



Sunday, March 14, 2021

Ridgemount Families,

SCHOOL PHOTO AND GRADUATION PHOTO DAY

Our school photos will take place on Tuesday, March 16 in the morning. Our Grade 8 Graduation photos will also be taken on Tuesday, March 16 in the afternoon. Students will be asked to remove their masks briefly for their photos and will then put them back on immediately after their photo.

Grade 8 students in remote learning may have their photos taken at the school on Tuesday, March 16, from 7:45-8:30am or from 3:15-4:15 pm. An email message has been shared with parents/guardians of these Grade 8 students. Information regarding photos for Kindergarten-Grade 7 students in Remote Learning will be sent out in April.

ELEMENTARY TRANSITIONS FROM REMOTE TO IN PERSON OR IN PERSON TO REMOTE:

At this time, families who wish to switch learning models between remote and in-person must contact the school at (905 575 1535) as there is no guarantee that a switch can be accommodated. We will be providing a third opportunity for students to switch to or from remote during the month of April. A message will be going out to all families about this transition this week. The parent portal will open from March 22 – March 28 for parents to indicate their choices. Be sure to enter your preference in the parent portal by the deadline on March 28th. For assistance using the parent portal contact the school at 905 575 1535 or if your child is in remote learning contact your child's remote learning office administrator.

ENTRY/DISMISSAL AND SAFE ARRIVAL

A reminder that our school day begins at 8:45 am and ends at 3:05 pm. Students will be dismissed at 3:05pm. We ask that students arrive on time or just before 8:45 am so that we can ensure the safe supervision of students during entry. The earliest we have supervision on the playground is 8:30am so please do not drop your children off before this time. Please also arrive at the school at 3:05pm for dismissal. Families are asked to remain outside of the school grounds and students will be released to them by their teachers at the end of the day.

If your child needs to be dismissed early the parent/guardian must enter this in SafeArrival or contact the school or your child's teacher in writing indicating the time of dismissal and who will be picking the child up. Students leaving early will be released from the office and the front doors of the school only.

Please click on the following link for instructions on how to report student absences using the Safe Arrival process. [SafeArrival](#)

If you require assistance accessing the SafeArrival app please contact the school at 905 575 1535.

Updated Screening Protocols

Thank you for continuing to complete your daily COVID-19 screening before arriving at school. You may have noticed the provincial screening tool has changed. Here are some of the significant changes:

1. A student with any **single** new COVID-19 symptom must isolate until they test negative for COVID-19, receives an alternate diagnosis for the symptom, or has isolated for 10 days since symptoms began. (Previously, students with a minor symptom could return after 24 hours.)
2. If you live with someone who has a new COVID-19 symptom, you must isolate pending the symptomatic person's COVID-19 test result. This applies to siblings of symptomatic students or children of symptomatic parents/guardians.
3. If you live with an international traveller who isn't exempt from quarantine requirements, you must isolate for 14-days.

For homes with more than one child, this means that all students in a household must stay home if a single student fails the screen; all siblings will be sent home from school if one child becomes ill.

We ask that all students returning to school remember to bring their masks. We will be wearing masks outdoors and in our outdoor cohort yards as well. It is a good idea to consider sending 2 masks per child as when outdoors masks become covered in condensation so a mask for indoors and outdoors is recommended. Please also remember to bring in a reusable water bottle and appropriate winter wear for the colder weather.

Only those students that have been approved for transportation may take the bus. Please do not put your child on a bus unless you have been approved by the school. Contact the school if you have any questions about busing (905 575 1535).

Please complete the daily screening with your child each day.

- [Daily COVID-19 Screen](#)

If you answer Yes to any questions, the student has failed the screening and must not attend school. Please follow the steps outlined in the screening tool. If you need to schedule a COVID-19 test, you may do so through www.HamiltonCovidTest.ca.

Visitor Screening

- We will continue with existing Visitor process. A Visitor is anyone who is not on staff at the school and may include other HWDSB staff e.g. itinerant, facilities, occasional, etc.
- [Daily COVID-19 Screen](#)
- Note signage: "You Must Screen Before Entry and Report to the Main Office if You Pass the Screen"
- The Office administrator should provide a copy of the screen and ask the visitor "did you pass the screen?"
- If the visitor passed, the office administrator will complete the Visitor Sign In sheet. Visitors should not be completing the Sign In sheet themselves as the screening information should remain confidential
- If the visitor did not pass they are asked to leave the building.

