

# GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT

It is the responsibility of the Guidance Department to implement a guidance program that involves the entire staff. The guidance program is designed to help students grow in their Catholic values and view themselves positively as they move from adolescence to adulthood.

Guidance counsellors are teachers who assist students in acquiring the knowledge, skills and attitudes to:

- design a personalized educational plan
- demonstrate effective personal and social skills
- develop a framework for life and career planning in a constantly changing world

The following supports are available for all students:

- a reference library with college and university calendars and additional resources from post-secondary institutions
- career resource materials
- access to the Internet as well as other support software
- interest inventories
- labour trends
- job search resources
- peer tutoring
- personal counselling

Students may request an appointment with a counsellor by filling out a request form in the Guidance office. Parents are encouraged to contact the Guidance Department about concerns they have regarding any aspect of school life.

The school counsellors, teachers, administration and other school personnel work as a team in the counselling and guidance process in order to assist the students to grow in their Catholic values, to develop self-esteem, to recognize their abilities and limitations. They evaluate possible alternatives to their actions, and to view themselves positively as they move towards setting realistic goals and achieving the optimum development of their potential.

The Guidance and Cooperative Education program provides students with opportunities to:

- expand their knowledge and understanding of themselves and develop an appreciation of their individual potential to contribute to society
- develop an understanding of effective relationships
- develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to make appropriate post-secondary decisions and to cope with the transition from secondary to post-secondary studies and the world of work
- explore educational alternatives and potential careers in relation to themselves
- experience first hand the world of work in order to gain experience and assist in career and post-secondary planning

# PROGRAM SUPPORT DEPARTMENT

Archbishop Denis O'Connor Catholic High School, in accordance with the Durham Catholic District School Board's Five Year Plan for Special Education, supports a Site-Based Model of service delivery.

The phases outlined in the plan for secondary schools are as follows:

- Phase One: Recognition and Program Adjustments
- Phase Two: Referral to School Team
- Phase Three: Referral to Identification, Placement and Review Committee (I.P.R.C.)

Most students requiring assistance will be supported at phase one or phase two of the plan.

At phase three, if parent(s)/guardian(s) and educators agree on the best programming for the student and there is a written record of informed agreement, there will be no I.P.R.C.; otherwise, the I.P.R.C. process will be initiated by the parent(s)/guardian(s) or the principal. At Archbishop Denis O'Connor Catholic High School, most students' needs are met within the classroom setting in an inclusive model.

In consultation with associate schools, parents, teachers and students, the Program Support Department may initiate the construction and ongoing development of Individual Educational Plans. These I.E.P.'s communicate useful information about academic progress, evaluation, learning styles and health and safety concerns, as well as suggesting specific strategies that promote learning and success in the classroom.

Subject teachers may obtain the support of an educational assistant within the classroom for individuals or small groups, as schedules permit. Program support teachers may confer with parents, staff, students and support personnel to generate programming ideas and specific strategies for students who require differentiated structures for learning and academic progress.

Some students are referred for educational assessments. Through academic testing, it is possible to learn more about student potential. Furthermore, assessments provide us with some useful information about the way students learn, as well as level placement and career exploration.

The Cooperative Education and Program Support Departments support alternative learning environments for students. Opportunities for work experience and Cooperative Education placements are available, in accordance with individual needs, school guidelines and ministry regulations.

Parents are considered equal and important partners in the education of their children. Participation in school team meetings facilitate open communication in consideration of student placement, high school programs and support services.

Recommendations and letters of referral for post-secondary endeavours may be requested by students who have been previously associated with the Program Support Department.