

Hillcrest School Council



"Encouraging Participation, Supporting Achievement, Promoting Community"

Advance Notice: The Grade 10 OSSLT test will be administered on Tuesday, 10 April. Parents wishing to get an advance idea of what that test entails may click [here](#). Similar to the mathematics assessment, a sample OSSLT test is also available for [viewing](#).

Note two special Hillcrest events on right hand side bar: 1) 08 February - Pathway and Course Selection Night - [for all parents](#) including current Grade 8's & 2) Tuesday through Friday 20-23 February - [Capital Region Music Fest](#) at Hillcrest

31st January - Bell "Let's Talk Day" - On this day, Bell will donate 5¢ for every applicable text, call, tweet, social media video view and use of their Facebook frame or Snapchat filter in support of mental health initiatives across Canada. Since hosting the first Let's Talk Day event in 2010, Bell has donated \$86.5 million to this cause. See the links below for more info: <https://www.facebook.com/events/153708135259968/>; <https://letstalk.bell.ca/en/bell-lets-talk-day>

[Gifted Geographic Transition Model](#) - The Board is considering altering the distribution of Gifted programs based on a geographic model. Currently, despite having 5 geographic zones, all Secondary level Gifted programs are assigned to schools in the Western zone.

Accommodation Reviews - [District Needs Analysis](#) - For those interested in Accommodation Reviews, the hyperlinked District Needs Analysis is useful & important reading.

[Disposal of Surplus Properties](#) - Related to the Accommodation Review, a new policy on the **disposal of surplus school properties** has been tabled.

Jim Tubman Chevrolet SENS Rink - regulations and schedules can be found on the [Canterbury Community Association](#) Facebook page.



Upcoming Events

Hillcrest

Thursday, 01 February - 2nd Semester commences

Thursday, 08 February 19:00 - 21:00 - Parent/Guardian Pathway & Course Selection Night

Friday 16 February & Monday 19 February - School Holiday

Tuesday - Friday, 20 - 23 February - Music Fest at Hillcrest & -1 -04 March at Longfield Davidson

Wednesday, February 28 - School Council meeting -7:00 p.m.

OCDSB

Wednesday, 01 Feb - Meeting of Parent Involvement Committee (PIC)

Tuesdays, 30 Jan, 06 & 20 Feb - Meeting of Committee of the Whole

Thursday, 15 February - OSASC Secondary School Committee

Thursday, 22 February - meeting of Committee on Equity

Community Newspapers

Four new community newspapers will be coming to Ottawa including an Alta Vista/Ottawa South paper. Deliveries, via Canada Post are expected as of the end of February.

The World...as it was, is and maybe shall be:

The Social Sciences - Canadian/World Studies



History, geography, civics...and perhaps a glimpse into the stable genius of Donald Trump is what awaits students of the Social Sciences.

History

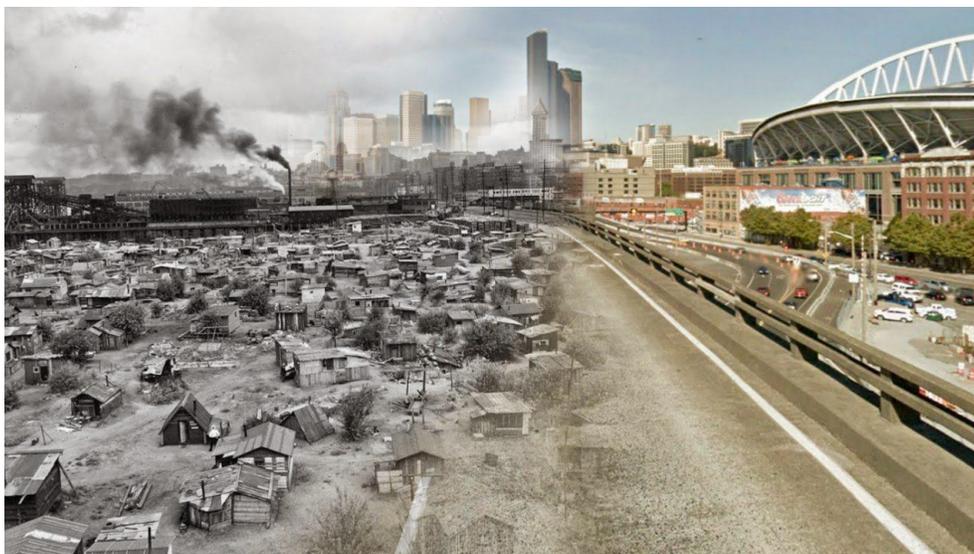
We seemingly live in a political world liberated from the constraints of facts and evidence. But while those frivolities may be easy to dismiss, there is less opportunity to erase the lessons of history. Those lessons help us interpret the present and anticipate the future. History is more than an academic pursuit. Knowledge and remembrance of the past is a reference tool we all use to navigate the modern world.

