

**MALVERN COLLEGIATE
INSTITUTE**

**A GUIDE FOR
PARENTS OF
GRADE 9
STUDENTS**

**PREPARED BY
MALVERN HOME & SCHOOL COUNCIL
2013-2014**

Coming to Malvern



Welcome to Malvern Collegiate Institute

For many of you, this year will be your first experience at Malvern and you and your child will likely have a lot of questions. Please make a point of reading this handbook with children or allow them to read it on their own. We remember the feelings associated with going into grade nine and to a new school and thought that a booklet like this would help promote a positive start to this great school!

We wish your child much success during his or her time at Malvern. Please feel free to contact the Home & School Council at any time should you have questions, concerns, suggestions or comments. We usually meet the first Tuesday evening of every month, during the school year. We meet in the Malvern Library at 7pm. We hope to see you there!

*Malvern Collegiate Home & School Council
Council Treasurer: Vicky Tsorlinis vickytsorlinis@rogers.com*

Welcome from the Principal

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the Malvern family! Malvern is a wonderful school filled with history and tradition that dates back to 1903. We have a strong reputation for excellence in academics, athletics and the arts. We also have a very active and supportive Home & School Council and I am thrilled that some of our parents decided to put together a handbook designed specifically for Grade 9 parents.

I hope this handbook will answer many of the questions you may have about your child's first year at Malvern and help ensure that they have a positive and successful start here. It is important to note that you should review the information contained in this handbook as well as the Student Agenda your child will receive at registration. Malvern offers an incredible range of extra curricular opportunities and I sincerely hope your son or daughter will get involved in some of the teams, clubs or sports available to our students. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at the school. I invite you to the parent council meeting on Tuesday September 10th in the Malvern Library at 7pm, and to Grade 9 Parents' Night on Wednesday September 25th. I look forward to meeting you in the coming months!

Diane Sharpe

Dear Future Grade 9s,

My name is Daniella Rizza and I was the last year's Grade Nine Representative. Going into Malvern I didn't know what to expect - a big school with a lot of new faces is intimidating! Luckily, Malvern knows exactly how to make you feel at home. There is honestly a group of friends to fit everyone's personality and interest. If that being art, drama, sports, music, computer technology, or math! If you are worried about not fitting in, Malvern has so many amazing clubs and sports teams that it's almost impossible to not find a group of people who are exactly like you. Sports are a big part of Malvern's reputation, but don't worry if you don't make a team! All you have to do is try your hardest, and our amazing coaches will acknowledge you no matter what. If you find that you are the only one out of your friends that is coming to Malvern, being in eight different classes with different people in each, you are bound to make friends that will last you a lifetime. Also, don't be afraid to try out for councils or committees. I especially suggest running for Student Council; it's a blast. You get to do the announcements, organize events, and meet people in all grades.

The teachers at Malvern are very understanding. If you're late to a class because the school is relatively big, don't worry because they will understand and in no time you'll find your way. I can't wait to see all of your new faces in September! Remember, high school is supposed to be the best four years of our lives, so make it count!

Sincerely,

Daniella Rizza

Hey 9ners!

Welcome to Malvern Collegiate, where people unite and dreams come true!

Right off the bat, you're probably thinking one of two things, "How is it I'm already in Grade 9?!" or "How is it I'm only in Grade 9?!" Either way, Grade 9 is the opening to a four-year adventure of life, laughs and lessons! And even if change isn't your thing.... know that Grade 9 is easily the 4th best grade of high school! And if you think about it...4th place isn't too bad. Over all, be sure to be perceptive and to use the environment around you to your best advantage! Join clubs, sports, committees and councils! Participate in as many different extracurricular as possible and join as many things as you can at Malvern. Student council really wants school spirit to be strong this year and getting involved is your ticket to a fun year! And of course there's school work; remember that you can always go to your teachers or the guidance counselors to discuss your future and your academics. When I started I would've liked to know that because now I discuss a lot of that stuff with the staff at Malvern and it really helps me. By the end of high school, you want to be able to look back and say, "Wow, I really was a Malvern Black Knight!"

Malvern may be a tad confusing at first but give it a few weeks and you'll know the school like the back of your hand. If you're ever concerned with anything, find a student council member or peer leader to help out! If there's a will, there's a way. Looking forward to a great year Malvern! Onward!

