

# HWDSB

August 25, 2020

Dear families,

We are communicating to share important updates with you about HWDSB's reopening plans. Full details can be found on our [School Reopening website](#), or in the latest [Board report](#).

## **Deadline Extended for Elementary Pre-registration**

We have extended the elementary pre-registration deadline to **Thursday, August 27, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.** If you are experiencing challenges with the pre-registration process using Parent Portal, please complete the [Parent Portal Issue Reporting Form](#). If you are unable to access to Parent Portal by the extended deadline, please use this [Alternate Method to Select Elementary In-Person or Remote Learning Form](#).

HWDSB students who have not selected remote learning will automatically continue to be enrolled for in-person learning at their school. HWDSB students or school transfers received after the extended deadline will be placed into the remote learning school. Please contact your child's school if you wish to discuss your child's specific needs.

## **Lower Class Size**

HWDSB will reduce class sizes by using \$9 million in reserve funds to hire up to 86.4 additional elementary teachers and 54 designated early childhood educators. This plan also includes the use of up to 77 additional classrooms. This will support reduced class sizes in kindergarten and grades 4 to 8. Current class size caps for grades 1 to 3 can accommodate physical distancing.

## **Secondary School Model Update**

The following changes have been made to the model based on feedback from parents, students and staff or directed by the Ministry of Education:

- **Schools with 5-period days:** All secondary schools, including those that are regularly scheduled as 5 period days, will now operate on four rotations of approximately 22 days
- **Turnaround days:** Hamilton Public Health has indicated that five turnaround days between rotations, as previously noted in the model, are not required. This means 19 more in-person school days for students this semester.
- **Study Hall:** We will be asking secondary parents and guardians to confirm whether your high school student will stay at school during the remote learning afternoons, or if they will be travelling home to learn remotely. Students that choose to stay at school during the afternoons for remote learning will be assigned a space in a designated 'study hall' area of the school (e.g., gymnasium, learning commons, cafeteria) and will be expected to remain in this space for the duration of the remote learning blocks. We will make every effort to keep cohorts in the same area to minimize the number of student-to-student contacts. Study halls will be supervised, but support with course work will continue through remote instruction. This Form will be in the Parent Portal and more communication will be ready when available.

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## Staggered Start

HWDSB continues to modify reopening plans based on the changes from the province. In order to ensure a safe reopening and introduce students to new health and safety routines, HWDSB is staggering the first two weeks of school reopening. Please see the models below.

### Elementary Staggered Start

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 7	TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 8	WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 9	THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 10	FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 11
<b>LABOUR DAY HOLIDAY</b>	Students that Require Special Education Supports/Supports with Transitions and Mental Health	Students that Require Special Education Supports/Supports with Transitions and Mental Health	<b>GROUP A</b>  Last Name Alpha A to K (approximately ½ class)	<b>GROUP B</b>  Last Name Alpha L to Z (approximately ½ class)
MONDAY SEPTEMBER 14	TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 15	WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 16	THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 17	FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 18
<b>GROUP A</b>  Last Name Alpha A to K (approximately ½ class)	<b>GROUP B</b>  Last Name Alpha L to Z (approximately ½ class)	<b>ALL STUDENTS RETURN TO SCHOOL (Full Classes)</b>	<b>ALL STUDENTS (Full Classes)</b>	<b>ALL STUDENTS (Full Classes)</b>

### Secondary Staggered Start

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 7	TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 8	WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 9	THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 10	FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 11
<b>LABOUR DAY HOLIDAY</b>	Students that Require Special Education Supports/Supports with Transitions and Mental Health*	Students that Require Special Education Supports/Supports with Transitions and Mental Health*	Grade 9 & 10 Cohort A In-Person and Remote Learning Classes  Grade 11 & 12 Remote Learning Classes Only	Grade 9 & 10 Cohort B In-Person and Remote Learning Classes  Grade 11 & 12 Remote Learning Classes Only
MONDAY SEPTEMBER 14	TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 15	WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 16	THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 17	FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 18
<b>All Students Cohort A</b>	<b>All Students Cohort B</b>	<b>All Students Cohort A</b>	<b>All Students Cohort B</b>	<b>All Students Cohort A</b>

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## School Day Details

Specific details about what the school day will look like for your child will be shared before school starts. Details will include cohorts, safe staggered entry, timetable information, washroom use, nutrition breaks and outdoor learning, and other enhanced public health measures.

## Transportation

Parents and guardians, whose children are eligible for busing, will receive a message to declare their intention to use transportation. Information will be shared on Wednesday, August 26, 2020 and the deadline for submitting your intention to decline transportation is Tuesday, September 1, 2020. More information will be available on the [HWSTS \(Hamilton Wentworth Student Transportation System\)](#) website.

## Masks

To further enhance safety measures for all students and staff, non-medical masks will be required for students in kindergarten to grade 3 in addition to grades 4 to 12, while they are indoors. Students may wear their own non-medical masks, and non-medical masks will also be made available for students. A process will be outlined for students to receive their masks. Recognizing that many students may experience difficulties wearing a mask, we are working with public health to develop exceptions, and guidelines related to when masks can be removed. Please see this resource for support on [How to safely use a mask](#). Staff will be wearing medical masks and face shields.

## COVID App

In addition to the enhanced public health measures like physical distancing and wearing masks, HWDSB supports the COVID Alert mobile app to protect yourself and your community. Learn more [here](#).

## Lockers

Lockers will not be available until further notice for students in secondary schools. This direction will minimize hallway congestion and promote physical distancing. Lockers in elementary schools can be used. Students are welcome to bring their backpack. More direction on what supplies you can bring will be provided in a future update.

Stay well and be safe,



Alex Johnstone  
Chair of the Board



Manny Figueiredo  
Director of Education