In Grade 10, students of history will focus upon Canada (1914 to the Present). The following year, students travel far back in time and view history with a wider lens as they study World History from archaeological evidence of early societies up to the year 1500. In Grade 12, students again have an opportunity to explore the world at large, but with a leap forward in time, investigating the period 1500 to the Present.

The examination of modern Canadian history is separated into three thematic elements: 1) the social, economic and political context; 2) communities, conflict and cooperation; and 3) identity, citizenship and heritage. More than a chronology of events, history explores the interplay between historical events and society. For any such analysis, we employ perspective. But which perspective? Anyone who follows the news will be aware of concerns that historical instruction in the past has been Euro-centric. Specifically, questions have been raised as to why history lessons do not also look upon Canadian events from an Indigenous perspective. Instruction at Hillcrest is sensitive to these legitimate concerns. First Nations, Métis, and Inuit issues and figures are

accorded prominent attention on a cross-disciplinary basis - in history, geography, English, the Arts (see the December newsletter for photos of the recently completed mural on display in the library) as well as in Law plus the Equity and Social Justice class.

Within our diverse nation yet other perspectives warrant attention. The Hillcrest student body itself offers a model representation of the multi-cultural nature of Canada. Within their historical study, Hillcrest students explore the impact of immigration upon Canadian society and our demographics. This includes learning the push and pull factors that impact current immigration and emigration trends, as well as our collective stories. Further within the realm of social sciences, Civics and courses like Law, Politics, Equity & Social Justice and Challenge and Change in Society all regularly examine issues of immigration, multiculturalism, diversity and racism.



Being a secular education system the school does not teach religion. However, as part of preparing youth for effective engagement in the world it is important the school teaches about religion. All social science courses examine the role religion plays in communities, cooperation and conflict. Students of different faiths are encouraged to correct popular misperceptions of their religion and share from a place of encouragement and confidence. Last year the Grade 10 history class hosted an assembly with Monia Mazigh who shared the story of her husband Maher Arar's imprisonment, torture, release and public apology. She shared how she has remained an activist for similar injustices and made students aware of the problems that accompany the new security rules in post-9/11. The grade12 Equity and Social Justice class has hosted alumnus [Batoul Hreich](#) who spoke about reframing the Islamic narrative in her work as a CBC journalist (intern). Other opportunities for curriculum enrichment on the topic of religion are under consideration, including hosting local leaders and communities, potentially under the mentoring guidance of the Conflict Studies department of St. Paul's University. There is clearly value in engaging local religious communities to educate on our similarities and shared aspirations, helping Hillcrest be part of a fulsome community which is accepting of all its members.

Geography

In high school, geography is taught, and hopefully learned, across four focus areas:

- regionally differentiated geography (e.g. Canada or world)
- geography and its connection to science (e.g. geology or tectonics)
- geographic forms and their impact upon human migration and settlement
- geography and its impact upon economic activity



In Grade 9 students will study four units of Canadian geography:

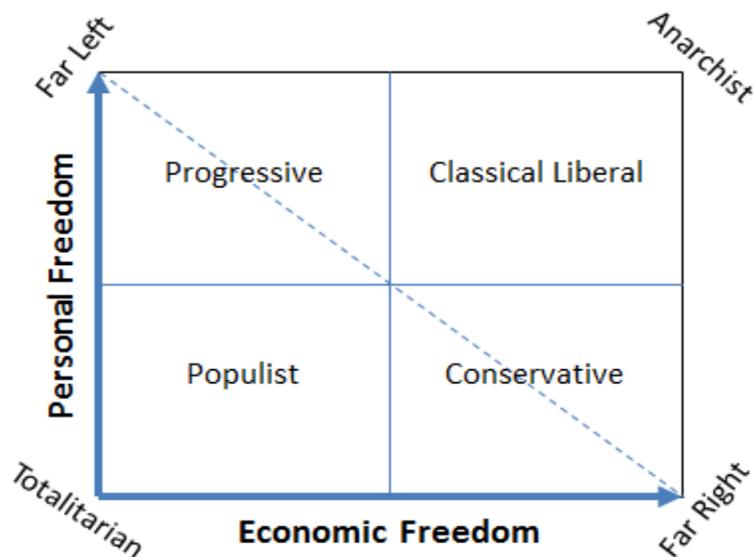
- *Physical geography* - the relationship between physical processes and human activity, the interrelationship between different types of physical processes, and the characteristics of Canada's natural environment.