- Sincerely your Student Council President, Taylor Patterson

Introducing your student council for 2013-14

Carter Pinkowski - Vice President

Mariana Kirkwood- Lazazzara - External Affairs Officer

Scott Phyper- Spirit Leader

Megan Phyper - Social Convener

Alex Mulligan - Secretary

Austin Read - Treasurer

Abraham Rogers - Grade 12 Representative

Maxine Wright-Stein - Grade 11 Representative

Daniella Rizza - Grade 10 Representative

Taylor Patterson - President

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Before School Starts

Before your child gets to Malvern

- Malvern staff is very excited about meeting your children. They spend a lot of time during the previous school year and the last weeks of August preparing for their arrival. When your child walks through the front doors this year, they will be part of 110 years of history.
- We hope your child is excited about coming to Malvern. They may also feel anxious. Anxiety may be increased if they aren't attending with friends. Please talk to your child about these feelings.
- Cliques are a part of life in high school. Please know that Malvern's values are based on inclusion and respect. If your child is coming to Malvern not having attended one of the feeder schools, they may feel isolated or disconnected at first – making friends is critical to feeling a sense of belonging and comfort. This may take time and you are encouraged to monitor your child's mood and behaviour in the event that this early adjustment becomes problematic. Malvern has many clubs and teams your child can join. Visit the Malvern website and look under Clubs & Teams. <http://schools.tdsb.on.ca/malvern/clubs/> Encourage children to visit this page and familiarize themselves to what's available. Perhaps they could choose several teams or clubs they want to pursue.
- High School is a very different environment from elementary school – with more independence and autonomy and much less monitoring from teachers. Your child should take some time before the start of school to set up a work space in your home and get organized for the year ahead.
- Discuss routes your child will take to and from school. They should avoid the ravine systems. Have them meet up with friends if they can, so they can travel in a group.

Registration: Wednesday August 28th

- This is a time for your child to receive their timetable, agenda and pay their student activity fee. This day provides an important first opportunity for your child to connect with the school. Try not to book a vacation or a camp at this time.
- There is a student activity fee of \$75, which your child needs to bring on registration day (cash). The fee covers the cost of the agenda, the yearbook and helps fund events and extra-curricular activities/clubs/teams/groups/student council, E.g. Red and Black day, the Equity Conference, guest speakers and Pink Day. If this is a financial challenge, please speak to a vice principal.
- Your child may not want you to accompany them to the school for registration. If possible, have them go with a friend.
- This year's Grade 9 registration will take place on **Wednesday, August 28th from 10:00 to 12:00** in the cafeteria. If you are away at this time, your child can register during the first week of school.

- Please review the Agenda with your child. The Agenda is filled with valuable and useful information. Go over the Code of Conduct. Note the rules on cell phones and media devices in the school and also the section on Respect for Safety.
- Please note that Malvern strives to be a “nut free” and “scent free” school. Please encourage your child not to wear perfume or body sprays/lotions. Other children and staff may react very strongly to those scents making it difficult to concentrate.
- If you need help deciphering the timetable codes, review your “Choices” booklet, available on-line at TDSB Choices. In high school each student has his or her own individualized timetable.

The First Week at Malvern

- Malvern staff, teachers and students take a lot of time during the previous school year preparing for your child’s first week at school with a specific orientation to ease the transition. This orientation spans several days from the first day of school until the end of the first week.
- Grade 9 students will meet with Peer Leaders on the first day of school – please encourage your child to connect with these students, especially if they are feeling alone or have questions. These volunteers are there to make the Grade 9 students comfortable. Your child may choose to remain silent for fear of being thought “uncool”. Please talk to them about reaching out to these trained volunteers.
- On the morning of the first day, the Grade 9 students participate in a variety of activities to familiarize themselves with the students in their Home form class. They are given a tour of the school and are provided with lockers. The grade 9 students are the only students in the school at this time. Grade 9 students work specifically with staff and Peer Leaders during this time to develop a stronger sense of community within their classes as well as strong connections with these senior students.

