

St. Gabriel Catholic School

Principal:

Mrs. Shelley
Callender

Vice Principal:

Mrs. Catherine
Colatosti

Secretaries:

Ms. Jenine Melo
Mrs. Kerry Rawson

14 Flanders Drive

Brantford, Ontario

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519-756-4706

www.stgabrielbrantford.ca



September 2025



Principal's Message

Dear Parents,

Welcome Back to another exciting year! We hope you all had an enjoyable summer; one filled with family and friends, memories, laughter, and spontaneity. The goal of our school is to continue to foster the academic, physical, social and the emotional needs of your children which is rooted in our Catholic faith.

A special welcome to all our new students and families who have arrived at St. Gabriel Catholic Elementary School this year. We also have a number of new staff members and I know everyone will help others feel welcome in our school community.

This year our Board Theme is "Pilgrims of Hope-on the path to Holiness." We will explore ways to live out Pope Francis' call for each one of us to be Pilgrims of Hope: Peace be with you, God loves you, Christ saves you, The Holy Spirit lives in you, and Together on the journey. We look forward to sharing this message with our students and families this year.

Fall is a special time when we celebrate the reward of the fall harvest and give thanks for the blessings of God. It is also a time of new beginnings. Each new year brings the promise of new friends, meeting new teachers and a chance to grow and develop. We are thrilled you selected Catholic Education and as a staff we are committed to joining you on this journey to prepare your children for their individual futures.

Thank you for the honour and privilege of helping to educate your child. I look forward to meeting you and helping to create a memorable educational experience for your children.

Peace and Blessings,

Mrs. Shelley Callender
Principal

Mrs. Catherine Colatosti
Vice-Principal

Prayer for the Beginning of the New School Year

Dear Lord,

As our children leave for school, we pray that you will keep them in your care.

Send your Spirit to open their minds to all that is true and beautiful and good.

Help them to see the gifts and talents you have given them and to use them well.

Help them to grow in knowledge and wisdom.

Help them to be kind to others and lead others to be kind to them.

Give their teachers patience and understanding

and help them teach what is just and true.

Send your angels to guide and guard our children and to keep them from all harm.

Open their young hearts to your presence and

enfold them in your peace and protection.

Hold them in the palm of your hand and bring them home safely at day's end.

Amen.

Welcome Back to our School Staff 2025-2026

Office Contacts

Principal	Mrs. S. Callender
Vice Principal	Mrs. C. Colatosti
Secretary	Ms. J. Melo
Secretary	Mrs. K. Rawson
Custodian	Mrs. A. Stapledon
Custodian	Mr. L. Polillo
Custodian	Ms. S. Purdy

Home Room Teachers

Kinder 1	Mrs. S. Howarth
ECE	Mrs. A. Pierce
Kinder 2	Mrs. A. Mancini
ECE	Mrs. A. Kotiuk
Kinder 3	Mrs. J. Hekker
ECE	Mrs. S. Girardi
Grade 1A	Mr. S. Adams
Grade 1B	Mrs. S. Hill
Grade 1C	Mrs. C. Lucas-Nikota
Grade 2A	Mr. T. McCarthy
Grade 2B	Mrs. T. Blackwell
Grade 2C	Ms. E. Lemay
Grade 3A	Miss P. Luciani
Grade 3B	Mrs. M. Engel
Grade 3C	Mrs. T. Colton
Grade 4A	Mrs. V. Nowlan
Grade 4B	Miss. O. Centritto
Grade 4/5	Mrs. B. Hogan
Grade 5	Ms. S. Christie
Grade 5/6	Mr. R. Paul
Grade 6	Mrs. R. Conley
Grade 6/7	Mrs. A. Kavanagh
Grade 7	Mrs. K. Weatherbee
Grade 7/8	Mr. G. Young
Grade 8	Mr. E. Hollingworth
Grade 8	Mr. T. Terpstra
Core French	Mme. K. Moyer
Core French	Mme. L. Almeida
Prep	Mrs. J. Kikas
Prep	Mrs. A. Kaukinan
Prep	Mrs. J. Dunn
STEM	Mr. A. Susi
STEM	Ms. R. Page
Librarian	Mrs. H. Stempien

Special Education Department

SERT	Miss T. Hallihan
SERT	Mrs. M. Kuzma
CYW	Ms. C. Miller
EA	Mrs. K. Porteous
EA	Miss K. Brady
EA	Mrs. C. Tompkins
EA	Mrs. W. Rivers
EA	Mrs. D. Phillips
EA	Mr. B. Pratt
EA	Mr. C. Francis

We are blessed at St. Gabriel to have an amazing staff. We would like to welcome all our new staff members!

