



**Southern
Ontario
Collegiate**

SOC Update

School Newsletter

Educating Students from Around the Globe for Over 40 Years

September 2023

From the Principal, Alison Currie



Photo Credit: Webster Falls, City of Hamilton, tourismhamilton.com

We're thrilled that another academic year has begun. We're very impressed with the academic skills and intellectual curiosity demonstrated by students in this year's intake. Their enthusiasm, humour and respect for education have been front and centre since our first day.

We're pleased that visits from universities begin next week; students will meet representatives from Trent University, Brock University and Lakehead University in September, with many more to follow in October and November.

Post Secondary Applications

The Ontario University Application Centre (OUAC) will be open for applications effective next week; this is especially important for students who will graduate in December 2023. Students graduating in 2024 have a deadline of January 2024 to complete their university applications.

SOC's guidance counsellor, Abeer Ghorieb, will be working with all students, providing advice on how to research programs, identifying student strengths and clarifying university expectations. One of the best resources for students and parents is the Ontario Universities Information website <https://www.ontariouniversitiesinfo.ca/>. We strongly urge you to spend time looking at universities, programs and admission requirements.

Colleges in Ontario are also accepting applications. Students are encouraged to look at OCAS <https://www.ontariocolleges.ca/en/programs> for additional information on the many programs available to students.

Key Policies for Students

A quick review of some key policies and procedures central to student life and success at SOC:

Phones and Devices

Use of mobile telephones and other devices (including headphones and earbuds) is not permitted in classrooms. This reflects the growing body of evidence that undue access and exposure to social media apps have profound negative implications on learning, and the objective is to give students time and ability to concentrate on studies without distractions. This also reflects the Ontario Ministry of Education's policy on prohibiting mobile telephones in classes unless in use for specific educational purpose. Finland and the Netherlands are among countries who have also banned use of these devices in schools.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, the use of the work of others without appropriate credit, is a serious academic offence. You've probably also seen a lot of discussion around Chat GPT, which can be used by individuals to research or complete writing assignments. Students are aware that work developed through Chat GPT is not acceptable. Our role is to encourage students to do their absolute best to demonstrate their own learning and abilities; work that has been collected by an app does not do this.

Upcoming Events

The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) is a government-mandated online literacy test administered to all secondary students in the province. Successful completion of the literacy test is one of the requirements to earn an Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

All students who haven't yet passed the OSSLT or the OLC (Ontario Literacy Course) will write the OSSLT in late November. Prep and support for this government test or reading comprehension and writing will begin in late September. We anticipate strong results. For more information about the OSSLT, please contact me at alison.currie@mysoc.ca.

National Day of Truth and Reconciliation

From: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/national-day-truth-and-reconciliation> and <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/national-day-truth-reconciliation.html>

Each year, September 30 marks the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The day honours the children who never returned home and survivors of residential schools, as well as their families and communities. Public commemoration of the tragic and painful history and ongoing impacts of residential schools is a vital component of the reconciliation process.

The Indian Residential School system operated across Canada between the 1870s and the 1990s. Indian Residential Schools were created to separate Indigenous children from their families and communities, and to systematically strip away their traditions, culture and languages.

More than 150,000 First Nations, Inuit and Métis children from across the country were forced to attend Indian Residential Schools, which were often located far from their homes. Many never made it home.

The pain and damage to children and their families crosses generations. On September 30th we stop to acknowledge the harm done, to renew change and support, and to learn about action for change, without which reconciliation cannot be complete.

September 30 is also acknowledged as Orange Shirt Day in Canada. Orange Shirt Day is an Indigenous-led day intended to raise awareness of the individual, family and community inter-generational impacts of residential schools, and to promote the concept of “Every Child Matters”. The orange shirt is a symbol of the stripping away of culture, freedom and self-esteem experienced by Indigenous children over generations. All Canadians are encouraged to wear orange to honour the thousands of survivors of residential schools.

In addition to inherent curricular activities, SOC will hold a special assembly on September 29 to commemorate the National Day of Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day.

Edsembli Accounts for Parents and Students

Each parent and student have been sent an email from SOC’s Administrator, Catherine McFarland, providing them with a username and password; this enables access to student results and attendance. Please open it promptly. You may wish to check your junk mail in case your computer security directed it there rather than your inbox. If you have issues with this, please contact catherine.mcfarland@mysoc.ca.

Reminder: Mid-term exams will take place on October 12 and 13, 2023.

As you can see, students at SOC are already enjoying classes, meeting teachers and building friendships with others.





Thank you for making Southern Ontario Collegiate your choice for excellence. Please don't hesitate to contact me or any of the school's staff if you have questions or concerns.

Contact us at SOC:

- Academics and Student Welfare alison.currie@mysoc.ca
- Guidance abeer.ghorieb@mysoc.ca
- Edsembli/student results catherine.mcfarland@mysoc.ca
- Residence and Travel nabil.alkilabi@mysoc.ca
- Immigration/Study Permits admin@mysoc.ca
- Invoicing andrea.toledo@mysoc.ca
- Admissions/applications admission@mysoc.ca

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