On Feeling Safe

- Malvern has made strong efforts to address issues of hazing. Our Home & School Council, Safe Schools Team, Peer Leaders and Staff collaborate to ensure the first week of school is safe and inclusive for all of our new students. Last year, Malvern reported no incidents. Our coordinating groups have again been preparing for another safe and inclusive first week. Below is some information about our special safety measures, events as well as tips for new students and parents. Email Malvern or its Safe Schools staff coordinator Mike Izzo at mike.izzo@tdsb.on.ca for more information.
- During this first week your child may want to go to lunch off Malvern property. Encourage your child to stay at the school for lunch during this first week.
- Encourage your child to walk to and from school in groups. Devise meeting times and places in the weeks before school starts. Your child should not use the ravine routes or “short cuts” to get home, particularly during the first week of school.

- If your child feels unsafe at any time during their time at Malvern, they should report this immediately to a staff member. Malvern employs two School-Based Safety Monitors, Lena Deonarine and Steve Mlilo, who patrol the halls and the outside area of the school throughout the day. Lena and Steve are very approachable and are there to help students feel safe.
- Malvern works closely with 55 Division. Parents are always welcome to contact the Youth Bureau directly if you have specific questions or concerns.
- Important contact information:
 - **55 Division: 416 808-5500**
 - **Crime Stoppers: 416-222-TIPS**
 - **TDSB Student Safety Line: 416-395-SAFE**
- Caution your child to keep all expensive electronics and clothing either in their locker (locked) or on their person. Theft is a reality at most high schools and Grade 9s are often looked on as an easy target. Likewise, caution your child not to share their locker combo as theft becomes much easier that way.
- Malvern is a Wi-Fi school and the temptation to “stay connected” is always there. Ensure that your child knows that cell phones, iPods, and other communication devices may be confiscated by the teacher if the student repeatedly refuses to put them away as per the Code of Conduct at Malvern. Parents will then be required to retrieve the items. Some teachers do allow the use of these devices in class for independent study. Your child should consult with each teacher on their specific rules for media use in class. See your child’s agenda for more information.
- It is important that your child is aware of their surroundings when off the school grounds or on public transit. Being distracted by cell phones and iPods may make them an easy target.

General Information

Making Connections/Getting Involved

Malvern offers a “Co-Curricular Fair” early in the year that coincides with the Grade 9 Student Council Elections. The Fair highlights all clubs, sports and various activities. Students are strongly encouraged to attend this event and to consider joining at least one club or sport as a way to get involved and stay connected. This is especially important if your child doesn’t know many people at Malvern. If your child doesn’t make a team the first time, encourage them to try again. School spirit is big at Malvern and there is tremendous support for the sports teams, the music groups and the many clubs that do amazing things such as Student Council, arts, sports, and clubs that promote the Environment and Equity-related issues. This year Malvern’s Co-Curricular Fair will take place the last week of September. Check the website calendar.

Getting In Touch with Malvern

- The School website is an invaluable resource. <http://schools.tdsb.on.ca/malvern/>. Please bookmark this site. It lists the school's phone number and teachers and staff extensions. It lists the day's schedule, important timetable changes, upcoming events and the daily announcements in the Tackler section.
- Please give the office your email address for inclusion on the "Blast Email" list. Through this you will be notified of a range of topics from Home & School meetings, special events, sanctioned dances, special school dismissals, fundraisers, etc.
- The school's main number is **416-393-1480**. You may also dial "0" and have someone in the office redirect your call. The extension numbers for all the school's staff is available on the Malvern Website. Google: tdsb Malvern staff.
- It is suggested you bookmark the Malvern Website and check its calendar and tackler section for all announcements and upcoming events. Update your agenda and home calendars to suit.
- Teachers are in class most of the day or may be involved in before and after-school activities, they may not be able to reply to your message immediately. We suggest that you establish the desired means of communication (phone, email, in person) with each teacher individually.
- Most teachers have blogs that students may refer to for homework, assignments and upcoming tests. Have your child make a note of these web pages and reference them daily.
- The principal sends home a newsletter (also available online) at the end of each Reporting Period. Memos addressing immediate events or issues may also be sent home.

