

## **New Honour Chord Process: Recognizing Student Excellence**

We are excited to announce an updated and inclusive process for awarding honour chords to recognize outstanding student achievement in academics and other diverse areas. This process highlights the dedication, talents, and contributions of our students in multiple fields, ensuring recognition for excellence in academics and beyond.

### **Academic Honour Chords**

Academic Honour Chords require that a student graduate with a minimum of 92 credits. Diploma Verification Records are used to determine final marks for prior courses as well as current marks for Semester 2 courses. To receive an honour chord, students will require a combined average of no less than 80% in their Grade 11 and 12 Graduation requirement courses plus 5 others. These courses are listed below:

Science 11

Socials Studies 11

Math 11

English/English First Peoples 11

English/English First Peoples 12

A student's top 5 remaining Grade 11 or 12 provincially authorized and/or BAA courses. This can include Dual Credit or Distance Learning courses (must be 80% complete).

Students do not need to apply for an academic honour chord and will be notified on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025. After May 30<sup>th</sup>, a student believing they should receive an honour chord but were not notified will have until June 6<sup>th</sup> to appeal to the MSS Administration Team.

### **Achievement Chords**

Students can apply for 1 achievement chord in the following categories:

1. **Cultural Leadership:** For Indigenous students contributing to their community and promoting cultural awareness.
2. **Arts:** Celebrating excellence in visual arts, music, drama, and dance.
3. **ADST – Trades:** Recognizing achievements in Auto, Metal, Woodwork, and Culinary Arts.
4. **Community Service:** For students demonstrating outstanding commitment to volunteering and service.

5. **STEM:** Honouring accomplishments in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.
6. **Humanities:** Highlighting excellence in subjects like literature, social studies, and languages.
7. **Athletics:** For students excelling as multi-sport athletes who demonstrate leadership and teamwork.
8. **Dual Dogwood:** Celebrating French Immersion graduates committed to bilingualism.

## How It Works

### 1. Student Applications:

- Students must submit a brief application for the category they wish to be considered for. Students may submit an application for a second “back up” achievement chord but will only be selected for one.
- Applications include a description of achievements, examples of contributions, and contact information for a reference.
- Supporting evidence (e.g., photos, certificates) can be included, depending on the category.
- Students must be in good standing with the school including attendance and behaviour to be considered for an achievement chord.

### 2. Selection Committees:

- Each category will have a dedicated committee of teachers and staff who review the applications.
- Committees will use standardized criteria to assess applications, ensuring a fair and transparent process.
- Achievement chords will be awarded based on the strength of the application, alignment with category criteria, and student conduct.

## Timeline

- **Applications Open:** February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025
- **Application Deadline:** February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025
- **Selection Period:** March 1<sup>st</sup>- April 11<sup>th</sup>
- **Achievement Chords Awarded:** May 30<sup>th</sup>

## Key Points for Students and Families

- The process is self-driven, with students taking responsibility for completing and submitting their applications.
- Every student may apply for 1 achievement category as well as a second “back up” category. Students receiving an academic honour chord are still eligible to apply for an achievement chord.
- Clear criteria and an application template are provided to guide students in preparing their applications.

This process reflects our commitment to celebrating the diverse achievements of our students and recognizing their unique contributions to our school and community.

For more information or to access the application form, please contact Dave Andersen ([dandersen@sd58.bc.ca](mailto:dandersen@sd58.bc.ca)) or visit the Graduation section of the MSS Website (<https://mss.sd58.bc.ca/graduation/>). We look forward to celebrating the many talents of our students through this exciting initiative!

# **Achievement Chord Application Criteria (Example per Category)**

## **1. Cultural Leadership (Indigenous Students)**

- Actively participates in Indigenous cultural events or community service.
- Demonstrates leadership or mentorship in Indigenous student groups or initiatives.
- Provides an example of how their contributions impacted their school or community.

## **2. Arts**

- Participates consistently in one or more school arts programs (visual arts, music, drama, dance).
- Shows excellence through awards, exhibitions, performances, or major projects.
- Provides an example of their contributions or achievements in the arts.

## **3. ADST – Trades (Auto, Metal, Wood & Food)**

- Completes advanced projects in their specific trade area with skill and safety.
- Demonstrates commitment to learning and growth within the trade.
- Provides examples or photos of projects, if applicable.

## **4. Community Service**

- Completes a minimum of 50 hours of verified community service.
- Shows commitment to ongoing community involvement (e.g., sustained volunteering).
- Provides a brief description of the impact of their service.

## **5. STEM**

- Engages in extracurricular STEM activities or projects (e.g., science fairs, robotics club).
- Demonstrates a high level of achievement in STEM subjects or competitions.

- Provides examples of STEM-related work or recognition.

## **6. Humanities**

- Participates in extracurricular Humanities-related activities (e.g., Book Club, Battle of the Books).
- Demonstrates strong performance and engagement in Humanities courses.
- Provides an example of their contributions or achievements in the Humanities.

## **7. Athletics**

- Participates in at least two school sports or athletic activities across multiple seasons.
- Shows excellence in sportsmanship, teamwork, and leadership.
- Provides specific examples of their contributions to school athletics.

## **8. Dual Dogwood (French Immersion Graduates)**

- Completes the French Immersion program with commitment to bilingualism.
- Demonstrates active engagement in French cultural or linguistic activities.
- Provides examples of participation in French-related events or accomplishments.