



Mary Hopkins Elementary School

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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January 15, 2024

Dear Families,

With winter upon us, we wanted to remind you of some HWDSB policies and procedures related to cancellations, snow clearing, and cold weather.

Inclement Weather Cancellations

During severe winter weather, the difficult decision to remain open or to close is always made with the safety and security of students and staff in mind. Here are some guidelines to remember:

- A school cancellation is a tough decision – and some families may disagree with HWDSB’s call. Families can always make the choice they feel is best when it comes to sending their child to school. · For more information, please see the Inclement Weather and Board Cancellations Policy. · You can also view the Severe Weather Handout for Schools and video about Severe Weather Cancellations.

Snow Clearing

Snow-clearing at HWDSB schools is a responsibility shared by Board staff, contractors and the City of Hamilton.

- HWDSB staff clear, salt and/or sand walkways from the city sidewalk to the school, school and portable steps, walkways to portables, ramps to schools and portables, areas outside entrances and fire exit doors, fire exit stairs and ramps.

- HWDSB contractors after 5+ cm of snow will plow parking lots and sidewalks when HWDSB Facilities staff deem it necessary, salt and sand the parking lot before school starts, and if required, Head Caretakers may also salt or sand parts of the parking lot.

- The City of Hamilton is responsible for clearing snow and ice from sidewalks directly in front of schools, a top priority for the city. Note that it may take up to 24 hours after a snowfall for sidewalks to be cleared. Report a sidewalk fronting a school in need of clearing at 905-546-CITY (2489).

Contractors will plow or clear up to half of the asphalt play area at schools. Head Caretakers also inspect playgrounds and sand and/or salt areas made slippery by changing temperatures.



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Students, take extra caution when walking or playing on school property that may be slippery. Principals concerned about weather or playground conditions may hold indoor recesses and lunch/nutrition breaks. See our Snow Clearing Infographic for more information.

Cold Weather at School

Time spent outdoors is an integral part of the school day. There are great benefits when children experience fresh air, exercise and time spent outside. Outdoor play is also a break from the structure of the classroom.

Depending on the season, preparing for outdoor play in Canada can mean anything from applying sunscreen to wearing mittens and a hat. During winter, it is important that children come to school prepared for the cold. Students should wear boots, mittens/gloves and hats and it is a good idea to pack extra mittens, socks, etc. in case they are needed.

Principals decide whether to send students outside for recess. *HWDSB asks Principals to follow the City of Hamilton guideline that people stay inside when it is at or below -15C, or -20C with the wind chill.*

We thank all students and families for their understanding. If you have any questions, please contact the school at (905) 689-7905 or at maryhopkins@hwdsb.on.ca. You can also learn more about Severe Weather at HWDSB at hwdsb.on.ca/about/severe-weather/.

Sincerely,

Susete Bloom

Principal