

GENERAL INFORMATION

Attendance

Regular attendance is an important component of the educational process at Archbishop Denis O'Connor Catholic High School. Student achievement has a direct relationship to student attendance. If the process of learning is disrupted by irregular attendance, learning experiences are lost that cannot be entirely regained and achievement cannot be fully assessed.

Code of Conduct

A school is a place that promotes responsibility, respect, civility and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. All students, parents, teachers and staff have the right to be safe, and feel safe, in their school community. With this right comes the responsibility to be law-abiding citizens and to be accountable for actions that put at risk the safety of others or oneself.

The Ontario Schools Code of Conduct sets clear provincial standards of behaviour. It specifies the mandatory consequences for student actions that do not comply with these standards. The Provincial standards of behaviour apply not only to students, but also to all individuals involved in the publicly funded school systems – parents or guardians, volunteers, teachers and other staff members – whether they are on school property, or on buses or at school-authorized events or activities.

The complete Ontario Schools Code of Conduct can be accessed at the Ministry of Education web site:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/brochure/conduct/conduct.html>

The Archbishop Denis O'Connor Code of Conduct has been developed with the involvement and contribution of the parents, students and staff of the school and is available for perusal by any of these groups. It is subject to regular review and update by appropriate school authorities who welcome the participation of any interested parties associated with the school. While the code concentrates on the duties of the student and the consequences of failure to observe such duties, Archbishop Denis O'Connor remains aware of the important questions of student rights. While cultivating the student's sense of responsibility, the school must also make each person aware of his/her self-worth, uniqueness and prerogatives within this institution. The school Code of Conduct is printed in the Student Agenda Book which is given to all students on the first day of school.

The complete Archbishop Denis O'Connor Code of Conduct can be accessed at the school web site: www.docchs.com

Compulsory Course

A course that as directed by the Ministry of Education and the Durham Catholic District School Board must be included in a student's program towards the earning of a diploma or certificate.

Course Offerings Through Other Means

The options available to students who wish to consider alternative methods for earning credits include:

Continuing Education

Students may earn credit and non-credit courses through the continuing education program. Courses may include evening and summer school, correspondence courses and adult basic education courses. Students should see their guidance counsellor for additional information. Additional information can be accessed at the Continuing Education web site: <http://www.con-ed.ca>

Summer School

Summer school is available for students who wish to earn additional credits, re-take courses they have not successfully completed, improve achievement in a course or to take transfer courses. Students are invited to see their guidance counsellor for additional information.

Credit System

In order to earn an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD), a student must earn 30 high school credits. A credit is granted in recognition of successful completion of a course that has been scheduled for a minimum of 110 hours of instructional time.

A half credit is granted in recognition of successful completion of a course that has been scheduled for a minimum of 55 hours of instructional time. Two compulsory courses, Civics (CHV201) and Career Studies (GLC201), are half credit courses.

Crossover Materials

Crossover Materials consist of learning activities for students changing course types from Grade 9 to Grade 10. Working through the materials will help the student prepare for Grade 10.

Curriculum

The plan for student learning outlined in Ministry of Education policy documents and implemented in classroom programs through the use of a wide range of resources. Information regarding curriculum, course outlines and curriculum policy documents can be accessed at the Ministry of Education web site: www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum

Evaluation

Students entering grade 9 on or after September 1999 will be evaluated based on the achievement charts in the Provincial Curriculum Policy Documents for the courses in which they are enrolled. Evaluation is based on the level of achievement the student demonstrates in the skills and knowledge covered in a course.

Seventy percent (70%) of the evaluation is based on classroom work and may be determined through a variety of methods such as ongoing class demonstrations, presentations, essays, performances and classroom tests and quizzes. Thirty percent (30%) of the evaluation is based on a final summative evaluation that may be determined through a variety of methods in the latter portion of the course. These could include a portfolio, essay, examination and/or demonstration. Formal examinations are held in the months of January and June. This final evaluation reflects the range and level of student skills and knowledge towards the conclusion of the course.

Honour Roll

A student earns placement on the Honour Roll by achieving an average of 80% or higher for their school year (September to June). Students must have completed a full-time course load for the school year. Calculations are as follows:

Grade 9, 10 and 11 Best 8 of 8
Grade 12 Best 6

Music Certificates Accepted for Credit

A student may earn **one Grade 11 credit at the University/College level (AMX 3M1)** for successful completion of Grade VII Practical (any musical instrument, including voice, on which performance is examined) **and** Grade I Rudiments of the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto.

