

2024-2025 PARENT TESTIMONIALS

Jodie MacLean – Parent of a Grade 9 GAEL

“As a GDHS graduate myself, I was so pleased that my son chose to attend GDHS as well. The transition from elementary to high school, for my son, was seamless. The teachers support and encouragement have been an integral part of this successful transition. Within the school, there are many opportunities for leadership provided through the Students Council and Student Athletic Association for example, as well as many sports including golf, basketball, volleyball and hockey to name a few. From some of the holiday fun days such as bracelet making, hot chocolate Monday, holiday hat day and movie and popcorn day to the famous GAEL Force events, the students have so many options to get involved and to perhaps step out of their comfort zone and enjoy fun with their friends. One of the most important contributions the students make is giving back to their community. Whether it is through volunteer hours, the annual food drive for local families at Christmas or the chance to find after school employment locally. From my son’s experiences I feel the teachers at GDHS know their students on a personal basis. They know their strengths and weaknesses and assist them based on that knowledge. From the very beginning, my son’s commitment to his schooling has been excellent and I feel the teachers have been a large part of that. He is pushing himself to be the best he can be, and I have seen the changes in him and it’s just the beginning of Grade 9. I look forward to seeing what the rest of his high school career looks like and offer a huge thank you to the staff and his fellow students at GDHS for creating an amazing experience! GO GAELS!!!”

Corey and John Crawford – Parents of a Grade 9 GAEL

“GDHS is a fantastic small town high school. After our tour of GDHS and meeting the staff, we knew this was the perfect choice for our daughter. The transition between public school and high school has been an easy step. We as a community are lucky to have this gem of a school in our town and should take advantage of all it has to offer.

GDHS is a smaller school which means students are able to get the attention needed in class to achieve their goals. There are also strong friendships formed between the students.

Since starting GDHS our daughter is more confident, she will take the plunge and step outside her comfort zone, which was a huge goal of ours. She is involved in sports teams and other events at the school, but most of all she has built a strong relationship with all the staff at the school in a short period of time.

GDHS is small but definitely mighty, thank you GDHS!”

Kerri Crowdis Angus – Parent of Grade 10 and Grade 12 GAELS

“Our experience (as parents and our boys) with GDHS has been filled with amazement and with the happiest of results that we could have imagined. If I wrote it all out, you’d be reading for days. In a nutshell, think smaller classes = more attention and quality education. The school spirit is palpable! Your child won’t be falling through any cracks here and is genuinely cared for.

You want your child at GDHS! From an extremely happy Mom!”

Ryan and Julie Hurley – Parents of Grade 9 and Grade 11 GAELS

“When discussing high schools in the final year of elementary school there actually was no option. Why wouldn’t you want to support your high school within our community that has so many offerings? You as the student may just need to work a little harder to find them.

Our experience with GDHS thus far has been an awesome transition. Our son and daughter have both had the opportunity to make school teams, been part of student leadership and have created awesome relationships with mentors/teachers supporting each of them and helping achieve goals and create spaces within the school for the next few years.

GDHS is a Gem; Smaller, Smarter, Stronger. We are so excited for the opportunities provided and to watch what their future holds. Thank you GDHS. ”

Mark and Jenn Jewitt – Parents of a Grade 12 GAEL

“Glencoe DHS is a callback to an older time when classes were small and everyone in town knows each other. The excellent staff are always relatable and available and genuinely have an interest in the wellbeing and education of their students. The smaller class sizes allow for more individualized instruction and the friendly academic events brings both staff and students together in a spirit of cooperation. Its proximity to downtown allows for students to grab anything they may need as well as fostering a sense of community.”

Eryn Cummings – Parent of a graduate and Grade 9 and Grade 12 GAELS

“Glencoe District High School is small but mighty. The involvement teachers and staff have with the students is outstanding. They know your kids and motivate them to be the best student they can be. Our oldest son graduated with his Specialist High Skills Major Red Seal Diploma, and we are thrilled with the experience he had and what he has learned. He's had a successful Co-op experience and was certified in Basic Health & Safety, Working at Heights, Elevated Work Platforms, WHMIS, Sector Specific Software, Standard First Aid and CPR throughout his time there. He also completed the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Level 1 Program! Our daughter is currently in Grade 12 and is really enjoying her classes and her co-op placement. She participates in school spirit events and playing on all the sports teams and has been given many leadership opportunities in the last four years. She's loving it! Our youngest is in Grade 9 and is thriving and enjoying his time at GDHS! We also appreciate that GDHS is hands on in the community with students and staff participating in outside events helping students earn their volunteer hours. Thank you GDHS for all that you have to offer!”

