



# PCVS Parent Handbook

## A message from the PCVS School Council

Hello Fellow Parents!

The PCVS school council wishes to improve communication between home and school and help parents get the information they need to support their child's education. This booklet, which we put together with the help of school staff, is designed as a parent's introduction to PCVS. It contains essential facts about the school, basic information about the high school curriculum and school programs, contact information for school staff and also a few ideas about where to find the more detailed information you might need. We hope it will help you to get to know PCVS a little more easily.



## Introducing PCVS

Peterborough Collegiate Vocational School, founded in 1827, is the second oldest Collegiate in Ontario with a population of just under 1000 students. The school serves a very diverse and interesting population of students by offering a full range of secondary school courses and activities. PCVS also has several areas of specialty. Eighty percent of PCVS students go on to post-secondary education.

Approximately 250 students are enrolled in the Integrated Arts Program, which draws students from all over Peterborough County. This enables the school to offer courses in ceramics, photography, musical theatre and digital arts in addition to visual arts, drama, dance and music. Some of these courses are open to students in grade 11 and 12 who are not in the Integrated Arts program.

Over 150 gifted and talented PCVS students take part in academic enrichment programs such as the Academic Olympics, mini courses at Trent University and Sir Sandford Fleming College, and the Model UN course, which culminates in a trip to The Hague.

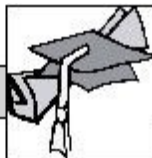
PCVS is the only secondary school in Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board to offer a full English as a Second Language (ESL) program. Our ESL program serves approximately 50 students from more than 20 different countries.

PCVS also offers a wide variety of interesting and unique courses. For example, our Technology department has courses in graphic design, animation, video & audio recording and software development computer graphics. Students in upper years may choose courses such as Philosophy, Introduction to Anthropology, Sociology and Psychology (one course), Guitar, Theatre in the Community (three credit course) Writer's Craft, Canadian and World Issues and a Geography course on Travel and Tourism, which includes a trip abroad.

PCVS and all other Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board secondary schools operate on a semester system. The first semester begins after Labour Day and runs to the end of January. The second semester runs from the beginning of February until the end of June. Students in grades 9, 10 and 11 must take 4 courses each semester. Students who have 21 credits as of September may be allowed to have one study period (spare) in one (but not both) of the two semesters. Students who have 24 or more credits (eg. completed Grade 11 with full credit load) as of September may be allowed to have one study period each semester.

## **Full-Time/Part-Time Students**

Students are normally expected to be full-time and full-time students take at least three (3) courses each semester. All requests for part-time status must be approved by the school administration. Approval will only be given in extenuating circumstances (ie: chronic illness) and will normally be considered only in the final semester of the student's graduating year. Only full-time students are eligible for extra-curricular activities.



## **Graduation Requirements**

Students must complete 30 credits to graduate. Some courses are compulsory for graduation; others are optional. Students must complete 18 compulsory and 12 optional credits. However, certain courses, although not compulsory for graduation may be required or strongly recommended for entry into certain college or university programs. Complete information on courses and graduation requirements is available in the PCVS course handbook, which is available to students in January each year. This information can also be found on the school website ([www.pcv.s.ca](http://www.pcv.s.ca)).

With the elimination of Grade 13, high school is now considered to be a four-year program. There is no requirement, however, that students complete all of their credits in four years. In fact, some students are now finding it productive to take 4 1/2 or 5 years to complete high school.



## Types of Courses

In grade nine and ten students take either **Academic, Applied or Essential** level courses. Some courses, however, usually in non-compulsory subjects (music, art, physical education etc.), are called **Open** and can be taken by any student. In Grade 11 and 12 the course titles change to names which suggest anticipated destinations after high school: Workplace, College or University. Some grade 11 and 12 courses are called University/College courses and can lead to either destination.

Generally speaking, the flow of courses works like this:

Theoretically, both **Applied** and **Academic** courses in grade 9 can lead to either **Applied** or **Academic** courses in grade 10. Students wishing to move from **Applied** to **Academic** should complete some extra course work called crossover material. However, in practice, this almost never happens.

**Applied** courses in grade 10 lead to college or workplace courses in grade 11.

**Essential** courses in grade 9 lead to individualized programming subsequent years and may lead to **Workplace** courses in grade 11 and 12. A more detailed explanation of Essential courses follows.