- *Resources and industries* - sustainability, including resource management and consumer choices, the development of natural resources, and industrial sectors, industrial sector importance and how geography affects their location.

- *Changing populations* - Canadian and global population issues, immigration and cultural diversity and their implications for Canada, as well as demographic patterns.

- *Liveable Communities* - the sustainability of human systems, impact of urban growth, and the characteristics of land use in Canada.

The Social Science department is hoping to build on this course, through the addition of a senior geography course.



Politics and Legal Systems

The Canadian political system seems relatively simple, especially if you don't pay too much attention. However, between federal, provincial, municipal, and First Nations self-government, we have enough to confuse the most ardent parent student. Consequently, our Canadian system of government is well covered in the Social Sciences - Grade 10 Civics, Grades 11 and 12 Law, as well as Grade 12 Politics.

While communism seems to be on the wane, nationalism, populism and even fascism are somewhat back in vogue, crowding liberalism and conservatism into a corner of the "ism" stage. At Hillcrest each of these ideologies are covered, as well as others, not only in their historical contexts, but how they are expressed in their current incarnations. Fascism, for example, is employed as a diagnostic tool to assess the political "health" of a range of contemporary regimes. Communism, is examined through consideration of its breadth of social and political expressions in past and present milieux. Students are encouraged to gain an understanding of these concepts as meaningful, useful and functional conceptual tools, to discuss and describe social and political conditions that they encounter. Students analyze trends, patterns and shifts in knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours, in Canada and around the globe, and develop an understanding of the impact these changes have on individuals and society, overall. Whenever possible, teachers seek to bring in expert and/or outside voices to enhance classroom discussions.

The utility and meaning of concepts like capitalism, communism and globalization are also examined, especially in the context of China's current hegemonic ascent and the implications of that process on democratic practices and aspirations; global power shifts; and Canada's place and purpose in a new world order.

Current events and developments – from national elections here and south of the border, to major contemporary conflicts, to populist and nationalist movements - are stitched into the fabric of the

curriculum, which necessarily pivots to address changing circumstances and to gain an understanding of them in real time through the mirror of political science and the law.

All Ontario High School students are required to achieve a half credit in civics. The Civics course covers the electoral process, civic engagement, rights and corresponding responsibilities. As an element to Civics, Hillcrest brings in DILA ([Day of Information for a Lifetime of Action](#)) who work with the class for 8 weeks developing a collaborative and concrete outcome of civic engagement.

Last year civics students participated in a town hall meeting on racism with four Ottawa Police active in diversity and community relations. Students also had a meeting with Chelby Daigle, a community consultant working the Ottawa Police. In the fall, and in concert with DILA, students created an Instagram filter and posters to raise awareness about discrimination. They also produced a podcast which tackled the history of racism and racism in current day Canada. They also did a "stay woke" campaign for the awareness of racism and to break the cycle of racism. And in addition, DILA invited a guest speaker, Séverin Jr César Ndéma-Moussa, the President of the Caribbean Union of Canada, to discuss the history of racism with the students.

While there is no direct extension from the half credit Civics course, students attracted to these issues can pursue Law courses (Grades 11 & 12) or the Grade 12 Equity and Social Justice class, which contains a social engagement component.