Kim Roose – Parent of Grade 9 and Grade 11 GAELS

“As parents we try to make the best choices for our kids, whether it's snacks and meals or where they will grow and develop into outstanding young adults. Knowing many Alumni in the community from GDHS, it was a clear decision to have our sons attend there; from the smaller class sizes, to the warm and caring office staff. GDHS will be the choice of school for all of our children as it's the right decision to choose for our small community. With the smaller school size, it was our priority that our sons are able to create personal connections – with friends, teachers and all other staff that will cross their path. With new opportunities always being shared, whether it's as small as a new class being offered, to being able to watch your children be a part of hands-on learning through SHSM. Having these opportunities for our children to be exposed to such positive experiences that they may not be exposed to otherwise, is truly amazing. We are grateful for all the teachers and staff who have supported and will continue to support our sons along the way.”

Kelly Gagen – Parent of a graduate and a current Grade 12 GAEL

“Choosing to uproot your children and move in their high school years can be a big decision but for our family it was the best decision we have ever made. We are new to the community, and I have never felt more belonging in my life. We have been welcomed by neighbors, local businesses, strangers walking down the street and especially by everyone at GDHS. From my very first inquiring email to the day my nervous boys walked through the door, we have all been surrounded by kindness, understanding and people going the extra mile. I have worked in the school system for 23 years and I have never seen such an accepting place. Both the students and staff have guided my sons, befriended them and made them feel like they have been there for years. My youngest came from an elementary school of almost 900 children and was supposed to go to a high school of close to 3000 children. I was terrified for him. A small school is what he needed to be successful. GDHS has made him feel safe, included and cared for. What else can a parent ask for? How do I know we made the right decision moving from the city to the country - from the big high schools of London to GDHS? When my son says, “Mom, I'm so glad we moved here. The kids are all so nice to me. Like legit...all of them”

Andrea Buckland – Parent of a Grade 12 GAEL

“Glencoe District High School is such an amazing school for so many reasons. Small class sizes mean your child gets the attention they need. Teachers and staff are very accessible to students and parents. Positive environment and supportive staff. Teachers seem to know all the kids by their first name. Guidance Counselor does regular check ins with kids throughout the year. Many upgrades to the school, new equipment in the weight room and upgrade tech equipment. For those reasons, my daughter looks forward to going to school every day. As a parent I feel confident in the school and environment at GDHS.”

Carrie and Derek McEachern – Parent of a graduate and a Grade 10 GAEL

“Smaller, Smarter, Stronger. GDHS truly embraces these three words. The first of our children is a graduate and currently in Grade 12 as a Victory Lapper and our second is in Grade 10. Both of our kids have had an amazing experience at GDHS. As a parent and educator, GDHS was the best option. Smaller class sizes allow the students to feel comfortable enough to step out of their comfort zone and ask the questions that they might not feel as comfortable to ask in a larger class. It also allows the educators to give detailed, specific and individualized feedback that the students can use to grow. The ability to have teachers who are passionate about their teaching subjects and who genuinely invest in the success of their students is unmatched. Our children have felt a strong sense of community at GDHS. This would not have happened in a larger school. Both children have had the opportunity to compete at high levels in athletics being students at GDHS and have represented the school at WOSSAA. As parents, we have always been confident that GDHS is continuing to do everything possible to keep their students and staff healthy and safe.”

Sarah McGinnis – Parent of a recent graduate and a Grade 10 GAEL

“There are so many benefits of sending your child to GDHS but one that is often overlooked, is how hard the staff work to ensure every child is able to pursue their future path.

Small class size, individual education plans, consistent communication, assistance with course selection and planning, post-secondary planning from applications to scholarships are just a few examples of how other schools pale in comparison to the individual focus GDHS provides.

Our oldest was accepted in every post-secondary program she applied for and found that GDHS well prepared her for the new challenges she faced. While some of her new peers were learning core skills for the first time, she was confident in the technology her University prefers, and the proper presentation and research of her papers.

Our youngest plans to be heavily involved in our family farm and has enjoyed Exploring Technologies and intends to complete the SHSM program. While he is gaining exposure to construction, welding, and mechanics, he is able to learn transferable skills that will become assets as he pursues a career Agriculture.

GDHS has been able to provide the opportunities my children have needed to be successful, while aligning with our family values to support our community.”

Amanda Nevin – Parent of two graduates and a Grade 12 GAEL

“I have one student in Grade 12 at GDHS, and two that recently graduated. Glencoe District High School has given my children opportunities that I feel wouldn't have been provided at a larger school. Being in a smaller school, their class sizes are smaller. This gives students the chance to get more help if needed. It's like being in a private school without having to pay the big tuition. They were also able to participate in sports that they may not have been able to in a larger school. The teachers know all the kids by name whether they have them in their class or not and they go out of their way to help them get the best marks they can get. By being in a local school there have been more opportunities for after school extracurricular activities, or jobs. Students at GDHS don't get lost in the shuffle.”