Student Absences

- You are expected to advise the school if your child is going to be absent or late. If the school doesn't receive notice, you will receive an automated voice message at the end of the day alerting you to the class(es) your child has missed. The school expects a response to the call. Please be aware that the students are familiar with this policy and there have been instances where the student has erased the message before the parents got home. If you suspect that your child is not coming to class, please speak to their Vice Principal. It is also suggested that you have the automated voice message re-directed to your cell phone to ensure that you don't miss any calls from the school.
- To report your child's absence call the school at 416-393-1480, extension 20005 for students with the last name beginning A to L, or extension 20004 for students with the last name beginning M to Z. If you know in advance, send a note in with your child.

- If your child is repeatedly late or absent, the school may require the use of a tracking form. This means that each teacher signs an attendance form for the student and also notes the student's behaviour and indicates if homework was completed. You will be contacted by one of the Vice Principals should this be applicable to your child.

School Attire

- Malvern doesn't have a uniform policy; however, the Code of Conduct outlines clothing that is not appropriate (half shirts, messages that are of a racist nature/ sexist/homophobic/drug promoting, etc.)
- Expensive footwear/outerwear left unattended is an easy target for theft – encourage your child to use their locker at all times when they can't keep something with or on them.
- As per the Code of Conduct outlined in your child's agenda, bags, backpacks and coats need to be locked in your child's locker. This is a safety issue. Coats and backpacks are not to be brought in the Auditorium during assemblies.
- Be reminded that Malvern strives to be scent-free.
- Malvern branded clothing will be available for purchase late in the fall offering everything from "Spirit Wear" (athletic clothing) to vintage style items such as scarves, hats and rugby shirts.

The Hall Pass System

- Students who need to leave the classroom require a hall pass. They must complete the 'Sign In/Out' sheet when they leave class and carry the hall pass with them. Malvern also employs two School-Based Safety Monitors, Lena and Steve who patrol the halls and the outside area of the school throughout the day. Lena and Steve are there to help students feel safe.

Report Cards, End of Year Exams and Summative

- Report cards are issued at the end of each reporting period. The final report card is mailed at the end of June. There will be an expectation of work and assignments prior to these issue dates.
- Many of the courses your child will take at Malvern are evaluated by an end of year exam, a summative, or a combination of the two. (A summative, also referred to as a Culminating activity, is work your child will do in class during the end of the school year.) These are normally worth **30%** of the final mark in that course, so it is critical that students be present during that time. Parents are therefore encouraged not to take early family vacations, as teachers are not required to accommodate vacations, which could significantly impact the final grade your student earns in a course. Exams are written during the exam period scheduled for mid to late June.
- If your child is away for a significant course, test, lab or project, the classroom teacher may request a note. If your child is sick, a medical note may be required.

- The Ontario Ministry of Education has implemented a new assessment and evaluation policy. Information can be obtained at the following link: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growSuccess.pdf>.
- In late September, Malvern offers a Grade 9 Parents' Night where you can meet your child's teachers and get a sense of how your child is adjusting. The 2012 **Grade 9 Parents' Night will be held on Wednesday, September 25th at 7 pm.**
- Keep in mind you can always schedule a phone call or a school visit to meet with a teacher if you feel it is necessary or you have concerns.
- The first general **Parent/Teacher interviews** for the 2013/2014 school year will be held at the end of November after the first report cards come home. You will be provided with an opportunity to book these appointments using the online appointment booking system. We encourage you to attend to get a sense of your child's progress in first term. These "sessions" are only 4 minutes long so anything requiring in depth discussion will need to be scheduled separately. **Research shows that attending a parent/teacher interview is one of the most important ways parents can help their children succeed in school.**

Take Our Kids to Work Day

- Mark Wednesday November 6th on your calendars. In November of each year, the TDSB participates in a day organized by the Learning Partnership in which Grade 9 students are encouraged to attend a day of work with a parent or adult caregiver. It's a great opportunity for students to experience a real work setting helping to prepare them for the Grade 10 Career Studies Course (GLC2O). More information will be forthcoming early in the year but it may be helpful to check with your employer in advance to ensure that this may be an option for your child.

