



George L. Armstrong Elementary School

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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www.hwdsb.on.ca/georgelarmstrong

September 6th, 2020

Dear Families,

We are excited about welcoming back students – in person and through remote learning – to the 2021-2022 school year. Both Ms. Miskas and I are excited to be joining the Armstrong community as the new administration team. We look forward to meeting everyone in the coming weeks and want to thank and congratulate the former principal, Mrs. Koop who retired on June 30th.

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:

Screening Measures: A One-time Attestation

Parents and caregivers are required to complete a screening attestation for each student prior to attending school on the first day. Attestation forms can be accessed in the [Parent Portal](#). ([Backup location](#) for forms and translations.)

Elementary	Daily	Student	Screening
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All elementary students must be screened for COVID symptoms daily. Daily screening consists of two steps:

- **Online Screening Tool:** [COVID-19 school screening \(ontario.ca\)](https://www.ontario.ca/COVID-19-school-screening) Using an electronic device, complete the questionnaire at the above link. Students who are not able to confirm their daily screening on their own using an electronic device will require assistance from their parent or guardian. If your student receives a “Go to school/child care” result, they are cleared to attend school.
- **Daily COVID-19 Screening Verification Log:** Once students have been cleared to attend school, parents and guardians will initial the paper log on the current date to confirm screening has been completed. This paper log must be returned to your child’s school each day they attend.

Students in older grades who can navigate the Online Screening Tool may complete this process independently with their parent’s knowledge.

Student Mask Attestation Exception

Masks are mandated for all students, including kindergarten students. Reasonable exceptions on the requirement to wear masks will apply and may include the following:



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- The student has underlying medical, developmental, sensory or mental health reasons which inhibit their ability to wear a non-medical mask
- The student has trouble breathing or is unable to remove the mask without assistance

Mask attestation exemption forms can be completed in the [Parent Portal Log In](#) or [downloaded](#) from the HWDSB website and emailed to the school.

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 note that the first day of school for all students in grades 1 to 8 is Wednesday, September 8th.

All children new to kindergarten have already been contacted by the classroom teacher and a school visit should have been arranged for September 8th. For our FDK visits, please use the entrances located within the FDK outdoor yard.

On Thursday, September 9th all children new to kindergarten and all children entering year 2 of kindergarten will begin full day attendance.

Routines and protocols

School operations are very similar to last year to ensure that we can provide a safe learning environment for students. School-specific protocols have been posted on our website, [School Site Plan](#). These will cover everything from parking lots, classroom set up, nutrition breaks, mandatory masks for students and more:

- **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** - Once again 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.
- **Morning Entry & Dismissal** – All classes will have a designated space for morning entry and dismissal. On the first few days, teachers will be out with signs so that students know where to go for entry and



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dismissal. We do ask that parents where possible have a designated drop off and pick up spot outside the playground and blacktop area to limit the number of people on school property. Families are encouraged to arrive a couple of minutes before the morning entry bell at 8:40 a.m. and to leave school property as promptly as possible at the end of the day when dismissed at 3:00 pm. **During morning entry and dismissal anyone on school property must wear a mask!**

Remote Learning Transition

HWDSB is providing an opportunity for elementary students to transition between in-person and Remote Learning later this fall.

Starting Friday, September 3, families who want a change for their child/ren between learning models can make their choice in the Parent Portal. The survey will close one week later, Friday, September 10 at 11:59 p.m., and students will make their transition between learning models in early October.

Families requesting a transition between remote and in-person learning this September are reminded that students will begin the school year in their original selection and will not complete their transition until a later date. Students who did not previously select the Remote Learning option in the June 2021 survey are considered in-person learners by default.

Additional Back-to-School To-Dos

In addition to the screening attestation and mask attestation exemption forms, parents are required to complete the following forms located in the Parent Portal:

- Digital Tools Permission
- Internet Use and Photo Consent
- Media Consent Agreement
- Elementary: Nutrition Break Consent
- Student Information Verification
- Elementary: Emergency School Closure

To access these forms please go to the [Parent Portal Log In](#) and click “Forms” on the left-hand side of the screen. Families who are unable to access the Parent Portal may request a paper copy from their schools. We understand that some families may find these processes difficult to navigate, and we are here to support. If you have any questions, please contact your child/ren’s school or visit <https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/about/covid19/> for more information.



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With Sadness

It is with a heavy heart that I share the sad news that one of our valued Armstrong staff members, Wendy Lampman passed away on July 26th. I know many of you will wish to send condolences to Wendy's family. We have a memory book for students who new Wendy and would like to share a message with the family. Ms. Zaroski our LRT, will be reaching out to students in the coming days for those who wish to share a message. The entire Armstrong family will be keeping all of Wendy's loved ones in our thoughts.

School Year Calendar and 5 Day cycle:

Attached are the links for the school year calendar and 5 day cycle:

[Elementary 2021 - 2022 School Year Calendar](#)

[Elementary 2021 - 2022 School Year Calendar - 5 Day Cycle](#)

We will continue to send updates as we receive added information. Thank you for understanding the challenges of planning the new school year, and for sharing our commitment to a safe and successful school year. If you have any questions, or think your child might struggle with school, please let us know.

Sincerely,
Joanne Hall, Principal
Jennifer Miskas, Vice Principal