

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Academic Questions

This school is older than others in the area, can you offer the same opportunities in an older building?

- Yes. Although our building was originally built in 1961 it has had ongoing upgrades to keep it contemporary. The music room, and family studies rooms have been renovated. The existing science labs were renovated and a new science wing added. We have a brand new state-of-the-art Communication Technology lab. The library is an addition which is constantly updated to create a modern learning centre open to all. The west playing field and track have been upgraded. Infrastructure is also constantly being improved. We have the same wifi bandwidth as all York Region Schools, and accessibility renovations, including an elevator, are complete.
- And don't forget, older schools do have advantages! We have large opening windows in our classrooms, and wide hallways. We have plenty inviting courtyards and numerous playing fields. As an older schools we also have rich traditions and strong support from our vast alumni association.

Do all high schools in York Region have the same courses available?

- All schools will offer the same compulsory courses, however elective courses may vary. For example, we offer courses in transportation and construction technology, but other schools that do not have the same infrastructure are not able to offer these courses.

How many total courses are there?

- Students take four courses a semester, eight throughout the entire year. To graduate you need 30 credits.
- This year KCSS offered 174 different courses divided among 17 different departments.
- In addition there are over 55 courses students can take through the Dual Credit Program in which students earn both a high school and a college credit.
- Many more possibilities are available through the Personal Alternative Education (Alt. Ed.) department.

How many hours do you need to earn a credit?

- High school credits are earned when a student demonstrates completion of the Overall Expectations of the curriculum. Courses are scheduled for a minimum of 110 hours in order for students to meet these expectations.

How do I know what classes to take?

- In grade 9 you will need to take many compulsory courses. These are: English, Math, Science, Geography, French, and Physical Education.
- You will also choose one Arts credit, either Visual Art, Music or Drama.
- You will then choose your elective course. The courses offered at KCSS are Exploring Technologies, Information Technology in Business, and Exploring Family Studies.
- You can use myBlueprint to help you plan courses for the rest of your high school career.

Am I best suited for Academic or Applied courses?

- The answer to this question is based entirely on the individual. It is important to remember that you can take some Academic courses, and some Applied courses. You do not have to take all of one or the other. If you excel in one subject area, and find another more challenging, you select courses accordingly.

What courses do you recommend?

- The answer to this question is unique to each student. You will need to consider your strengths and areas for improvement as a student, as well as your interests and future goals. Using myBlueprint, attending Grade 8 Open House, and talking with your grade 8 teachers and your parents should help guide you in the right direction.

Does taking an Academic or an Applied course get you the same credit?

- Both Academic and Applied courses count toward your required compulsory courses. For example, you can take Academic or Applied English in grade 9 and both will count as one of your required four English courses. However, the two courses act as prerequisites for different pathways. For example, if you take Grade 10 Academic English, you can then take either Grade 11 College or University English, but if you take Grade 10 Applied English you would be eligible for Grade 11 College or Workplace English.

What do you do in each elective course? What is Transportation Technology like?  
What is Art like?

- All grade 9 courses are outlined in the booklet you received at our Open House. A full list of course descriptions for Grade 9-12 can be found on our school website.

What if I have multiple elective courses in mind but can only take one?

- The number of elective courses a student will select increases in each grade. If there is a grade 9 course you would like to take, but are not able to schedule in your grade 9 year, you could choose to take it in grade 10.

Are there any advanced culinary courses?

- We do not currently have a culinary course, but we do offer Food and Nutrition courses in Grade 10 and 12.

Is there a photography course?

- Yes, we offer a digital photography course in Grade 10, and starting next year, a Grade 11 course will also be offered.

If I didn't take a course when I was in the grade it is offered in, can I take it later?

- Yes! As long as you have the prerequisites, you can take any course in any grade. For example, if in Grade 12 you realize you have an interest in travel, you can take the Grade 11 Travel and Tourism course.

If I fail, how do I earn that credit later on?

- There are a number of considerations that would go into the guidance offered to a student regarding how to earn a missed credit. Depending on the number of expectations met by the student at the end of the course, the student may be recommended to take the course again, either at summer school or in the next semester. If a significant amount of progress has been made in a course, the remaining expectations may be met through Credit Recovery. This is an opportunity to complete the course either during the school year or at an abbreviated summer school program.
- If you do not complete a "compulsory course", you will need to complete it in one of these two ways. If you do not complete an "elective course" you may choose to take something different altogether.

Where can I get extra-help?

- There a number of places a student can seek extra help: classroom teachers, the teacher-librarians, the Student Success team, the Special Education team, peer tutors, etc.