Late Starts/Early Dismissals

- Throughout the year students may be instructed to arrive later or be dismissed earlier as a result of staff meetings, Ministry related testing or other events underway. These dates are all listed on the School Year Calendar fridge magnet included in the summer mailing and are published in the Student Agenda and on the Malvern website. In addition, written information may be sent home with your child. You may need to check your child's backpack, as many students seem to forget about these papers! The website will have up to date information on each day's schedule.
- All staff meetings and most Professional Development sessions will be held in the morning of the second and last Tuesday of each month. Students come to school at 10:15 on these Tuesdays. Refer to the Student Agenda for specific dates. Please check the Malvern website regularly. <http://schools.tdsb.on.ca/malvern/>.

Community Involvement Hours

- All students of the TDSB must complete a minimum of **40 hours** of approved Community Involvement work as a condition for graduation. Students are strongly encouraged to begin accumulating these hours in Grade 9 so that they are not overwhelmed in the senior grades when the workload has intensified and they might also have a job.
- Students can pick up a community volunteer log sheet in the Attendance Office or on-line by searching “Community Involvement Passport.” Hours can be submitted to the Guidance Office, once they have accumulated 40 or more hours. Submit your community involvement hours on November 1st or on April 1st.
- There are many volunteer opportunities at Malvern. Students should listen to the Tackler and visit the Volunteer Opportunities Board outside of the Guidance Office. For more information visit: http://www.tdsb.on.ca/wwwdocuments/programs/Co-operative_Education/docs/Community_Involvement.pdf

Equity Conference

Malvern will host an Equity & Social Justice Conference. This is a conference on topics of equity, diversity and social justice in which all students participate. The conference includes discussion defining Malvern’s values of being an inclusive, respectful and safe environment for all students. It includes a variety of workshops selected by students and attended within a revised school schedule. Students, teachers, volunteers and community organizations lead these workshops. The workshops focus on issues of diversity and safety and on topics of social justice, the environment and humanitarian issues. The date for this conference will be announced in the Fall.

This is the largest conference of its type in the TDSB and is a key component in Malvern’s strategy to create a more inclusive environment.

- Parent volunteers are needed for this event, as presenters and to help with its organization. Please contact the school if you can offer your time to help organize or present at this conference.

Special Events

- Malvern has a tradition of offering unique events that promote school spirit and support important causes. Here are a few of these events:
 - Malvern Red & Black Day – an off-site sport day held in to promote school spirit. **The 2013 date is Friday October 11th**. The school will run on a special schedule that day.
 - Malvern on the Move – events organized by the Student Council during December where the school works together to raise money for a local community organization.
 - Winter Formal – This is a sanctioned dance for all Malvern Students and is organized by the Student Council.
 - Sportathon – an onsite overnight event in March. This is a fundraiser and spirit opportunity for all grades.
 - Pink Day – held in April to celebrate diversity and gender equality. Students are encouraged to wear pink.

- The Spring Social Justice Campaign that is in April is five days of special events and workshops related to global and local issues of social justice, equity and safety.

Please note that there will always be an email from the school advising you of school-sanctioned events.

- **Unsanctioned Dances:** ex-Malvern or current Malvern students usually run these. They are not organized nor sanctioned by Malvern CI. They charge upwards of \$25 a ticket for students to attend an all-ages event, usually in the Club district in downtown Toronto. The target group is Grade 9 & 10 and “pre-drinking” is usually the activity of choice prior to attending the event. Your child may be under the impression it is a “semi-formal” but it is nothing like the semi-formals you may have attended. This is a situation that requires an individual response by each family, but is advised that drug and alcohol use is common and thus high risk for 14 and 15 year olds who, until now, might not have had exposure to this kind of event/behaviour. As always, conversation with your child is recommended so that your rules and expectations are clear.

Buyouts

- Occasionally, the school permits opportunities for students to pay a fee - anywhere from \$2 to 5 - and be excused from classes to attend a sporting event in support of a Malvern team. This is called a “Buyout”. Parents are required to sign a permission form allowing students to miss class. Students participating in buyouts are still responsible for missed work. They should speak to their teachers and see if they will be missing a test or assigned class work.

