

Welcome to the 2025 - 2026 school year!

We've had the pleasure of welcoming all of our students over the past few days, and we're excited for the year ahead! It's an honor to lead such an outstanding group of staff and students as we begin another year filled with learning and growth. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me—either by phone at the school or via email. I'm always happy to connect and discuss anything that's on your mind. We also encourage you to attend our School Council meetings to stay informed and involved. It's a great opportunity to hear updates and share your voice as we work together to support our students. Looking forward to a fantastic year ahead!

At MHS, our primary focus this year is on ensuring students achieve both *acceptable* and *excellence* standards in their curricular outcomes. To support this goal and ensure meaningful learning takes place, we need students to be present and on time every day. Since COVID, there's been a shift in how school attendance is viewed—almost as though it's optional. I believe it's time for that mindset to change, and I need your help to make it happen.

When students miss school, even for a day, they fall behind. Learning is sequential—each skill builds on the last. When a student is absent, they miss those foundational steps, which creates gaps that interrupt their learning. Our staff at MHS are dedicated, capable, and committed to helping every student succeed—but we aren't magicians. We can't teach empty seats.

This year, we are placing a strong emphasis on improving literacy and numeracy, but our efforts must be matched by a shared commitment from families. Regular attendance and punctuality are essential. Please do your best to avoid scheduling vacations, appointments, or other activities during instructional time. When we maximize attendance, we maximize learning—and, ultimately, student success.

Positive and productive communication between home and school is key. We want to work with you to support your child's achievement. While we will be holding in-person parent-teacher interviews in October and March, we welcome additional meetings at any time throughout the year.

To support positive attendance habits, PowerSchool will automatically generate a list of absent students and contact home **twice daily**. If a student is not present in class, the teacher will mark them as absent. Please note that if a student arrives late, the teacher may not be able to immediately update the attendance from "absent" to "late" due to teaching responsibilities. As a result, you may still receive a notification. To confirm your child's attendance status at any time, you can log in to the **Parent Portal** on PowerSchool. You can call the school at 780 786 2624 or text 780 286 9232 to report an absence.

If you are ever uncertain or have concerns, please don't hesitate to **call the school office** for clarification. If you know in advance that your child will be absent, please contact the office directly (780 786 2624) or text 780 286 9232 with the reason for the absence so we can ensure the information is accurately recorded in our system.

Please remind your children that success in school doesn't require perfection—it simply requires effort. The formula is straightforward:

Pay attention in class, complete homework, and ask for help when needed. If they do these three things consistently, success will follow.

Most classes this year will be using **Google Classroom**, where students can access assignments, assessment dates, and additional learning materials. Staying organized and checking Google Classroom regularly will help students stay on top of their responsibilities.

We also encourage all parents and guardians to set up a **PowerSchool Parent Portal** account. PowerSchool allows you to monitor your child's **attendance, assignment completion, upcoming assessments, and academic progress** in real-time.

Homework, practice, and assignments aren't just tasks—they are essential tools for learning. Completing them allows teachers to assess understanding and adjust instruction to support student growth. When students skip these steps, they miss out on important opportunities to improve and succeed.

If you do not yet have a PowerSchool account, please contact keri-lynn.evarts@ngps.ca and she will gladly help you set one up.

SchoolCash Online

All fees and outstanding items will be listed on SchoolCash. Programs with fees will appear on the account and can be paid for through various platforms online.

School Photos - Wednesday September 10th

Smart Photography will be taking school photos on Wednesday September 10th. All order forms will be online. Remember - DO NOT WEAR GREEN!

Sports

Girls and Boys Senior and Junior volleyball tryouts are happening this week. The Senior golf team will be heading to Drayton Valley soon.

Please Note that throughout the year, parents may be required to drive students to competitions. If you wish to drive more than your own student, you must get a letter from the office to get a criminal record check (this takes two weeks), proof of insurance, a driver's abstract complete a volunteer driver form. We truly appreciate those parents that are able to help us get the athletes to competitions.

Textbooks/Library Books

If your student has any outstanding text/library books, please return them to the office as soon as possible. Outstanding books will be placed on SchoolCash Online accounts in October.

Final Exam Exemption Policy

Last semester we piloted a new policy regarding the exemption of final exams. A student may be eligible to exempt one final exam per year (Junior) or one final exam per semester (Senior) if they meet either of the following conditions: Academic Standing: The student has achieved a final grade of 80% or above in the classroom portion of the course OR Attendance: In a semester course, the student has been absent 5 days or fewer. In a year-long course, the student has been absent 10 days or fewer. There is a more detailed explanation in the student handbook located on the school website.

Meet The Teacher - Thursday, September 11 at 5:30pm

All parents and students are welcome to join us for a hot dog and a chat. We will introduce our staff and you will have the opportunity to walk the halls and ask questions.

Grade 12 Parent and Grad Meeting - Thursday September 11 at 7:00 pm

Parents and grade 12 students should attend this meeting to discuss graduation qualifications, how to support your student in achieving their diploma, and meet the new grad executive. It will be in the library.

School Council Establishment Meeting

There will be a school council establishment meeting on Wednesday September 17th @ 7 pm. We will elect members to the position of Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and others if needed. Please join us and hear the latest news in the school and the division.

Green Certificate

There will be an information meeting for those students and their parents interested in enrolling in the Green Certificate Program. It will be in the library on Monday September 22 at 12:30. Please call the school or email keri-lynn.evarts@ngps.ca if you plan on attending.

Upcoming Dates:

- Awards Night is scheduled for October 16, at 6 pm
- Parent Teacher Interviews are October 21 and 22 from 4 - 7:30. No appointment needed. Just come into the gym and the teachers are available.

Thank You for taking the time to read through this newsletter and for your continued support in promoting regular and punctual school attendance. Let's work together to support our students in building strong habits and achieving their best this year.

My email address is kariann.roszko@ngps.ca and I can be reached at 780 786 2624.