



Westmount Secondary School

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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www.hwdsb.on.ca/westmount

September 3, 2021

Dear Westmount Families,

We are excited to welcome our students back to classes – in person and through remote/elearning – to the 2021-22 school year. The last year was an unusual in many ways, and we know our students may be feeling anxious about returning to classes this September.

We appreciate that families may have a lot of questions as they prepare to send their students back to classes and are committed to sharing updates as we receive new information. We also invite families to keep up with communications from HWDSB by [subscribing to email updates](#) or following @hwdsb on social media. Please follow our school Twitter account @Westmount_HWDSB.

A friendly reminder that the first day of school will be **Wednesday, September 8**. We understand that this falls on the last day of Rosh Hashanah, and will be working directly with families who require accommodation for this day. Please reach out to the school if you have any questions.

We know that safety is on the minds of every family sending their child/ren back to school. We are taking many actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our classes while giving our students meaningful experiences which focus on both their physical and emotional well-being. Here are some important points for families to remember as students prepare for the start of the school year:

Attestation

Parents and caregivers, and students over 18 years of age, are asked to complete [one-time attestation](#) to declare that you will participate in active daily screening. The attestation can be completed in the [Parent Portal](#)

Daily COVID-19 Screening

Students will submit a daily screening either on paper or a device to an educator for review. If the student does not have verification, they will remain in class, with a mask and distanced as much as possible from others. Parents will be contacted to verify screening. Although the screening has changed, the process is similar to last year.

Mask Requirements

Masks are mandated for all students. Reasonable exceptions on the requirement to wear masks will apply. No medical notes are required. Please complete the form in the Parent Portal if a mask exemption is needed.

Privacy and Immunization Status

HWDSB's immunization disclosure policy is in effect, and all schools will follow provincial guidelines regarding vaccinations requirements. As students and staff come together in schools, we remind everyone that individual health information, including vaccination status, is confidential. In order to



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support an inclusive and respectful school environment, we ask families to not engage in conversations around vaccination opinions or ask for vaccination status of other students, staff or teachers.

Case Management

HWDSB will continue to work with Hamilton Public Health services to confirm details related to contract tracing as well as procedures related to dismissed cohorts and closures. Information on confirmed cases of COVID-19 that involve a student or staff member in a school setting will be posted on the [COVID-19 Advisory Dashboard](#). In the interest of privacy, information will not identify the student or staff member that has received a positive COVID-19 test.

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

Visitors and Volunteers

Access to the school will be very limited for parents and caregivers. There will be a temporary pause on welcoming volunteers in our school as staff await more information from the Ministry of Education about how the Immunization Disclosure Policy impacts them.

Making Wellness a Priority

When it comes to our students, wellness comes first. We will be introducing a new welcoming, inclusive initiative to help students as they return to school. [Reimagining Wellness](#) is a series of activities and lessons which address needs highlighted during school closures for COVID-19: the need for safety, routine, support, growth, community and more. Short activities covering weekly themes such as personal and collective identity, understanding and managing emotions, self-care and more will be woven into your child/ren's learning schedule.

Return to Athletics

Plans are underway for a safe return to athletics, after the pause on extracurricular last year. For more information, please [Read the update on athletics here](#).

Revised Site Plan

Please see attached a revised site plan that was sent out last week with additional/updated information.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school. We are looking forward to an exciting new school year. Have a restful long weekend.

Sincerely,

Ms. Geeta Malhotra
Principal