Lunch Time

- One of the tougher things in High School is to get your child to eat a healthy lunch. There is a cafeteria at Malvern and some students go off-site to local restaurants or eateries. However, consistent with other strategies to promote healthy bodies and learning, encourage your child to take a nutritious packed lunch.
- Please be aware that as of September 2011 the School Food and Beverage Policy has been in effect and does not permit the sale of many of the popular food and beverages in Toronto schools. See www.ontario.ca/healthyschools. Please talk to your child about these changes as with their new found freedom they may be tempted to go off site and purchase items at local stores.
- Malvern is a Platinum level Eco-School so reusable lunch containers are recommended.
- Malvern strives to be “**nut free**”. Parents are asked not to include nuts in lunches from home.

School Trips

- Malvern offers a range of trips related to sports, music, and clubs and subject-related field trips. Should an opportunity occur, you will receive a permission form to be completed; some will require additional funds. It is your choice as to whether your child attends or remains in class.

Connecting with the School and with other Parents

- A great way for parents to get connected with the school is to attend the monthly Home & School meetings. These are held the first Tuesday of the month in the library at 7pm. **The first meeting for the 2013-2014 school year is: Tuesday, September 10th.** There are lots of opportunities to get involved or to simply hear about many of the exciting activities and programs going on at Malvern.
- These nights offer an opportunity to meet school administration in a friendly relaxed atmosphere and to connect with other parents and make decisions affecting your child's experience at Malvern. Information about the meetings is sent out in the email blasts along with the minutes, which are also posted on the Malvern website on the Parents page. This is a really great way to stay in touch with what is happening at the school, including key dates and events.
- You are strongly encouraged (even though your child will likely do everything to discourage you) to network with the parents of your child's friends. In this way you can confirm activities, homework and discuss other potential concerns when your child says, "Everybody's parents are letting them do....". We suggest getting email addresses so that you can even have a group conversation if necessary. This is especially important when it comes to discussing participation in what could be seen as "high risk" events.

Key Home & School Events

- Commencement Reception in November: Organized by a couple of great Malvern parents this is a "pay it forward" event where parents of students in Grade 9,10 & 11 prepare and host a reception for graduated students and their families. Contributing food, assisting with decorating the cafeteria and hosting the Alumni reception are all roles available that evening. This is a great way to meet other parents and give back in a one-time way to the school. The 2013 date for commencement is November 8th.
- Staff Appreciation Night: Held in early December, this is an event relatively unique to Malvern. A parent graciously donates their home for a reception for Malvern staff. Parents donate money and Home & School executive members assist with hosting the event.
- The Boardwalk Ball: The main fundraiser for Home & School, this takes place near the end of the school year and features the incredible talents of the music students. The event features a dinner, Silent Auction and Gift Basket Raffle and requires many volunteers, both with pre-event planning and assisting during the night of the event. This event takes place in early June. You will be notified via an email blast.
- The Home & School Council will also involve itself in other activities and/or partner with other related Malvern groups such as the Malvern Red & Black [Alumni] Society and the Onward Malvern Foundation – e.g. fundraisers, events for Remembrance Day and other activities.

The Onward Malvern Foundation

- This organization exists to raise funds that are not covered in the operating budget for the current needs of the school and its students.
- The Onward Foundation can receipt donations for a variety of initiatives including scholarships, specific activities such as “Save the pool” (which occurred in 2009) and other opportunities.
- Donations can be sent to the Onward Malvern Foundation c/o Malvern Collegiate Institute 55 Malvern Ave., Toronto, ON M4E 3E4. You may also contribute online at Canada Helps. You will receive a tax receipt via email very quickly. Tax receipts for cheques mailed to the school are sent out by the year’s end.

The Malvern Red & Black Society

- The Malvern Red & Black Society (MRBS) is the alumni organization for Malvern CI. It was founded in 2004 following the hugely successful Malvern Centennial in 2003. MRBS is open to all graduates, past students, staff, parents and community members and is active in the life of the school. Its website is www.malverncollegiate.com.
- We welcome your child’s participation. For interested student volunteers, we offer opportunities to earn community service hours at our various events.

2013-2014 Home & School Council Executive

Please note that the Home and School Council Meetings are the first Tuesday of every month starting Tuesday September 10th at 7pm in the Malvern Library. We are looking for new council members. Please join us!

Home and School Council Treasurer Vicky Tsorlinis vickytsorlinis@rogers.com