A student may earn **one Grade 12 credit at the University/College level (AMX 4M1)** for successful completion of Grade VIII Practical (any musical instrument, including voice, on which performance is examined), **and** Grade II Rudiments of the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto.

A music credit obtained through a certificate granted by a conservatory of music may not be used to meet the compulsory credit requirement in the arts or the

additional compulsory credit requirement in the category Health and Physical Education, Business Studies or the Arts.

The Ontario Student Transcript (OST)

Ontario secondary schools use the Ontario Student Transcript to record student achievement in all successfully completed courses in Grades 9 and 10 and provide a complete record of students' performance in grade 11 and 12 courses. The OST also provides an accurate and up-to-date record of the students' achievement of all diploma requirements. **As of September 1, 1999, full disclosure came into effect. If a student withdraws from a course after five days following the issue of the first report card in a semestered or non-semestered school, the withdrawal is recorded and a mark is assigned.** This affects students taking courses in Grade 11 and 12 and students re-taking courses in grade 11 and 12 (that is, students who have taken these courses and wish to repeat for a higher mark).

The Ontario Student Record (OSR)

The Ontario Student Record is the official school record for a high school student. Every Ontario school keeps an OSR for each student enrolled at that school. The OSR contains achievement results, credits earned and diploma requirements completed, and other information important to the education of the student.

Optional Course

A course selected by a student from available courses other than his or her compulsory courses.

Policy for Course Changes

Course Selection

1. The courses offered by Archbishop Denis O'Connor C.H.S. have been developed according to the requirements of the Ontario Ministry of Education. All courses are worth one credit unless otherwise noted. Every student has equal access to any course, providing normal prerequisites are met. Students are encouraged to enrol in courses regardless of their gender. The materials, methods, and content of the courses will provide opportunities to reflect the equal contributions that men and women make to society.
2. **Guidelines for the Selection of Courses:** Since considerable freedom of choice is given, especially in grades 11 and 12, both students and parents must exercise great care in the selection of courses. To choose these courses wisely, it is advisable to keep in mind specific goals. Students should consult with teachers and guidance counsellors in order to make wise choices.

All students at Archbishop Denis O'Connor Catholic School must select 8 full credit courses each year (from Grade 9 to Grade 11 inclusive) until 24 credits have been successfully completed.

During the months of January and February students will select their courses for the following year. The school master timetable will be constructed based on these selections.

Once courses are selected, changes to a student's timetable will be made only if graduation requirements must be met or a prerequisite course is lacking. **Students must choose courses wisely as discretionary changes will not be allowed.** Changes in course selection will require parental approval.

Students who attend summer school and who successfully complete their course work will be permitted to modify their course requests. These students will be responsible for notifying the Guidance department as soon as the information becomes available in order to make the necessary course changes.

Policy on Substitutions for Compulsory Courses

Substitutions may be made for a limited number of compulsory credit courses using courses from the remaining courses that meet the compulsory credit requirements that are offered by the school. To meet individual students' needs, Principals may replace up to three compulsory courses (or equivalent half courses). Parental approval is required for students under the age of 18.

Prerequisite Course

A prerequisite course is a course that is deemed absolutely essential for the successful understanding and completion of a subsequent course. Prerequisite courses are established by the Ministry of Education and are noted by each course, if applicable, in the school course calendar.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

PLAR is the formal evaluation and credit-granting process whereby students may obtain credits for prior learning. Prior learning includes the knowledge and skills that students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside secondary school. Students may have their knowledge and skills evaluated against the expectations outlined in provincial policy documents in order to earn credits towards the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. To receive a credit through the PLAR process, students are assessed through a process established by the Durham Catholic D.S.B. Students may obtain a maximum of four credits through the PLAR process, but no more than two in one subject area. PLAR applies to courses in grade 10, 11 and 12 only. Grade 9 courses cannot be challenged. Students are responsible for initiating the challenge process and for satisfying all of the requirements.

Semester System

Archbishop Denis O'Connor Catholic High School is a semestered school. This means that the school year is divided into two semesters: September to January and February to June. There are four classes a day, each 75 minutes in length. Students do not have a choice about the order in which they study the subjects; however, every effort is made to balance the student's timetable.

Note: English and Math at the grade 9 level are delivered as full year courses.

Transfer Courses

Transfer courses are partial-credit courses offered to students who intend to switch from one course type to another in the same subject (i.e. grade 10 applied math to grade 11 university math). Transfer courses consist of learning expectations that were not included in the completed course but that are considered essential for success in the course to be taken. These courses will offer students a means for transferring from one type of course to another if their interests and goals change. Transfer courses are available outside the regular school day.