses is as follows:

first name.last name@ocdsb.ca

Please ensure that we have up-to date-information so that we can contact you as well.

PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

Destinations

Students at SRB have the opportunity to pursue different post-secondary pathways including university, college, apprenticeships, and the world of work. Today, earning a high school diploma is not a race; some students complete high school in four years and others take five years. A five year plan can afford students an opportunity to explore their interests and strengths in a number of different ways, some of which are described below:

- Cooperative Education – a work education program for which students earn credits
- Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) – for students earning Cooperative Education credits in a skilled-trade area, this program is an opportunity to begin an apprenticeship career path
- Focus Programs – grade 11 and 12 students may apply to take a concentration of courses in a subject area in the Arts, and in Trades and Technology
- Dual Credit Program – this recent partnership with Algonquin College allows senior students to earn a high school credit and college credit concurrently
- Enrichment Mini-Courses – each spring students have an opportunity to attend university for one week. Please note that there is a fee for this program and spots are limited.
- E-Learning with the OCDSB-for students looking for courses which may not fit in their timetables-this is more applicable to Senior students.

Please note that the above programs are described in more detail in the OCDSB 2009-2010 Course Calendar, which is available on the OCDSB website.

OCDSB 2011-2012 Course Calendar

This resource contains essential information for parents/guardians and students to keep themselves informed about secondary education in Ontario and the programs available in our Board. Parents/guardians are encouraged to talk with their child to help him or her make appropriate educational plans. A printed copy of the Course Calendar is provided to students and an electronic version of the document is available on the OCDSB website.

The Course Selection Process

The final decision on course selection for students under the age of 18 years rests with parents/guardians. Therefore, keeping in touch with your child's guidance counsellor is of great importance. Parents/guardians should consider the student's achievement and the advice of educators when choosing appropriate courses and/or programs.

Course Contracts

Course selection for September takes place in February. Course contracts (i.e., option sheets) are an important tool in the educational planning process and must be completed each year. It is the responsibility of all students and their parents/guardians to submit course selections by the prescribed date. Subsequent modifications to a student's program will be made for sound educational reasons only. Please note that maximum class sizes cannot be exceeded. This means that full classes may limit or prevent timetable changes. Also, where enrolment is insufficient a course may be withdrawn or cancelled. The school makes every effort to run requested courses.

Prerequisites

Prerequisite courses contain prior knowledge in a specific subject area which must be obtained before taking courses at a later grade level. Without the appropriate prerequisite a student cannot take the next course. This planning is especially crucial for students entering grade 11. Please ensure that prerequisites are checked prior to submitting course contracts.

Types of Courses in Grades 9 and 10

Locally Developed courses are designed to meet the needs of students who are not yet ready to study grade level curriculum. Each course is counted as a compulsory credit.

Applied courses focus on the essential concepts of a subject. The emphasis is on practical applications that relate to real-life experiences. Students benefit from opportunities to problem-solve using a more hands-on approach.

Academic courses emphasize theoretical and abstract thinking as a basis for further learning. In general, the pace of these courses is faster and students are required to demonstrate independent learning skills and work habits.

Open courses have one set of curriculum expectations for the subject and are appropriate for most students in a given grade.

Types of Courses in Grades 11 and 12

Grade 11 and 12 courses are organized into five types based on students' future destinations. Students may choose from University Preparation, University/College Preparation, College Preparation, Workplace Preparation, or Open courses.

Mathematics Mastery Program

The SRB math department implements a mastery program throughout all grades and course levels. Foundational knowledge and skills have been identified, and students revisit these skills frequently to build long term retention. Mastery of these skills supports the more sophisticated problem solving that permeates the curriculum. This program is fully implemented on line, with sample questions and practice tests. It has had a significant positive impact on student success at SRB over the past 10 years.

Student Success Program

The Student Success Program focuses on students who need additional help to be successful in their courses. At SRB, our Student Success Teachers monitor students who are at risk for academic failure and offer them support when it is needed. Support may be offered in various forms including lunchtime help, credit rescue or credit recovery. Consideration for credit rescue and credit recovery is by referral.

TEXTBOOKS, SUPPLIES & FEES

The school lends students required textbooks. Students are expected to keep these books in good repair and return them at the end of each semester so they can be used the following semester or for summer school. Students are responsible for any loss or damage to these books while in their possession.

Each textbook issued to students is stamped with a number. Only the student to whom the textbook was originally issued will be given credit for its return. Students must reimburse the school immediately for any lost or stolen textbooks. Payment is to be made directly to the main office.

General school supplies such as locks, pens, pencils, paper and binders are usually purchased by parents/guardians.

In some cases, fees may be charged for courses such as outdoor education, and construction. It is important for parents/guardians to know that if any fees pose significant financial hardship, they should contact the Principal or one of our Vice-Principals.



SRB adheres to the OCDSB School Fees Procedure (PR.648.SCO) with regards to collecting voluntary school fees which are used to provide a wide range of support. There are elective or specialized programs for which the student may have to be charged additional fees. Please note a \$40 fee will be charged for all NSF cheques.

Dress Code and Cafeteria

SRB has a dress code that is specific to what must be covered up, in short -no cleavage, tops and bottoms shall meet and underwear is to be worn under; details are in the student planner and on the school website. Staff decisions are final.

The cafeteria is open daily from 8 a.m to 12:30 p.m. and provides a selection of healthy food and snacks in accordance with the new Ministry requirements. Debit cards can be used only in the cafeteria.

ATTENDANCE

One of the most important things your child can do to achieve academic success is also one of the most basic: attend school every day. In fact, research has shown that your child's attendance record may be the biggest factor influencing his or her academic success. Attendance and Achievement are directly linked.

What do I do if my child misses school?