**Academic** courses in grade 10 may lead to **University, University/College** or **College** courses in Grade 11.

**Workplace** courses in grade 11 lead to Workplace courses in Grade 12.

**Can students ever get to university courses from applied courses?** Yes, but it requires some extra work. Students can move from, for example, an applied grade 10 course to a university level grade 11 course by taking a transfer course, a shorter, more focused course designed to cover the additional course content that bridges the gap between two course types. Transfer courses are taken at summer school. Students will receive a partial credit for a successfully completed transfer course.

**Essential courses:** When the new high school curriculum was introduced in 1999, some students, who in the past would have taken courses known as “Basic,” had trouble meeting the expectations of the applied courses. Therefore school boards have developed what are known as locally developed courses, which go by the name **Essential**, to meet the needs of these students. Some **Essential** courses, while they may count as optional credits (see Graduation requirements above) do not count as compulsory credits toward graduation.

**Co-operative Education (Co-op):** This is a two-credit, practical work-experience course which helps students develop employability and career management skills through both classroom work and an unpaid placement in a real workplace. For more information contact Cathleen Martherus, head of Co-op Dept.

**Course costs:** Certain high school courses have assigned material costs which cover the expense of special supplies, workbooks, sketchbooks and special activities (i.e. Art, Science, French, Physical Education, etc.). Most costs are small (\$5.00 to \$20.00) but costs can be higher in a small number of courses with special activities and excursions (eg. Outdoor education, Model UN, Travel and Travel & Tourism). Any student who has difficulty covering an assigned cost should contact Guidance for financial assistance.

**Community Involvement:** One relatively new graduation requirement is that students must complete 40 hours of volunteer work with one or more non-profit organizations or community agencies. Community involvement hours must be completed outside of normal school hours and must be approved by the school and documented on forms available from the Guidance office. Some non-credit school activities, such as serving on Student Council and assisting extra-curricular activities, are also eligible.

It's important for parents to note that community involvement hours cannot include such things as chores or unpaid work for a for-profit enterprise. Therefore such things as unpaid chores done for friends or relatives, unpaid work at a friend's farm or small business or assisting with lessons at a private dance or karate school will not be allowed as community hours. For more information, a school board brochure called *Questions and Answers About Community Involvement*, is available at the Guidance office.

**The Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program:** The Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) enables capable students to work towards a career as a certified worker or journeyman in a skilled trade. OYAP Students begin their formal apprenticeship training during the second semester of their graduating year. OYAP can help young people obtain placements in 130 different skilled trades. For more information about OYAP contact: Guidance.



## Tutoring/Extra help

The best place to start looking for extra help is with the classroom teacher. Teachers provide extra help on an ongoing basis. Students who need further support have several options. The Special Education Department provides support for students with formally identified special learning needs and can also arrange individualized instruction for non-identified students who are

struggling academically. PCVS also offers a reading tutor program which pairs grade nine students with senior students. Parents who wish to hire private tutors can **call the guidance office (ext. 204) for assistance**. A wide range of options is available including, high school students, university students from the Trent Education program and even some retired teachers.

## Expectations of Students

### **The School Code of Conduct:**

PCVS has a comprehensive code of conduct designed to ensure a safe, positive learning environment where all people are treated equitably and with respect. It covers a wide variety of topics including: student behaviour and consequences, suspension, attendance, dress code, evaluation and examination, late and missed assignments, harassment, school dances, student parking and also outlines student and staff rights and responsibilities. The full document is rather long (too long to reproduce here); a complete version of the code of conduct is available in the school office.

PCVS is the first high school in Canada to be implementing a new method of dealing with inappropriate conduct called *Restorative Justice*. Also known as *Restorative Practice*, this way of working focuses on providing students with the opportunity to learn from their experiences to repair the harm they may have caused and to “make things right” again.

### **Attendance:**

*If you know your child will be away on any given day, please call the attendance secretary at extension 208 to report the absence.* The school’s automated attendance system will allow you to leave a message 24 hours a day; therefore, you can call at anytime and leave a detailed message regarding your child’s absence from school. Students are expected to bring notes from parents to explain all legitimate absences.

Students will not be penalized when they miss a class for a school-supported activity

Students are responsible for material covered and work assigned when they are absent for any reason. If a student misses a major test, the student will be given another opportunity to achieve the expectations if the absence was legitimate and is supported by a note from the legal guardian.

Students may not make up marks for a class they have **skipped**.

**Skipping classes:**

Parents will be notified by an automated phone call for all unexplained absences. In other words, a student only has to skip one class before parents are contacted.