Bell Times are as follows:

Morning Bell	8:40am
Nutrition Break 1	10:20am-10:40am (Outside for Gr. 5-8/Snack for K-4) 10:40am-11:00am (Outside for k-4/Snack for Gr. 5-8)
Nutrition Break 2	12:40pm-1:00pm (Outside for Gr. 5-8/Snack for K-4) 1:00pm-1:20pm (Outside for K-4/Snack for Gr. 5-8)
Dismissal	3pm

Important Dates

Thursday September 11thMeet the Staff 5:30-7:30pm
Friday September 12thPA Day (No School)
Tuesday September 30thNational Day for Truth and Reconciliation
Tuesday October 7thPA Day (No School)
Monday October 13thThanksgiving (No School)

Meet the Staff

Thursday September 11th from 5:30pm-7:30pm is our Meet the Staff Event. Families and students will have the opportunity to stop by the school and say hello to our staff members. We look forward to seeing you!

BUSING THIS YEAR

Please note our circle drive out front will be used for our **BUS PICK UP in both morning and afternoon** (Sharp Bus and Boys and Girls Club Bus). Please ensure you are not parking and blocking either end of the driveway and that all families are using the sidewalk out front to be safe along the driveway as well.

Parking

Please be aware that the Bylaw officer will continue to monitor the parking throughout the year. He will be ticketing individuals who are parking in the no parking spots across the street from the school. Please remember that double parking in the parking lot is not allowed. Our kids are worth it. Park in designated areas only. **YOU CANNOT DRIVE THRU OUR FRONT DRIVE. We are asking families to NOT park in the staff parking lot during drop off or pick up. We have a very large staff this year, including our YMCA program. All staff need a parking spot. If this continues to be a problem we will shut the parking lot down for parent use.**

St. Basil's Parish

Father Kevin Sousa is the priest at Basil's Parish. Fr. Kevin will be working with us this year. We will be celebrating liturgies of the word at the school. For more information <https://www.stbasilparish.ca/>

DROP OFF AND PICK UP REMINDERS

Staff are outside at **8:25am** for you to drop off at the kindergarten area or at the front gates. Please drop your child and leave, so help with traffic congestion. At dismissal, staff will ensure that they take students outside to have a safe release to parents or an older sibling. If a student is picking up a sibling, they are to go around to their siblings designated dismissal/pick up area. To further ensure safety parents are not permitted on school property. We appreciate your understanding.

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INDOOR SHOES While at school, all students are expected to wear a clean pair of shoes when indoors. This practice provides for a cleaner and safer school facility. We recommend that students have running shoes that can also be worn in the gym as their indoor shoes all year long.



Thank you for your cooperation.

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SCHOOL PHOTOS

EDGE IMAGING our school photographer, will hold a Picture Day on September 29th Retakes will take place on October 10, 2025



PAWCHA CUB AWARDS



(aka we “caught ya” making great choices)

We are on the lookout for students making great choices that reflect our Gospel values including kindness and compassion for others and our Board Theme “Pilgrims of Hope.” Students “caught” making these choices will be awarded a “Pawcha” notice that identifies what they did and who they are. These Pawchas will be posted on our main bulletin board. At the end of the month, all student Pawchas will be entered into a draw for the “grand prize” of a pizza lunch with the principal. Help us support this positive recognition program by asking your child how they served their school today.

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SCHOOL CASH ONLINE—VERY IMPORTANT

We really appreciate having every family on board with this initiative. St. Gabriel School will only utilize School Cash Online as a form of payment. Sorry, **NO CASH or CHEQUES** will be accepted. Credit Cards are now accepted. Once you are registered, you can pay for field trips, hot lunches etc., for all your children at one time. You will also receive notification when an item has been placed on School Cash. Instructions to register for School Cash were emailed out to families during the first week of school.

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ARRIVING LATE TO SCHOOL

Students who arrive late to school must report to the office before going to class by entering through the front doors of the school.

LEAVING FOR APPOINTMENTS

A parent/guardian who requires a student to leave the school before dismissal time must come to the office to sign the student out. Please make sure to use the Safe Arrival App to indicate that you are picking your child up early. All students must be picked up at the office. This policy is in place to ensure the safety of all students.

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MEDICATION

The staff at St. Gabriel Catholic School must follow Board procedures for the administration of medication during school hours. If your child requires such medication you are asked to contact the principal, and the necessary arrangements will be made.

Authorization to provide such service must be made in writing by the parent and physician on the appropriate form (obtained at the school). Only prescription drugs will be administered. Non-prescription drugs such as aspirins will NOT be administered to the students.

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ST. GABRIEL SCHOOL COUNCIL

The St. Gabriel School Council is an important component of our school community. A nomination form will be sent out shortly. Our first meeting will be Wednesday September 24th at 6:00 p.m.

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SPIRIT WEAR

Back by popular demand!! We will be offering spirit wear again this year.

The process is a little different. Please click this link [Spirit wear link](#) pick your spirit wear and fill out your form (one family per form) and hit send. You will get a confirmation of your order with the total cost and a request for an e-transfer. Once your e-transfer is received your order will be completed with your order delivered individually packaged to the school by the beginning of November. If you have any questions or concerns and to pay for your order, please email 47promowear@gmail.com

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NUT ALLERGY ALERT

St. Gabriel's is a NUT FREE facility.