What courses do I need to take to become a paramedic?

- Entrance requirements for colleges and universities are specific to the school and program. Web-based tools such as myBlueprint, ontariocollege.ca and eInfo Ontario can help you research requirements of each program. Career and pathway options are explored in a course called Careers' which is compulsory in grade 10, and assistance is available from your guidance counsellor.

What courses do you need to take for Kinesiology? Do you need to take Family Studies in Grades 9 and 10 to take Psychology in Grade 11?

- All courses are listed on our school website and the prerequisites are included as part of the course descriptions.
- The prerequisite for the Grade 12 Introductory Kinesiology course is any Grade 11 university or university/college preparation course in science, or any Grade 11 or 12 course in health and physical education.
- To take the Grade 11 College level Anthropology, Psychology, and Sociology (HSP3C) there is no prerequisite. To take the course at the University level the prerequisite course is either ENG2D1 (English - Academic) **or** CHC2D1 (Canadian History Since World War 1 - Academic).

Is there an Astro-Physics course?

- No. Astro-physics is not a high school course in the Ontario Curriculum. Physics is offered as a unit in Grades 9 and 10 Science and as a full course in Grades 11 and 12. Astronomy is covered in Grade 9 Science.

Do you have to take Physical Education in Grade 9?

- To graduate students need to complete one compulsory credit in Phys. Ed. Most students take this course in Grade 9, but technically it does not have to be completed in your grade 9 year.

What field trips do you go on?

- This is determined by the courses you are registered in, personal interest, and availability of programming.
- In the past we have taken trips as small as local walks in the community to trips as extensive as trips to Europe.

## **Speciality Program Questions**

Will King City be a French School?

- As of the 2019-20 school year, KCSS will become a dual track school. This means that we will offer program for English and French Immersion courses.

How will English courses be modified for French Immersion. (E.g. will science teachers be qualified?)

- The expectations for Grade 9 science, and all other courses remain the same regardless of whether you speak English or French in the classroom. The French Immersion teachers will be qualified French teachers who are also qualified in the subject area that they are teaching (Geography, Science, Business, Drama, etc.)

If you are in French Immersion will bus transportation be available for all the years of high school?

- As King City SS is currently not on a regular transit route, French Immersion students, within the French Immersion boundary area who live more than 3.2 km from the school, will have transportation provided.
- This decision is reviewed on a yearly basis by Student Transportation Services (STS) and could be adjusted should YRT service to King City SS improve in the future.

Is there an Arts program at King City?

- We are not an Arts school, but we do offer Visual Art, Drama, and Music programming at all grade levels. The specialized Arts program in our area is at Alexander Mackenzie Secondary School.

Is there an AP (Advanced Placement) program at King City?

- No. We offer other programs such as a Health and Wellness SHSM program, as well as a Transportation SHSM. We have a High Performance Athlete program. As of next year we will also have a French Immersion program.

What is the HPA program?

- The High Performance Athlete program is a credit-based program that allows elite athletes to earn credits as part of their training.
- To participate students must be competing at the provincial or national level in their sport.

## **Timetable and Scheduling Questions**

What time does school start and end?

- Our day begins at 8:20. The day ends at 2:30.

Can you request to be in the same courses as your friends?

- No. Timetables are based on individual course selections and creating balanced timetables.

Can you do summer school the year before Grade 9?

- No. Grade 9 summer school courses are only offered as reinforcement courses for students who took the course during the school year but we unable to complete the expectations at that time.
- You can do your 40 Community Hours the summer before Grade 9 though.

As you choose your courses, can you create your schedule too?

- No. Scheduling is a complicated process. Once students select courses, the school's timetable is created by the Principal and Vice Principals. Guidance staff work to ensure that timetables are balanced in each semester.

When do exams start and end?

- There are five days of exams in each semester. Semester 1 exams are at the end of January. Semester 2 exams are at the end of June. The exact dates vary depending on the calendar and are posted by June each year for the following year.

## **General Questions**

Is high school fun?

- Like anything, you get out what you put into it. If you get involved in extracurricular activities and/or athletics, you will meet people with similar interests and form friendships.

How do I find my way around?

- You will be provided a map on the first day of school, and there are maps on the walls at school. You will receive your timetable in the last week of August and will have an opportunity to come into the school and receive assistance to find

your classes and your locker. The first day of school is reserved for Grade 9 students and mentor students will be available to help show you around. You will catch on quickly; in a couple of days you'll know your way around easily.

What do you need to bring or buy for school?

- This will depend somewhat on the courses you take. You will need binders, paper, pens and pencils. Some courses will have specific requirements. For example, you will need a gym uniform for Phys. Ed.

