



Welcome Back!

Gatestone Elementary School 2020-2021

Friday, September 4, 2020.

Dear Gatestone families,

We are excited about welcoming back students – in person and through remote learning – to the 2020-21 school year. The pandemic has brought many changes to our school and its families, but I know that we can rise to the occasion if we work together. Thank you for keeping up with the communications coming from HWDSB, and for completing important forms and surveys as required. We are taking many actions to prevent COVID-19 at our school. You will notice that safety is guiding our programming choices. Here are some of the important points to remember:

Attestation

Before a student can enter a school, we require that their family completes an attestation that they have read, understood, and will abide by expectations. Find this on the [Parent Portal](#). ([Backup location](#) for forms and translations.)

Daily COVID-19 Screening

HWDSB COVID-19 Student Screening Checklist is to be completed daily before arriving at school. The checklist is found on the Parent Portal as well as on the [HWDSB website](#). If you answered YES to any of the screening questions, or if you refuse to answer the questions, the student has failed the screening and must not attend school. The family should contact Public Health (905) 974-9848 or their family doctor for testing. Please contact the school using [SafeArrival](#) to report the absence. If the student is tested for COVID-19, your school would appreciate knowing the outcome of that test.

Staggered start details

As you know, we will be opening our school with a staggered start timeline. This means that not all students will begin on the same day. Please see the chart below, note which group your child falls into, and reach out if you have more questions.

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 7	TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 8	WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 9	THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 10	FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 11
LABOUR DAY HOLIDAY	Staff Transition to New Assignments Remote Learning Day School Training	Staff Transition to New Assignments Remote Learning Day School Training	Students that Require Special Education Supports/Supports with Transitions and Mental Health JK Orientation Remote Learning Day School Welcome	Students that Require Special Education Supports/Supports with Transitions and Mental Health JK Orientation Remote Learning Day School Welcome
MONDAY SEPTEMBER 14	TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 15	WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 16	THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 17	FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 18
GROUP A Last Name Alpha A to K (approximately ½ class)	GROUP B Last Name Alpha L to Z (approximately ½ class)	ALL STUDENTS RETURN TO SCHOOL (Full Classes)	ALL STUDENTS (Full Classes)	ALL STUDENTS (Full Classes)

New routines and protocols

School operations are changing significantly to ensure that we can provide a safe learning environment for students. Our Gatestone Elementary Site Plan is posted on our website under Community Updates. Please see our site plan to review protocols and routines. These protocols have been recommended by Public Health.

Water Bottles

Drinking fountains in all schools will be bagged and not used. Please be sure to send your child with a reusable water bottle so they stay hydrated, in addition to their non-medical mask.

Visiting Schools

This year, our school must significantly limit or even prohibit visitors to school, including parents, to support a safe and healthy learning environment. We ask families to call or email our school if they need to supply information or contact a staff member. Also, it is strongly recommended that parents do not drop off items during the school day.

Junior Kindergarten Orientation

Kindergarten staff will be e-mailing or phoning the families of JK students to set up a classroom visit on Friday, September 11. We ask one parent only attend. A medical screening will be completed prior to entering the building. Parents must sign in at our main office prior to visiting the classroom. Please ensure your child's attestation form is completed prior to the visit.

Elementary Reorganization

Our school reorganization has allowed for smaller class sizes in our Kindergarten and junior/intermediate classrooms. We understand change is difficult for some of our students. Knowing there will be changes for our students than the tentative placements shared in June, our staff is prepared to work with all of our students to ensure they are feeling welcome and safe in their new classroom.

Parents will be able to view their child's class placement and teacher on the Parent Portal the week of September 8th. Please be patient as it may take a few days for this information to be set up in our system. **The school will send out a reminder to families once we have confirmation this information is available.**

We are unable to honour changes to class placements. Please do not contact the office for class placement changes. Classroom cohorts were developed to adhere to public health guidelines and maintain appropriate numbers to allow for physical distancing.

Due to public health recommendations, students attending Umbrella before and after school care at Gatestone will be placed together within their grade level from **Kindergarten to Grade 6**. We appreciate families understanding here. Staff will work hard to ensure students are comfortable with their new peers and class environment. Health and safety comes first in our Gatestone community.

Technology

Students returning to in-class learning that borrowed a school ipad last school year should wait to return the device until a protocol is shared regarding the drop off process. A process in the upcoming weeks will be communicated to families that have chosen online learning and require a device.

Thank you Gatestone Community

I sincerely want to thank our Gatestone families for your patience with us during these unprecedented times. We appreciate your understanding of new procedures and routines that are occurring at school and for students participating in remote online learning. We will continue to do our best to support your needs and answer your questions as we work to re-open schools safely.

Learn more about COVID-19 precautions at HWDSB at www.hwdsb.on.ca/covid19.

If you have any questions, or think your child might struggle with school, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Kelly Reilly-Scott

Principal