## Evaluation of Student Course Work

Many parents have questions about how marks are determined.

For all grades, 70% of a student's mark is based on evaluation of work throughout the term (daily work, daily exercises, tests and assignments). The final evaluation (culminating activities/tests, and/or exams) will count for 30%. Students must complete a final exam in all college, university or mixed courses to receive a credit.

**Evaluation Appeals:**

A student who is not satisfied with her/his evaluation on a test or assignment may ask the teacher to review evaluation criteria and reasons for the evaluation. If the student is still dissatisfied he or she should ask the teacher to refer the item to the department head and, if still dissatisfied after that, the matter can be referred to the Principal.

**A Parent's Role in Appeals:**

For the most part, completion of assignments and meeting of academic expectations are considered to be a student's responsibility. Evaluation appeals should be a student's initiative. A parent may get involved if the student has trouble expressing himself/herself or the student feels that the procedure was not followed properly. Start with your child's teacher who can explain what steps were taken. In the end, decisions about marks are made by school staff.



## Exams

Exams take place at the end of each semester and are usually written in the morning. In some courses, part of the final assessment will include a practical exam (in-class activity which is related to course work).

### **Missed Exams:**

Generally, exams are only rescheduled for medical or family emergencies. If an exam is missed due to illness, a medical note must be forwarded to the attendance office no later than the day following the exam. In case of an emergency, documentation from a parent must be provided. A meeting will be arranged with teacher, student, and Principal to discuss re-scheduling the final evaluation.

Requests for students to miss exams for non-medical reasons will be reviewed, on an individual basis, by the Principal or Vice-Principal. Parents are advised to make their requests well in advance of the examination date. Rescheduling for non-medical or urgent family matters is not common. Exams will not be rescheduled for reasons that are within the student's control (eg: vacations).

## Parent Involvement

Parent involvement and support are very important for student success. The most important way for you to be involved is to support and encourage your son or daughter's regular school attendance and completion of academic work. It's also very important for parents to communicate effectively with teachers and school administrators.

Here are some other ways to be involved.

### **Parent Teacher Interviews:**

Parent/Teacher interview night usually takes place early in each semester, about one week after the progress report comes out. This is a good opportunity to meet your child's teachers, hear some more details about your child's progress, ask questions about the curriculum, homework or assignments and deal with concerns. Teachers sit at tables in one of the gymnasiums and interviews are on a first-come first-served basis. For the date & time, refer to "Key Dates" at our website [www.pcvs.ca](http://www.pcvs.ca). Private interviews can also be arranged at separate times.

### **School Council:**

The PCVS school council meets monthly in the school library. School Councils

are there to provide the school administration and the school board with parent input and advice aimed at enhancing the well being, learning and achievement of students. All school council meetings are open to the public and all parents are welcome. The school council has positions for seven parents, but parents do not have to be an official member of the school council to attend meetings and participate in discussions. Some parents find school council meetings to be a good way to learn more about the school and to get to know the principal. Please note that school council is not a forum for individual concerns. Concerns about an individual student should be directed to the teacher in question or the school administration.

### **Contacting the School:**

With most concerns that are not related to attendance, parents are advised to start with the classroom teacher and work from there. However, there are exceptions. Obviously, if a matter is very serious you are always welcome to contact the principal or vice-principal directly. Never hesitate to contact the school. Here are some guidelines on who to call about what.

#### **Teachers**

Call classroom teachers to discuss issues about a certain class, course expectations, student progress and curriculum-related questions. All teachers at PCVS have their own telephone extensions. To get a teacher's extension number call the main switchboard (742-0425) during normal office hours. If you wish to leave a message for a teacher outside of office hours and don't know the extension, dial the department head's extension number and leave a message.

#### **Department Heads**

Call department heads to discuss departmental policies, course offerings within the department and pre-requisites for the courses, or to leave a message for a teacher after hours if you do not know the teacher's extension number. A directory of department head extensions is located at the front of this booklet.

**Special Education:** Department Head: Tom Quinn - ext. 223

Call Special Education to discuss issues related to your child's IEP, or to discuss course selection for an identified student.

**Guidance:** Department Head: Al Cook – ext. 204

Call Guidance to discuss course selection, programs of study, questions about post secondary destinations and to notify the school about personal (family-related) circumstances that school staff should be aware of.

**Office:** Administrative Assistant: Brenda Mancini – ext. 203. Call this extension for matters relating to office administration and finance.