Are drugs a common problem in high schools?

- Sadly whenever you bring together a large segment of any population, there are people who suffer from substance use and abuse, high schools are no different. Guidance counselors, social workers, and community resource officers are all available to assist students who are facing this challenge.

Is there any bullying?

- Sadly this can be a problem in schools. The York Region District School Board, and KCSS do not tolerate this behaviour, and have strategies and systems in place to support victims and end the behaviour.

## **Lockers**

Do I bring a lock?

- No, lockers and locks are school property and provided for you.

How do you open an lock?

- Using the combination provided, point the arrow to "0". Turn two full circles to the right, and then point the arrow to the first number. Turn one full rotation past that number and stop at the second number. Then move directly to the third number. Tug on the lock and it should open.

## **Extracurricular Activities**

How many extra-curricular activities can you sign-up for?

- There is no limit on the number of activities you can participate in. Realistically it would be hard to play on two teams in the same season, or to be part of two clubs that meet at the same time each week, but as long as your schedule works, we encourage you to participate as much as possible in your school community.

When are club meetings held?

- Most clubs meet at lunch, but some after-school meetings may be held depending on the group.

What extracurricular activities are based on music?

- There is both a junior and senior band repertoire program which are courses you can take after school and for which you earn a credit.
- In addition there are numerous other musical ensembles: Concert Choir, Junior Jazz Band, Senior Jazz Band, Woodwind Ensemble, Brass Ensemble, Guitar Ensemble, Bluegrass Ensemble, Jazz Improv Workshop

Is there a theatre club and if so, can you join without taking Drama?

- We have a number of theatre based clubs, all of which you can join without taking Drama
  - Stage Crew - organizes and carries out all technical aspects of stage productions (e.g. lights and sound)
  - Stagecraft - organizes and carries out all artistic design elements of stage production (e.g. costumes, make-up, set design)
  - Drama club - performers, directors and stage managers for productions

What is GSA?

- The GSA is the Gay-Straight Alliance club. Students who are members of the 2SLGBTQ+ communities and their allies socialize and work together to create an equitable and inclusive school community.

## **Athletics**

How do you manage sports with education?

- Time management is an important skill. The senior student mentors run a Grade 9 workshop on Time Management to help teach students strategies for balancing their time.

Can KCSS provide as many sports opportunities as Bill Crothers Secondary School?

- Yes and no. Part of what determines the number of sports opportunities offered is the population of the school. Smaller schools do not have the student numbers to field as many teams; HOWEVER, something to keep in mind is that at Bill Crothers, you are not permitted to play on the team for the sport at which you excel. For example, if you have gone to BCSS because you are an elite

soccer player, you are not allowed to play school soccer. At our school, you would be permitted to play this sport.

Is there a boys basketball team? Why is there no rugby team?

- Each year the list of teams offered changes based on the expertise of coaches who volunteer their time, and student interest.

Is there a dance or cheer team?

- There is currently a championship winning Cheer Team!

Is the hockey team a varsity team?

- The current hockey team is a boys varsity team. The team was an OFSAA finalist last year and is currently undefeated this year.

Is there a baseball team?

- There is currently a boys' baseball team.

Are girls allowed to play tackle football?

- Yes, provided they make the team, girls are able to play football,

Is there a girls' football team?

- No, there is currently not a girls' football team. There is a Girls' Flag Football league in York Region but our students have traditionally gravitated to Ultimate Disc and Soccer as spring sports.

## **Student Services**

What is the difference between a Social Worker and a Guidance Counselor?

- Guidance Counselors are teachers who have taken additional training to assist students with a number of areas such as pathway planning and social-emotional challenges. Guidance Counselors are not health professionals. When necessary they refer students to outside supports who do have the required professional training to assist a student's needs.
- A Social Worker is a trained professional concerned with helping individuals, families, groups and communities to enhance their individual and collective well-being. They aim to help people develop their skills and ability to use their own resources and those of the community to resolve problems. Social workers help to treat mental, behavioral, and emotional issues. Every school has a social

worker who spends part of his/her time at the school. School social workers generally provide a short term intervention for students and assist students and families to access community based resources to provide longer term support. Guidance Counselors can refer students to see the Social Worker.

Is EVERYTHING kept confidential if I talk to one of the staff on the MOBYSS bus?

(Note: The MOBYSS bus is a portable medical clinic that visits KCSS on a bi-weekly basis.)

- The staff on the MOBYSS bus are regulated health professionals. They are employed by Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA). They follow the same guidelines as a walk-in clinic. They are obligated to report if someone is at risk of harming themselves or others.