



OAKWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL

255 Omer Avenue, Port Colborne, Ontario L3K 3Z1

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SCHOOL MESSENGER – IT'S NOT JUST FOR ATTENDANCE!

Dear Oakwood parent/guardian:

At District School Board of Niagara, one of our greatest priorities is ensuring that all our students arrive safely at school each day. To enhance our existing absence-checking procedure, we are introducing **a new, more efficient** student absence reporting system called **SafeArrival**. This new system will reduce the time it takes to verify student attendance, make it easy for you to report your child's absence and easy for staff to respond to unexplained student absences. **(Returning parents – this is not new information – it is being re-shared to help if you have having difficulty using Messenger!)**

With **SafeArrival**, you are asked to report your child's absence in advance using any of these 3 convenient methods:

1. Using your mobile device, download and install the **SchoolMessenger app** from the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store (or from the links at <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca>). The first time you use the app, select **Sign Up** to create your account. Select **Attendance** then **Report an Absence**.
2. Use the SafeArrival website, at <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca>. The first time you use the website, select **Sign Up** to create your account. Select **Attendance** then **Report an Absence**.
3. Call the toll-free number 1-866-606-5567 to report an absence using the automated phone system.

These options are available 24 hours/day, 7 days a week. Future absences can be reported at any time.

SafeArrival app will have a number of benefits for both parents and staff. It is quick, convenient and will allow you to report daily absences as well as schedule future absences for your children for medical appointments and other important events in your lives. Using SafeArrival, you will be able to update your contact information easily, should it change. SafeArrival will also reduce the amount of staff time dedicated to tracking absences, allowing them to spend more time supporting students.

In addition, we will use the **SchoolMessenger Communicate** automated notification system to contact parents whose child is absent when the absence was not reported in advance. The automated notification system will attempt to contact parents at multiple contact points until a reason is submitted for the absence. If our system is unable to reach the designated contacts, office staff will follow up.

If you report your child's absence in advance using the SafeArrival toll-free number, website or mobile app, you will NOT receive these notifications.

If you have not provided us with an email address, you will be able to set up your account by visiting the Safe Arrival site via the Report Absence button which is available on our school website.

PLEASE report absences in advance using SafeArrival instead of sending notes or calling/emailing the school.

Staff will use the SafeArrival notifications to let you know if your child is absent (when you haven't reported the absence in advance).

SCHOOL MESSENGER WILL ALSO BE OUR PRIMARY METHOD OF COMMUNICATION DURING THE 2020-21 ACADEMIC YEAR!
Important school messages and other timely updates will come to you via school messenger!

Thank you, The Oakwood Staff

Where Spirits Soar