



January 24 – January 28

Gatestone Elementary School 2021-2022

Week at a Glance

Monday, January 24	Day 2	Please complete the daily screener for your child.
Tuesday, January 25	Day 3	
Wednesday, January 26	Day 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Parent Council Meeting 6PM Virtual MS Teams (please email www.gatestone@hwdsb.on.ca if you require a link to this meeting).
Thursday, January 27	Day 5	
Friday, January 28	Day 0	PD Day – No School

Weekly Updates

Public Health Guidance

The Ministry of Health published [COVID-19: Interim Guidance for Schools and Child Care: Omicron Surge](#). Also, please find two updated decision guides created by Hamilton Public Health Services schools will follow when a student is symptomatic.

- [Symptomatic Child At Home – Decision Guide](#)
- [Symptomatic Child at School or Child Care – Decision Guide](#)

When in doubt, please contact the school before sending your child to school. Any child with a symptom (common or less common) will not pass the screener and should follow the appropriate isolation guidelines. We appreciate families working together to keep schools safe and everyone healthy.

Student Daily Screening

A friendly reminder to please complete the student screener daily with your child. Our younger students will have received a calendar for the month of January and February. Parents will need to

initial each day, once the screener has been completed, to verify their child has passed the screener. Please do not initial the days ahead on the screener as the purpose of this tool is to remind us to screen daily and work through the screener questions each day. Older students (typically Grade 6-8) that are able to read the screener and answer the questions may complete the screener in the morning with their classroom teacher. Students may also complete this on their device as well. The green check mark will determine if they have passed the screener and can attend school. Thank you for your support here!

<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>

School Reporting of Self Reported COVID-19 Cases

As the province and Public Health focus their efforts on vaccine, the practice of case management in school settings has stopped in Ontario. Given that our communities may have access to tests, (PCR, RAT), HWDSB has created the following process to communicate information on test results shared by staff or families. This process is voluntary for families that choose to self-report. Any information provided by the school to communities has not been confirmed by Public Health. Cohorts of students/staff will not be dismissed as a result of this data. The school will communicate self-reported cases on the school website. Please subscribe to our Gatestone Website to receive notifications. <https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/gatestone/>. The subscribe button is located on the Gatestone website home page under the Gatestone school picture.

Absentee Rates Reporting

- Principals will report absentee rates (staff and students) to the provincial government daily.
- This number will be shared with the Board as a percentage of students and staff and posted on the Board website. **Please note this will not include a class-by-class breakdown, only an overall number of absences or percentage of staff/student absences and will be noted for the *previous* day.**
- If a school's absence rate for students or staff reaches 30%, principals will report that to Public Health and will follow Public Health guidance.

Additional Measures

We will continue to reduce the number of contacts within our schools in any way possible. This includes:

- A pause on any in-person high-contact/high-intensity activities, as well as band and choir.
- There will be a pause on **all extra curricular activities** (except for those activities that run virtually) until further notice
- School Photographs are on pause

- Students will remain with their classroom cohorts during recesses and lunch breaks, even while outside.
- School boards are permitted to mix contacts if necessary to continue school operations due to staffing shortages. If this occurs, classrooms may be combined into larger areas (gyms, libraries) where they can be supervised by a teacher with physical distance between the cohorts. We are also using all of the resources available, including retired teachers and principals, occasional teachers, student teachers and emergency instructors to support keeping our schools open without having to mix cohorts.
- Closing a school due to an unsafe staffing level will be considered only as a last resort

Short Term Asynchronous Learning

Elementary Short Term Virtual Learning will be offered for parents who do not wish to send their child back for in-person learning for a short period of time. The Short-term virtual learning will be asynchronous. Current classroom teachers will not provide the learning. HWDSB School Programs will provide learning packages accessed through <https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementary/elementary-remote-learning-2021-22/learn-at-home/> and supplement through a regular MS Teams event that will:

- Have a live component at scheduled hours;
- Enable questions regarding the learning packages to be asked and responded to in the chat function;
- Not provide 1:1 support;

The Short-Term Virtual Learning Model will continue to February 18, 2022 depending on the evolving situation with COVID-19 in the province. The learning packages on www.hwdsb.on.ca can be translated through Google Translate. MS Teams provides captioning in different languages. There are also resources for students and families at the HWDSB Learn4Success , Centre4Success and Enrichment and Innovation websites. Individualized learning packages will not be available for students.

Families that choose to participate in asynchronous learning for the next few weeks, rather than have their child attend in-person, **must notify the main office**. Our office will require a temporary excusal form. Our main office will send the form to parents/guardians via email for signature.

Parking Safety Around the School

A friendly reminder to our families to avoid parking vehicles right across from our school during entry and dismissal times. This helps to lessen congestion for our buses trying to enter and exit and also allows our crossing guard safer views of oncoming traffic. We prefer all families walk with their younger children to school to lessen congestion at our entrance. Older students should be walking to

school if they are not assigned to a bus. Students should always be crossing at the crossing guard area. Thank you for your support here.

School Photographs (Retake) and Grade 8 Grad Photographs

School Re-take photographs and Grade 8 Grad photographs will be rescheduled. Photographs are cancelled until at least February 14th. The school will communicate once new dates are scheduled. Families that ordered photographs prior to our winter break were distributed today.

Rapid Antigen Tests

2 Rapid Antigen Tests were sent home with each student today. These tests are only for students currently attending in-person learning. Parents/guardians may use the test kits when a child is showing symptoms of COVID-19. Please continue to follow the daily screener and follow Ontario isolation requirements if your child has symptoms of COVID-19 (common or uncommon).

Parents/Guardians we had a successful return to in-person school this week. Let's keep working together to maintain a safe and healthy school.