



Dundana Elementary School

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

23 Dundana Avenue
Dundas, Ontario L9H 4E5
Phone: 905.628.2622
Fax: 905.628.2699

EMAIL: dundana@hwdsb.on.ca
PRINCIPAL: K. Keery Bishop
kkeerybi@hwdsb.on.ca
www.hwdsb.on.ca/dundana

August 13 2020 Update to Dundana Families

Principal Update

I hope all of our Dundana families have been able to find ways to enjoy this strange summer, spend time with family and friends, and rest and recharge. While I know there is still a lot of uncertainty surrounding school buildings re-opening in September, I am excited that we will have the opportunity to welcome students back to learn in person with us. I know families have a difficult choice to make in the next week; during the week of August 17, parents/caregivers will need to enter information onto the Parent Portal indicating whether your child will be starting the year in person at school or if they will start the year as a distance learning student. As the information that was sent out earlier this week indicated, even if you opt for distance learning, there will be three opportunities during the school year for you to re-evaluate and return to in class learning if you choose. (If you were not aware of the parent portal response requirement for the week of August 17th, please see this communication from HWDSB:

<https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/about/covid19/covid-19-update-to-families-19-august-11-2020/>

I know what a tough choice this is for families, made even more difficult because HWDSB, the Ministry of Education, and provincial and local Public Health departments are still working on many of the details. Earlier this week, the HWDSB Board of Trustees held a meeting to work through the elements of the School Re-Opening plan. It is available here, if you would like to read the entire report: <https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/meetings/Special-Board-Agenda-1597086836.pdf>

I've taken the full report and condensed down the pertinent content that most affects Dundana families. Here is that information:

Overview Information:

- Elementary schools will open in conventional mode (i.e. full time attendance of all students, with enhanced Public Health measures)
- Face coverings (non medical masks) are mandatory (with some reasonable exceptions) while indoors at school for students in grades 4 to 12 (optional for students in Kindergarten to grade 3)
- All staff will be required to wear medical grade masks (with some reasonable exceptions) and face shields

Enhanced Public Health Measures:

- Enhanced cleaning of frequent touch points by caretakers throughout the day and between cohorts
- Reconfiguration of learning spaces to increase space in classrooms for physical distancing
- Frequent and scheduled hand washing/sanitizing throughout the day for all students and staff



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- Cohorting of students – during the school day, students will remain with their cohort as much as possible
- Ventilation – the board is currently performing reviews on school ventilation systems and intend to address any needs that are determined
- Increased age-appropriate signage throughout the school for students about health measures (e.g. handwashing, distancing reminders)
- Limited and closely monitored, access to school by visitors
- Parent/caregiver screening of student health daily
- Outbreak protocol is in development, and school staff will be trained in its directions prior to school start up

Program

- Parent/caregivers determine if their child will attend school in person or be enrolled in distance learning school, with opt-in timelines occurring through the year
- Focus both in person and online classes on supporting well being, establishing new routines and building community
- Subject area learning guided by health protocols (e.g. arts, PE) and system guidance on curriculum delivery
- Distance learning honed to two tech platforms (MS Teams and the Hub) for easier access and use

Parent Communication

- HWDSB Parent Portal to provide single point of access for families for information sharing and required student forms and processes

Other

- Maintenance of school day start and end times during this full return scenario for elementary
- Bus transportation provided for eligible students (**NOTE: courtesy busing has been suspended at this time and courtesy busing applications will NOT be accepted**) Parents/caregivers will be contacted by Transportation directly about whether their child to understand which students will be using the provided bus services

Dundana School-Specific Information

- The Dundana website will continue to be used to inform Dundana families regularly about school specific information.
- The week of August 31st, Dundana families should look to the Dundana website for information about some specific new routines and procedures for students and families.
- The week of August 31st, information about school re-organization and possible changes to class/staffing assignments will also be shared, using the school website.

On Monday, August 17, you should receive an email about accessing the Parent Portal. The email should also provide any further information available to help you with the decision to send your child to school in September or to start with distance learning. Continue to watch both the board website and the Dundana School website for updates as we approach the beginning of the school year for more updates.



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