Full Day Absence from School:

When a student returns from an absence, they are to submit a note from their parent/guardian to the main office explaining the reason for their absence. The student will then receive a permit which is to be shown to all teachers from whose classes the student was absent.

Part Day Absence from School:

Students who are required to leave school before the end of the day must “**sign-out**” at the main office with a note written by a parent/guardian explaining the reason for leaving and the leave time. If they are returning later the same day, they must “**sign in**” at the main office upon their return.

Students without a note from a parent/guardian are not permitted to leave the school during the day until a parent/guardian has been contacted by telephone in the main office. In emergencies, if parents cannot be contacted, the administration will act on behalf of the parent/guardian.

Students who go home for lunch are required to have their parent/guardian contact the main office if they are not returning to school in the afternoon. They must also present a note the following morning to the main office.

What if my child is late for school?

Students who arrive at school after 9:00 a.m. **must** sign in at the main office and present a note written by a parent/guardian explaining the reason for the late arrival. Students arriving without a note will be considered as having an unjustified late and will be assigned appropriate consequences. Parents will be contacted if this becomes an ongoing issue.

What about family vacations during school time?

If a student will be absent from school due to a family vacation, **the Principal must be notified, in writing, in advance**. A formal letter will be sent to parents in response. Please note that family vacations **cannot** be recognized as a legitimate reason for exemption from a summative evaluation or final examination.

Please Note: Students are responsible for all work missed during an absence regardless of the reason for the absence.

IMPORTANT TIPS

At home, help your child establish and maintain a routine that includes homework, reading and/or a review of notes. Retention of information is greatly improved when class notes are reviewed daily.

Support your child in developing self-advocacy skills: encourage him or her to speak directly with their teachers or make an appointment with their guidance counsellor.

Share important information with the school regarding your child's health and well being.

Please consider speaking confidentially with your child's guidance counsellor about anything that may affect your child's learning (e.g., job loss, a death in your family). If needed, the guidance counsellor can follow up at the school or make a referral to community resources.

Check the school website for important pieces of information about such things as lockdown drills, dress code and scholarships.

LOOKING AHEAD

Planning for Post-Secondary

Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss and research post-secondary destinations with their son or daughter as part of the educational planning process. Please keep in mind that your child needs to complete a minimum of 40 Community Involvement Hours in order to graduate. We recommend completing them prior to the year in which your child graduates.

Assemblies are held each fall to provide graduating students with general information about applying to colleges and/or universities. During these assemblies, our guidance counsellors encourage students to meet with them individually to explore program interests, answer questions, and assist in the application process.

Representatives from colleges and universities visit SRB in the fall. Students are required to sign up for these information sessions in the Student Services office and they may attend a maximum of three sessions so as not to interfere with their learning.

Students Aged 18 and Over

Once your child turns 18 years of age, he or she is legally considered to be an adult. Students who are aged 18 and over have the right to write their own notes regarding absences; however, the school retains the right to demand appropriate third-party documentation for a note to be accepted (e.g., a medical certificate, parental note, or vice-principal authorization). In order for the school to continue sharing information with parents/guardians of students aged 18 and over, the student must sign a consent form. These forms are available through Student Services or the main office.

FAQs

What if there's an emergency and I need to contact my son or daughter at school?

Since the school rules state that communication devices (cell phones, pagers, black berries, etc.) must be turned off during class time, parents are asked to use the main office for this communication.

Are field trips compulsory?

No, field trips are not compulsory; however, they are designed to supplement the curriculum, so attendance is therefore encouraged. Financial assistance can be arranged in some cases by speaking with the appropriate Vice-Principal. Students struggling with attendance (i.e. skipping) may be removed from lists of attendees.

What happens if my child fails a course?

If your son or daughter fails a course, several options exist. He or she may be counselled to take the course at summer school, retake the course in the following school year, or consider credit recovery. Each student's situation is considered on an individual basis and involves consultation with teachers, your child's guidance counsellor, and you.

When is the earliest that my child can take Cooperative Education?

Co-operative education may be considered in Semester 2 of grade 10 for those students who demonstrate sufficient maturity. Your child's guidance counsellor can assist you in reviewing this option.

How can I find out about post-secondary options for my son or daughter?

There are many excellent websites where parents/guardians and students can research and plan post-secondary choices. To get you started, a list of websites is provided at the end of this booklet. Also, please do not hesitate to contact your child's guidance counsellor for information on such topics as scholarships and bursaries. Many scholarship opportunities are posted on the bulletin board outside of the Student Services office.



RESOURCES

Sir Robert Borden High School

www.sirrobertbordenhs.ocdsb.ca

Keep in touch with what is happening at SRB.

The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

www.ocdsb.ca

The Board's website will help you stay in touch with what is happening in our region. Click on the "Parents Corner" for updates and information designed specifically to support parents.

Ontario Ministry of Education

www.edu.gov.on.ca

This website provides information on Ministry of Education initiatives, curriculum, publications and more.

CanLearn

www.canlearn.ca

A government of Canada online post-secondary education resource that provides parents/guardians and students with information and services they need to decide what and where to study and how to cover the costs.

Ontario College Application Service

www.ocas.ca

The application processing service for colleges in Ontario.

Ontario Colleges

www.ontariocolleges.ca

A comprehensive website that allows parents/guardians and students to plan and explore options at Ontario colleges.

Ontario Universities' Application Centre

www.ouac.on.ca

The application processing service for universities in Ontario with links to Ontario universities, undergraduate calendars, and the Directory of Canadian Universities.

Ontario Student Assistance Program

www.osap.gov.on.ca

Information about financial assistance for students attending post-secondary education.

Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO)

www.eqao.com

Look here for assessment dates, reports and practice questions.