



*Gatestone Weekly Updates*

**May 3 – May 7**

**Gatestone Elementary School 2020-2021**

Monday, May 3	Day 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Daily Class Schedules will be Posted on your Child’s Classroom Platform</i></li> <li><i>Mental Health Awareness Week: Gatestone will continue to share awareness through the month of May</i></li> </ul>
Tuesday, May 4	Day 4
Wednesday, May 5	Day 5
Thursday, May 6	Day 1
Friday, May 7	Day 2 <b>Jump Rope for Heart Class Activities</b>

**Upcoming Important Dates:**

***Kindergarten Grad Photos – May 17,18 (if school is open and no restrictions)***

***Virtual Kindergarten Orientation – May 19***

**Mental Health Awareness in May**

Our Gatestone Mental Health Reps have designed and shared a variety of activities and resources for Gatestone staff to implement during the month of May that support Mental Health Awareness and student well-being. Given the challenging year our students have experienced, Gatestone is committed to educating our students around

ways they can take care of themselves. A few parent resources were attached in our Community Weekly Post.

The link below is another resource to support parents as well when children are indoors for lengthy periods of time due to remote learning.

<https://www.5minutefun.com/wellbeing-activities-for-kids-stuck-indoors/>

### **Jump Rope for Heart**

Students will be recognizing Jump Rope for Heart on May 7<sup>th</sup> virtually. Thank you Gatestone community for all your support here!

[https://secure-support.heartandstroke.ca/site/SPageServer?pagename=jfh\\_donate](https://secure-support.heartandstroke.ca/site/SPageServer?pagename=jfh_donate)

### **Heritage Green Community Trust**

In June 2020, Gatestone was approved for a grant through Heritage Green Community Trust to support the Revitalization of the Learning Commons area. With an approved grant of \$32,400 from Heritage Green Community Trust, Gatestone was able to purchase new furniture to support innovation and collaborative spaces in this space and also provide additional storage and shelving for resources. The school has also supported the project by purchasing a new mounted projector for large and small group instruction and additional ipads to support learning in this space. Literacy resources continue to be updated and purchased yearly as well. See below letter to Heritage Green Community Trust. Pictures of the new space is also included, however the school will communicate more updated use of the space once COVID-19 protocols are lifted. ***Thank you Heritage Green Community Trust for your support to improve innovation and collaboration in this area of our school.***

**Heritage Green Grant 2020 - 2021**  
**Learning Commons Revitalization Gatestone Elementary**  
**May 2021**



**Heritage Green Community Trust,**

**COVID-19 PROTOCOLS 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR**

Due to COVID-19 protocols, although our Learning Commons space has been completed, it is not currently in use for collaborative spaces. Umbrella is unable to use this space at this time as well. We have been able to use this space with small cohorts of students to support literacy and technology skills. We are excited to begin appropriate shared school use of this space once COVID-19 protocols are lifted.

**COMMUNICATION AND SCHOOL FUNDING TO SUPPORT PROJECT**

This current school year, Gatestone has also purchased various technology (ipads, laptops for research, projector for whole class learning) for this space and extra furniture (shelving for lego wall and Umbrella Care storage) through school funding. School Council funding and fundraising has been on pause for this current school year due to COVID-19 restrictions. School Council will be able to support increased technology for this space once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. The approved grant through Heritage Green to support the revitalization of our Learning Commons area has been shared with our School Council through pictures and Administrator communication. Pictures of the revitalized space was also shared with our Community in Gatestone's Weekly Community Updates and our School Council.

**LONG TERM BENEFITS**

The Learning Commons space was an important area of need that required significant improvement to support collaboration and innovation. Our Gatestone community is thankful to have such a generous start provided through Heritage Green so improvements in the Learning Commons area can be made. We now have a variety of collaborative spaces implemented for students, staff, and the community. We have new areas created to support technology skills, literacy skills, and innovation. The school will continue to put forth funds toward this space by replenishing technology yearly and purchasing new literacy resources as well. The creation of a Maker Space will allow for opportunities for innovation, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This space will support increased student engagement and hands on learning (e.g., robotics, coding, lego creation, creative materials).

Thank you, Heritage Green Community Trust, for your support to foster student engagement and achievement at Gatestone Elementary.

Respectfully,

Kelly Reilly-Scott  
Gatestone Elementary  
Principal



## **2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR**

### ***Requests for Specific Learning Environment for Your Children***

It's understandable that although we are currently faced with school closures, September class placements are on families' minds. The HWDSB will be sharing information with families regarding remote learning opportunities for students for the 2021-2022 soon. For students returning to in-person learning, Gatestone Elementary School does not accept parental requests for a specific class placement. We have checked with our area schools and the majority of schools do not accept these requests either. The practice of selecting a specific teacher is contrary to all that we believe in terms of respecting all members of the Gatestone community and learning to work together.

With our current focus on grade team planning and implementation of our instructional program, all classes of the same grade will have a similar curriculum focus and delivery. Given that the curriculum will be aligned across the classes in the same grade, parents can be assured that the instructional program their child receives will be of equal caliber across the grade team. While we know that parents sometimes have a preference for a specific teacher, we believe it is important for our students to learn how to cooperate and function in an environment with a wide range of personalities and educational philosophies, which is a life-long skill that is imperative to meeting with success in any group or workplace. For these reasons we will not accept requests naming specific teachers and/or students.

At Gatestone we have developed a comprehensive process of assigning students to classes based on combinations of students, the learning needs of each student, the balance of male/female ratios, students who present with challenges, as well as independent workers versus students who require greater teacher support. All of this information is important in developing classes that are balanced and effective and can only be done by staff who work directly, in the school, with all of the students being considered.

Another common request from parents is that their child not be placed in a “split” or a combined class. We cannot accept these requests. Split or combined classes are a reality in education today. Instruction in these classrooms is differentiated to meet the needs of all learners. We take the entire student profile into account before making decisions about placement. Just because a child was in a combined class one year does not guarantee that they will not be in a combined class the following year.

Should you feel the need to share parental input into the type of learning environment that would best meet the specific needs of your child, you are welcome to share this information through e-mail to [kreillys@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:kreillys@hwdsb.on.ca) by May 14<sup>th</sup>. I hope this has helped you to understand the complexity of allocating classes in a fair, responsible and equitable manner and helps to assure you that great attention is given to the placement of each and every child.

Respectfully,

Kelly Reilly-Scott  
Principal