



Dundana Elementary School

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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December 2020 Dundana Newsletter

Principal Message

Schools should be a welcoming place. They shouldn't just a place for students to come and learn together as a community, but where we can also invite parents, guardians and family members into our community for celebrations, events, demonstrations of learning and conversations. This is one of the important aspects we are missing in our schools this year. Certainly, it is with reason, but it is missed all the same.

This December will mark the first in many years that Dundana won't have a Winter Concert to share. With imposed restrictions on indoor singing, gathering and sharing of online content, we've had to change our traditions. While we are unable to give parents and family members the same kinds of glimpses into what's happening in our school, please know that we are still doing whatever we can to maintain and build student interest and excitement in school. As you are likely experiencing at home as well, it is the year to find new traditions and activities to make the most of what we have.

Instead of our Winter Concert, we'll be having a Winter Village display with many classes contributing a scene. We'll also have a fun, new "December Dance" to add to our Friday Funday Dance Parties outside. Our monthly awards and reflection assembly will continue virtually. We'll have the ever-popular Pyjama day as a Spirit day this month, as well as a few other surprises sprinkled in.

It is important to understand that school staff are organizing and implementing these activities to support the development of school community despite our distancing restrictions and other protocols. The amount of time we spend lining up for hand washing, sanitizing and distancing can be tedious for students and we know that can have a negative impact on student well being. Anxious or disappointed thoughts about changes to their typical winter break activities, or worries about family, friends, and the pandemic may also be affecting our students. We have less time than ever to teach students curricular expectations, but it is also more important than ever that we help them pause, smile and connect in spite of the work and the protocol adherence to be done. I look forward to the day when we'll again be able to safely welcome parents, guardians and family members into the school to share in our experiences. In the meantime, I thought it was important to share with you the thinking behind our collective efforts at Dundana to bring some light to your child's school day in addition to what you see reported on any school academic or learning skills reports. I hope the upcoming winter break will allow all of you the same opportunity to rest, smile and make new memories.

School Council Update

In November, members of the Dundana School Council initiated a community drive for cloth masks, as well as needed clothing items by one of our Hamilton schools in need. Thanks to the overwhelming support to our Dundana community, we were able to restock our selection of cloth masks available for Dundana students who forget or break/soil their mask while at school. As well, we were able to donate 5 large bags of clothing and 5 boxes of cloth masks to Bennetto School in Hamilton to support their students and families! Thank you for all of the donations. They have been so appreciated by both the Dundana and Bennetto communities.



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School Council will have their next meeting on **Wednesday December 2 at 6:30 p.m.** If you are interested in attending this virtual meeting via MS Teams, please email Mrs. Keery Bishop at kkeerybi@hwdsb.on.ca by Tuesday, December 1.

Winter Weather Reminders

We will keep trying to go outside as frequently as we can for students to get masks breaks, some fresh air, and a chance to move around. However, we are anticipating that winter weather conditions may, at times, interfere with our abilities to safely cohort students on the playground (e.g. icy conditions on the playground, snow covered cohort lines). When these conditions arise, we may have to resort to indoor morning entry or indoor recesses to keep our physical distancing and safety parameters in place. Whenever possible, we will find alternate ways to get students outside on those days during instruction time where they can continue to be cohorted. Please continue to send your child with appropriate clothing for the weather conditions.

Dates to Remember

December 18
December 21 – January 1
January 4

Spirit Day – Pyjama Day
Winter Holiday, no school
School Resumes