Melissa and Cliff Duarte – Parents of two graduates, two Grade 12's and a Grade 10 GAEL

“GDHS is SMALL BUT MIGHTY! We have had two of our children graduate and currently have three at GDHS. We love that the school has been so welcoming and has such a warm environment. Being a smaller school within TVDSB, the students have more one-on-one time with teachers. The school offers great programming for all learning streams. Teachers, Guidance, Administration and Principals have been a delight and have great communication between home and school. Team building and peer connections throughout the year are another aspect of the school that makes it feel like home for the kids. SMALL BUT DEFINITELY MIGHTY! Thanks GDHS!”

Andrea Burdick – Parent of two graduates and a Grade 12 GAEL

“GDHS is more than ‘the town school’. It's small. It's been here many years. In my opinion ‘this little country school’ has SO MUCH to offer! So very much more than a bigger city school. The beauty of this ‘little’ school is that it has HUGE SPIRIT. There are MANY spirit days and opportunities for your child to join in and be included in the fun! What school do you know of that provides the entire building with a full turkey dinner at Christmas? Or a chance to experience the GAEL Force team building experience? My kids have all talked about GAEL Force for years after they've attended. It has definitely been a highlight of their school career here! The staff have been so supportive of all 3 of my children while they attended GDHS & after! When my oldest son lost a classmate to suicide, the entire faculty supported the kids in every way possible. And as a parent, that meant so much to see teachers rally around the kids & walk alongside of them to support them not only academically but emotionally as well. I'll never forget that. The entire staff will know your child by name in the first week of school, regardless of whether they are in his or her class. This was important to me as a parent because I felt like MY child mattered. That MY child was not just a face in a sea of faces. But that the teachers care enough to make my child's learning experience successful.

It's been my experience that when asked for help (by my child or questioned by myself) every teacher HAS offered it and followed through. They really want your child to succeed and shine. The graduation rate at GDHS for many years has been well above 90%..unheard of in ‘big schools.’ The decision to attend another school out of boundary was never given a thought, as there are very few electives in the first 2 years of school, meaning, core subjects are the same no matter where you go. GDHS has unique programs that are NOT offered elsewhere, such as the much sought after Specialist High Skills Major Program. For my daughter who worked frequently after her Co-ops, living close to her school allowed her much more time to complete homework or earn money. Time not spent travelling on the highway, especially in winter. I love our ‘little town school.’ I support GDHS. The more kids that attend in the grade 9 & 10 years, solidifies teaching lines which means more electives can be offered. Keeping our kids in our local schools means keeping teachers employed HERE, and schools will thrive. Kids that attend ‘out of boundary’ schools are disappointed when they try to sign up for classes and won't get the elective if there's a child that wants it from that town...your child is not priority there, in the sea of faces. At GDHS they are the PRIORITY!”

Mike McEachern – Parent of a GDHS graduate/Victory Lapper

“I was happy and proud when my son chose to attend G.D.H.S.. I, too, attended and graduated from G.D.H.S. (many moons ago). I enjoyed my high school experience, but it was only when I attended university that I realized that not all high schools provide the same level of instruction and opportunities for learning. I distinctly recall the day that the professor in my first year History class angrily announced, as he was returning our first essay assignments, “Most of you should go back to your high schools and demand your money back!” I don’t recall the topic of my essay, but I remember that I received an A-! My G.D.H.S. education served me well as I earned two university-level degrees.

Smaller schools like G.D.H.S. typically have smaller class sizes. Smaller class sizes permit more individualized instruction by teachers. They also make it more difficult for reluctant learners to escape the teacher’s attention when assignments have not been handed in/completed.

In the same vein, smaller schools and smaller class sizes seem to facilitate better communication between teachers and parents. My wife and I often know what assignments my son has completed, and what assignments are still outstanding, because of open communication channels that have developed with many of the teachers at G.D.H.S.

The fact that my son attends high school in the same community as we live has many benefits. If my teenage son oversleeps, G.D.H.S. is only a few minutes’ drive away. If he forgets something at home, the item can painlessly be dropped off. My son can walk, after school, to his part-time job. My son can be quickly picked up and hustled off to after-school sports events or medical appointments. We know, on a personal level, many of my son’s classmates and their families. None of these scenarios would hold true if my son attended a school in another town or city.

Attending G.D.H.S. worked well for me and my son. You should strongly consider G.D.H.S. for your children.”



**GO
GAELS!**