Parking Lot and Pick Up and Drop Off

A reminder that for the safety of our staff and students, families will not be permitted to enter the school parking lot throughout the school day. Families are asked to follow the parking signs posted on Ronaldshay and Hester streets and to ensure students safely enter the school using the sidewalks and the proper entrance by the portable. The parking bylaw officers have been patrolling and giving warnings that they will be ticketing those parked illegally in the upcoming weeks. Please do not park in our school bus loading zones (Along the west side of Ronaldshay beside the Kindergarten during entry in the mornings and at the front entrance on Hester at dismissal time).

A reminder as the weather turns colder to ensure that students are wearing appropriate clothing (boots, gloves, hats, winter jackets). We are able to store winter clothing in lockers and be sure to label all clothing as due to covid restrictions there is no lost and found collection at Ridgemount. If valuable items are found they are turned into the office so please contact us if your child has lost something valuable. Clothing items found in classrooms, lockers or hallways will be gathered in a bag and after a short time disposed of or donated to a local charity. Please be sure to tune into local news stations or the HWDSB website (www.hwdsb.on.ca) for inclement weather updates and school cancellations.

Please be sure to wear masks when on or near the school premises especially during busy drop off and pick up times. We are also encouraging students to wear masks when outdoors at recess, especially when they are playing closer contact activities.. Students are still encouraged to social distance and there is plenty of space in each cohort year to remove themselves and take a mask break.

Thank you for keeping up with the communications coming from HWDSB, and for completing important forms, daily screening and reminding students of safety protocols as required. Please be sure to connect with your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns. A reminder to stay updated and informed please register for our website by logging on to www.hwdsb.on.ca/ridgemount/

Attestation and Attestation for Return to School Forms

Before a student can enter a school or after a student has been asked to self isolate for a period of time, we require that their family completes an attestation or attestation return to school form. Please be sure to read, and follow the instructions and abide by the expectations included on the forms. Find this on the [Parent Portal](#). ([Backup location](#) for forms and translations or contact the school and we will assist you with locating the appropriate form.

If for any reason your child is instructed by Public Health to self isolate for a period of time parents/guardians must review and complete the [Attestation for retrun to school after illness OR self isolation form](#) before their child can return to school. Please be sure to complete and return this form. The form can be found here:

<https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/ridgemount/files/2020/11/Attestation-for-return-to-school-after-illness-OR-self-isolation-1.pdf>

New routines and protocols

School operations are changing significantly to ensure that we can provide a safe learning environment for students. We are finishing school-specific protocols and expect to post these to our website or send out in school messenger in the days ahead. 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

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.

A reminder that parents/guardians are asked not to bring in lunches throughout the day. Please ensure students have an adequate lunch for both nutrition breaks as we are limiting the number of visitors to the school.

Transportation

A reminder to all families using transportation to please sign up to the HWSTS parent portal <https://www.hamiltonschoolbus.ca/parents/> so that you will be notified if the bus will be delayed longer than 10 minutes.

[Parent's Portal - Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation Services](https://www.hamiltonschoolbus.ca/parents/)

Thank you for visiting the HWSTS Parent Portal. We are pleased to offer this new information tool to provide parents / guardians of students enhanced information and features regarding their student transportation services.

www.hamiltonschoolbus.ca

Please be sure to contact the school if your child is eligible for busing but will not be riding the bus or if your child is only riding the bus one way so that the transportation department can plan accordingly. If you are picking your child up at the end of the day and they are students that normally take the bus you must go the front entrance of the school and buzz the office for assistance. Thank you.

A reminder that there is no lost and found collection at Ridgemount this year due to covid restrictions. If valuable items are found they are turned into the office so please contact us if your child has lost something valuable. Clothing items will be gathered in a bag and after a short time disposed of or donated to a local charity.

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

Stay healthy and safe,

Mr. G Carey – Principal