Enrichment

Social science enrichment activities in any given year may include trips, speakers, and club activities. Some very recent examples of enrichment include:

November:

- Remembrance Day Assembly speaker was parent Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Clow
- Adrian Harewood (CBC) spoke to the Black History Club and Grade 12 Law students about telling one's story and activism for justice
- Eric Booth, OPP officer spoke to Grade 11 Law students
- Black History Club attended the [Equity Knowledge Network](#) launch by the Faculty of Education at uOttawa, hosted at Hillcrest. This included Indigenous stories, anti-racism and diversity workshops and spoken word highlights. Hillcrest hopes to build a strong educational community with this network
- Jamaal Jackson Rogers, Ottawa Poet Laureate, began a series of 8 workshops on performance and production of Spoken Word. Students will present spoken word art in the spring. The school is looking to build on this experience and create a course next year based on Jamaal Jackson's spoken word workshops and other forms of artistic expression and production

December:

- Grade 11 Law classes went to the Ontario Courthouse and Supreme Court House
- Andrea Levans, who was a Crown Prosecutor for 9 years and who now works at a legal clinic spoke to Grade 11 Law Students
- Six Grade 11 and 12 students attended a workshop for a Model United Nations that was hosted at Cairine Wilson S.S. These students will participate in their first Model United Nations in late February, with a chance to attend university Model UNs in March
- Senator Kim Pate spoke with Grade 11 and 12 Law students about her activism with prison reform and her experiences with the Elizabeth Fry Society

Upcoming:

- in May, 4 Gr.12 students will represent 2 countries at the National Student Commonwealth Forum, hosted by local Commonwealth embassies and uOttawa.
- prior to the upcoming Provincial election, there will be a Student Vote among Grade 11 Law students

Global Citizens Club

The Global Citizens Club was only recently formed, in 2016. The objective and activities of the Club are consistent with the Board's desired outcome for students to exit high schools as Globally Minded Citizens.

Moreover, participation in the Club is linked to the International Certificate Program. Participation in meetings, field trips, and activities go towards the earning of this certificate. The club expects at least two students will earn their certificate this year.

As indicated in last month's newsletter, the earning of this certificate offers tangible value to students if/when they apply to an institution of higher education that places a premium on an applicant's extra-curricular interests.

The main goal of the club is to promote Global Awareness. As part of activities, students will experience a variety of cultures and languages. For example, in December members attended a Korean Cultural Forum where they learned about Korea from fellow students, educators, as well as the Korean Ambassador. They also had an opportunity to play a Korean version of "hacky-sack" called Jegichagi and won! Needless to say they also had the pleasure to sample Korean food. This event is connected to an initiative the club launched last year - Global Mindset - an exchange program with a Korean high school, which is being revitalized this year.

This year the club has 10 core members but typically a more broader mix of students will participate in meetings and events.

This year club members have been leading a mental health initiative. During club meetings, members discuss world events, plan activities, and share ideas about the International Certificate Program. Once a month they participate in a cultural luncheon. Most recently one luncheon was dedicated to Somali food while another to traditional holiday treats. These luncheons have been very successful and will be continued over the next semester.

Also, and in demonstration of awareness, citizenship, and a desire to reach out to others, club members earlier this year raised money for hurricane relief.

Last year the club organized and delivered an extremely well received travelling exhibit from the Aga Khan Foundation featuring the issue of poverty reduction. While each member of the club will invariably have their own interests and priorities, a common thread among members again this year is a desire to address poverty and its elimination.

Congratulations to club members and their teacher sponsor, Christopher Olson for devoting time and effort into practicing the social engagement lessons they learned in Civics.

OCDSB News

OCDSB - Call for Applicants - [Special Education Advisory Committee](#). Applications to be submitted by Friday, 26 January.

Board of Trustees - Shirley Seward was [re-elected](#) Chair of the Board, with Lynn Scott elected as Vice-Chair.

[OCDSB Speaker Series](#) - 01 March - Mental Health and Addiction at Sir Robert Borden High School

OCDSB Committees

The Ottawa Carleton District School Board and related organizations operate several committees which may be of interest to parents and whose meetings are open to the public:

Committee of the Whole - Please note that the agenda for COW meetings is published in advance on the OCDSB website. If an agenda item is of interest but you are unable to attend in person, the meetings are live streamed via the Board website.

[Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils](#) - click on the link for detailed committee information

[Parent Involvement Committee](#) - click on the link for detailed committee information.

Advisory Committee on Equity - meets monthly, usually from 6:00-8:30 pm at Greenbank. Committee members include individuals drawn from the public.

Useful Links

Hillcrest School - <https://hillcresths.ocdsb.ca/>

OCDSB - <http://www.ocdsb.ca/>

School Board Trustee Chris Ellis - <http://schoolzone6.org/>

Contact Us - Suggestions for, or comments about, this newsletter can be submitted at any time to hillcrestcouncilnews@gmail.com.