**Principal:** Call the principal directly about very serious matters or if you have spoken to teachers and department heads and the matter is still not resolved.

**Superintendent:** Superintendents of Student Achievement have responsibility to supervise principals and oversee education at a large number of schools. Call the superintendent only if you have pursued all other avenues and still need assistance to resolve the matter.

## Keeping in Touch

*All in a Week* is a weekly publication designed primarily to remind staff and students about important dates and student activities on a weekly basis. Parents can access *All in a Week* via the school website: [www.pcvs.ca](http://www.pcvs.ca).

The *School Newsletter* comes out with each report card. Newsletters are given to each student along with report cards. However, experience has shown that newsletters do not make it home as reliably in secondary school as they do in elementary school: look for your child's copy at report card time. Newsletters will also be posted on the school website.



The *Peterborough Collegiate Foundation* is dedicated to supporting the long-standing tradition of scholastic excellence at Peterborough Collegiate & Vocational School through its efforts to raise funds for scholarships and other educational projects that support the "PCVS Way". The Foundation is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors that includes alumni, former and current teachers and administrative staff. We encourage you to tour our website @ [www.peterboroughcollegiatefoundation.org](http://www.peterboroughcollegiatefoundation.org) sign our guest book and contact Brenda Mancini @ 742-0425, ext. 203, if you would like more information regarding the Peterborough Collegiate Foundation

## Student Activities

PCVS offers a wide range of sports, arts activities and clubs.

### Music

Symphonic Band, Jazz Band, two choirs and various other ensembles.

### Drama

Junior Play, Sears Drama Festival, Musicals

### Clubs

School Newspaper, Dance Team, Outdoor club, Highlife, Environmental Coalition of Students (ECOS)

### Student Activity Council

**Athletics** (available for boys and girls unless otherwise noted)  
Hockey, soccer, rugby, volleyball, basketball,

rowing, cross country skiing, cross country running, tennis, badminton and curling, field hockey (girls only)

## Additional Sources of Information

**PCVS Student Handbook:** Each student receives a copy of this handbook at the beginning of the year. The student handbook is designed for students but it should also answer many of your more specific questions about PCVS and how it operates (including more detailed information about student activities). Many parents are not aware of this handbook. Ask to see your child's copy.

**Websites:**

<http://www.pcv.s.ca> → The PCVS website has a wealth of more detailed information about the school including a link to the school council website.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/brochure/stepup/choosing.html> → The Ministry of Education Website has information about Ontario Secondary School Curriculum

[www.ontariocolleges.ca](http://www.ontariocolleges.ca) → Information about college programs and prerequisites for various programs.

[www.ouac.on.ca](http://www.ouac.on.ca) → Information about university programs and prerequisites for various programs.

## School Schedule

The daily schedule consists of four 75 minute periods with five-minute breaks in between as follows:

**Period 1** - 8:45 - 10:00

**Period 2** - 10:05 - 11:20

**LUNCH** - 11:20 - 12:20

**Period 3** - 12:20 - 1:35

**Period 4** - 1:40 - 2:55

## Key Information

**PCVS Address:** 201 McDonnell Street, Peterborough, ON K9H 2W1

**Telephone:** (705) 742-0425      **Fax** (705) 742-2177

**Principal:** Anita Simpson - ext. 202

**Vice-Principal:** Annie Johnston - ext. 201

**Guidance Head:** Al Cook - ext. 204

**Superintendent:** Rusty Hick - 750-0634

### Department Heads

**Art** – Tracey Germa - ext. 225

**Business** – Cecily Ugray -ext. 217

**Co-op** – Cathleen Martherus ext. 214

**English** – Karen Christie ext. 215

**ESL** - Ferne Cristall - ESL - ext. 238

**French** - Christine Smith -ext. 234

**Integrated Arts** – Cyd Hosker - ext. 213

**Library** – Teresa Friar - ext. 216

**Math** – Vikki Dunn - ext. 237

**Physical Education** -- Rick Nelson - ext. 221

**Science**-- Bob Roddie - ext. 236

**Social Sciences** (History, Geography) – Steve Ainslie - ext: 211

**Special Education** – Tom Quinn - ext. 223

**Tech** - Anthony Peterson - ext. 219

**Administrative Assistant** - Brenda Mancini – ext. 203

## PCVS Key Dates

For a list of our Key Dates please refer to our web site @ [www.pcvs](http://www.pcvs).