

HWDSB

April 22, 2020

To: Grade 12 students and their parents/guardians,

We are writing to you in hopes of easing some of the concerns we are hearing from our graduating students and to provide you and your families with further information concerning your final year of secondary school.

We want to begin by saying how sorry we are that we had to cancel athletics, proms, banquets and similar events for the remainder of the school year. This was a difficult decision to make but it was a necessary one for the safety of all, made with guidance from public health officials. In addition, we have made the difficult decision to cancel all secondary school graduations in June and explore solutions to offer them in the fall once the emergency order in Ontario is lifted and it is safe to gather in large numbers.

We all recognize that Grade 12 can be a challenging year for students and the many changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic have created additional challenges. No student will have their graduation compromised by COVID-19 and it is our priority to support Grade 12 students through to graduation.

The Ministry of Education has collaborated with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities to ensure there will be no barriers for graduating Grade 12 students to access post-secondary education. This includes:

- Waiving the graduation requirement of 40 hours of volunteer service
- Waiving the requirement to successfully complete the Grade 10 Literacy Test requirements
- Graduating students in a Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) program unable to complete their SHSM requirements will be supported through the override request process
- Ensuring that midterm marks for Grade 12 students are available to colleges and universities for admissions and that those are based on work done before March 13, as well as providing an opportunity for students to submit any missed and/or additional assignments to demonstrate their learning.
- Final report card marks will be reported in June 2020.

We are aware that distance learning is not a one-size fits all approach and learning during this time will look different. This means you are not expected to be online with your classmates for 75-minute periods. We hope you continue to communicate with your teachers, guidance counsellors, Special Education staff and ESL/ELD teachers to ask for the support you need to be successful.

Last week, staff supported our unprecedented distribution of technology, so that all students can participate in distance learning. If you need a device or if your situation has changed, please contact your secondary school.

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Please refer to previous letters for more detailed information about HWDSB's response during this time at www.hwdsb.on.ca/covid19. As always, we invite you to contact your school with questions. If you need further assistance, you can reach Board staff by phone at 905-527-5092 or by email to info@hwdsb.on.ca.

Sincerely,



Alex Johnstone
Chair of the Board



Manny Figueiredo
Director of Education