



NOTRE DAME SCHOOL

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Reference: Using Zoom for Student Led Conferencing
November 16, 2020

Dear Notre Dame Parents/Guardians,

First I would like to thank you all for your continuous support returning to school this year with our new COVID-19 guidelines. It is definitely a new normal for us all. Notre Dame Staff are trying their best to connect and share the school community with you all through different online opportunities, such as FreshGrade, Google Classroom, and Zoom.

We have needed to utilize online tools in new ways and add tools we had not needed prior to COVID-19 to try and share the events of our school community. One of these tools has been Zoom conferencing. Zoom is an online tool that allows video and audio communication to groups. The purpose of using Zoom with students and families is to enable face to face interaction during COVID-19 restrictions. This letter is designed to help Zoom meetings go smoothly for all during our Student Led conferencing, identify the safety protocols we have in place for all and help everyone stay cyber safe. As well, we ask for you to please be patient with us as we work through the technical aspects of doing this in a 'new way', as we will with you all.

Notre Dame Teacher Safety Steps

To ensure that all students and families can join, teachers will be sending a Meeting ID to each student and family. The Waiting Room feature will be used which means the teacher has to 'admit' each student and family into the Student Led Conference meeting. Teachers can control the student and family microphones and who can share their screen.

Expectations for Students & Parents/Guardians

- Once you have clicked on the Zoom invitation link, you will go into a 'waiting room'. The teacher will allow access to the Student led session once it is your time to conference. You will know when this happens because you will be able to see your teacher on the screen.
- To support the teacher in allowing you to enter the Student led conference, please make sure you have entered your full name.
- The volume will need to be up on the device you are using and the video activated.
- Your teacher will lead the session and will be looking forward to having you participate once started. Zoom allows you to see and hear one another, almost as if you are in the classroom together.
- At no time should families, students and/or staff take photographs or videos of any Zoom conferencing meetings. Please do not post videos or screenshots anywhere publicly including on any social media platforms.



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- **Our virtual classrooms are safe spaces:** disrespectful language and inappropriate behavior are not allowed. All participants in a classroom, physical or virtual, have the right to learn and interact in a respectful environment.
- An online student led conference environment is not a social media site: we ask that students and parents/guardians keep comments and conversations focused on the learning materials and behaviours being discussed, or questions about the previous learning and behaviours.

Quality Video Conferencing Tips

- Consider the environment that you are sitting in. Try to limit any background distractions and ensure that you are in a common area of your house.
- Remember that if your camera and microphone are turned on, everyone can see and hear you.
- Keep the source of lighting in front or above you. Avoid having a bright light or window behind you.
- All questions and comments should be related to the learning expectations or core purpose of the conference.
- Progress slowly. Everyone is learning (including the adults) and it will take some time for participants to adjust.
- Be patient and forgiving with technology. It can be temperamental, glitch and sometimes difficult to navigate so pause, breathe and keep this in perspective.

We appreciate your support during this new learning time and we are working very hard to try and keep sharing the events of Notre Dame's school community. Please take a moment to thank your student's teachers—they are working harder/longer hours than they would if school was in a normal return. We miss the sounds of students sharing with their parents in the hallways and look forward to eventually returning to a 'normal school routine.'

God Bless,
Your Partner in Education
Colleen Richard
Principal, Notre Dame School