There are students in our school with life threatening allergies to **peanuts and tree nuts**. Even a trace amount from peanut/nut products or food that has come in contact with a peanut/nut source (cross contamination) can result in a life-threatening anaphylactic reaction. The most serious reaction being respiratory difficulties, blockage of the airways, which if not medicated immediately, can lead to death.

To provide the minimized allergen environment, we need the support and cooperation of the parents/guardians and the school community. Students are asked to bring lunches and snacks free of peanuts and tree nuts as well as products that have the "may contain **peanuts/tree nuts**" warning on them. Please read labels before sending food to school. Keep in mind not all packaging is clearly labelled with the warning. Truly, this is a life saving measure. If you have caregivers who provide your child with lunches or snacks, we encourage you to share this information with them.

NUT ALLERGY HELP (Understanding what to look for.)

When identifying whether food is safe to send to school, there are few things to look for:

1. READ THE LABELS!

That means there should be **NO** tree nuts & peanuts in the ingredients.

The item should also be made in a **TREE NUT & PEANUT FREE FACILITY**.

The label can NOT say “May Contain Nuts” or made on equipment that also processes nuts, or anything similar.

2. DON'T BE FOOLED BY SYMBOLS!



*The symbol on the left
Indicates “peanut free”, but not
necessarily “tree nut” free so
please read the ingredients to be sure!*

*Each companies standard
of school safe is different so
Please read the ingredients to be sure!*



Anaphylaxis Canada recommends reading all labels instead of just reading the symbols

3. Remember that peanuts and tree nuts are NOT the same thing

Peanuts: a member of the legume family and not botanically related to tree nuts.

Tree Nuts: Almonds, Brazil Nuts, Cashews, Chestnuts, Hazelnuts, Hickory Nuts, Macadamia Nuts, Pecans, Pine Nuts, Pistachios, Shea Nuts and Walnuts.

We realize this request may require added planning and effort on your part when packaging your child’s lunch and snacks, however, we wish to express our sincere appreciation for your support and cooperation. We cannot guarantee a nut free environment for students nor an “allergen free” area at our school, but with your help we can make our school as safe as is reasonably possible in this regard.

Parents we have a number of students in the school who have serious allergies. In order to best ensure the students do not have an anaphylactic reaction we are insisting that no food items other than your child’s lunch and snacks be brought to the school.

We will still have our hot lunches (pizza days, pita days). Children’s birthdays or special occasions will have to occur at the home. I’m confident that you understand the importance of this and will support this initiative. The health and safety of all our children is most important.

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STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Many families do not know that our school board does not cover accident costs! If an accident happens, the board may be prevented from offering financial solutions to our families even if we wanted to. Student accident insurance, Insuremykids®, can mitigate your board's exposure and help you manage the loss for student injuries that occur on school property or during school activities, including extra curricular sports.

Each year, many families are left financially unprotected when their children are injured at school, while participating in non-school activities or at home. If a student is injured, parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for any costs not covered by the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) or their employer’s health care plan. Please check with your provider regarding your coverage.

Most accident-related expenses are not fully covered under OHIP and some expenses like ambulance fees, casts, crutches, physiotherapy and emergency dental care are usually not covered at all. This leaves you, the parent/guardian, financially responsible.

To help protect your family, it is recommended that you consider obtaining student accident insurance. As a convenience to you, the Board has arranged to offer student accident insurance through insuremykids®. Participation is voluntary, but highly recommended, and the costs are to be paid by the parent/guardian. The program is available for students up to age 26.

Coverage is provided for a wide range of accidental expenses, including:

- Dental Expenses - includes 10 years unlimited dental benefit coverage, future dental up to \$1,650 per tooth, and injury-related orthodontia coverage up to \$2,500 per accident.
- Total and Permanent Disability - up to \$350,000.
- Loss of Limb/Loss of Sight, Hearing, or Speech.
- Accidental Death.
- Ambulance Fees.
- And much more.

Insuremykids® Student Accident Insurance offers three plans with 24/7 coverage at affordable rates – their most affordable plan is \$17 per year and their most popular plan is the Platinum at \$33 per year, which provides out-of-province emergency medical coverage and travel benefits. All annual plans provide 13 months of coverage from the date of purchase. Family rates are available for three or more children in the same family, even if attending different schools. You can also save on time and premium with an optional 3-Year or 5-Year plan, available for online purchase only.

If you wish to purchase coverage, please do so directly online at www.insuremykids.com or call 1-800-463- 5437. The insurance agreement is between You and the insurance underwriter, Old Republic Insurance Company of Canada. For more information, please visit www.insuremykids.com

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HOT LUNCHES

We will have hot lunches through LUNCHBOX again this year. More information will be coming directly to your emails about our food options and how to order weekly. Please note that our hot lunches support our fundraising efforts. Hot lunches are paid for using School Cash Online.



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Remember to subscribe to our website

[St Gabriel Catholic Elementary School-Brantford | Just another BHNCDSB site](#)

as we will be working on adding new information.

Stay in the know! All correspondence will be via our website and/or messenger emails to families.

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