

**AGENDA: 5:30 pm REVISED**

1. Call to Order
2. O Canada
3. Swearing In Ceremony – Student Trustee
4. Approval of the Agenda
5. Declarations of Conflict of Interest
6. Confirmation of the Minutes: September 14, 2020
7. Delegation – Written Submissions received from A. Kumka re: Masks

Reports from Trustee Special Committees:

8. Finance & Facilities – September 17, 2020
9. Governance – September 21, 2020

Reports from Staff:

10. September Re-Opening – Update #5
11. Appointment to the Code of Conduct Review Committee – First and Second Alternate
12. Report from Committee of the Whole (private) – September 21, 2020
13. Oral Reports from:
  - A. Student Trustees' Report – Local Activities & Ontario Student Trustees' Association (OSTA) Report
  - B. Director's Report
  - C. Chair's Report
14. Adjournment

Meeting times and locations are subject to change. Please refer to our website for the latest information.

<http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/trustees/meetings/>

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**Trustees:** Kathy Archer (electronically), Christine Bingham (electronically), Becky Buck, Dawn Danko, Penny Deathe (electronically), Cam Galindo, Alex Johnstone, Maria Felix Miller, Carole Paikin Miller (electronically), Ray Mulholland and Paul Tut (electronically). Student Trustees Ethan Hesler and Fatima Zakar.

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**Regrets were received from Student Trustee Skylar Seggie.**

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**1. Call to Order**

Alex Johnstone, Chair of the Board, called the meeting to order at 6:21 p.m.

**2. Student Trustees Swearing in Ceremony**

Student Trustees were welcomed to the Board and their first in-person Board meeting. Student Trustees Hesler and Zakar completed the Swearing in Ceremony.

**3. Approval of the Agenda:**

**RESOLUTION #20-100:** Trustee Galindo, seconded by Trustee Danko, moved: **That the agenda be approved.**  
**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Student Trustees Hesler and Zakar voted in favour  
Trustees Deathe and Miller were not present for the vote

**4. Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

None.

**5. Confirmation of the Minutes – June 22, July 13, 27 and August 10, 24 and 31, 2020**

The minutes were confirmed.

**Reports from Community Advisory Committees:**

**6. Rural Schools Advisory Committee – June 24, 2020**

**RESOLUTION #20-101:** Trustee Tut, seconded by Trustee Deathe, moved: **That the Rural Schools Advisory Committee – June 24, 2020 be approved including the election of Amanda Fehrman as the Chair of the Committee.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Student Trustees Hesler and Zakar voted in favour  
Trustee Miller was out of the room

**7. Faith Community Advisory Committee – June 29, 2020**

**RESOLUTION #20-102:** Trustee Buck, seconded by Trustee Bingham, moved: **That the Faith Community Advisory Committee – June 29, 2020 be received.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Student Trustees Hesler and Zakar voted in favour  
Trustee Miller was out of the room

**Reports Staff:**

**8. School Re-Opening Update**

Staff shared a verbal update with Trustees covering the topics of PPE, ventilation, staffing, transportation, communication, and public health nurses. An in-depth report will be forthcoming on the September 28, 2020 Board meeting. Trustees had an opportunity to have their questions answered.

**9. Committee of the Whole (Private) – September 14, 2020**

Trustee Danko shared that there was nothing to report at this time.

**10. Oral Reports from Liaison Committees:**

**A. City/School Board Liaison Committee**

There is nothing to report at this time.

**B. Hamilton-Wentworth Home & School Association**

The Home & School Association participated in several HWDSB committees over the summer, helping their own school associations with the changes. There has been no date scheduled for the next meeting at this time.

**C. Hamilton Foundation for Student Success (HWDSB Foundation)**

There is nothing to report at this time.

**D. Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)**

There is a meeting booked for Saturday, September 19, 2020. The updates have been covered through the staffing update as well as the funding announcements.

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

**From:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**To:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Subject:** Submission on behalf of a group of parents to be presented at the HWDSB meeting  
**Date:** September 11, 2020 2:41:38 PM

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Dear Heather,  
 Please see our message below  
 Thank you  
 Antonina Kumka

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Re: Passed motion by HWDSB trustees to mandate non-medical masks at HWDSB schools for students in JK - Grade 3.

A group of concerned parents would like to address the Board on the matter.

We believe the decision has been made against the Ministry of Education and Public Health Ontario direction and does not align with Hamilton Public Health recommendations/direction.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-reopening-schools#section-5>

<https://www.hamilton.ca/sites/default/files/media/browser/2020-07-20/20-155.pdf>

The decision to mandate masks for JK - Grade 3 (in combination with other covid-19 measures in place) will cause mental health issues, social and developmental issues, will negatively impact student learning ability and, consequently, their achievement. In addition, strict physical distancing rules and mandatory masks may lead to a physical harm to a child (since teachers now cannot help them with many things). The school environment will be non-inclusive and the incidents of bullying may increase.

WHO on masks for children (recent): <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-children-and-masks-related-to-covid-19>

SickKids (and partners) on masks for children (pp 11-

14): <https://www.sickkids.ca/PDFs/About-SickKids/81407-COVID19-Recommendations-for-School-Reopening-SickKids.pdf>

[https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/port-moody-principal-forced-to-retract-in-class-mask-policy-1-day-after-introducing-it-1.5709461?](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/port-moody-principal-forced-to-retract-in-class-mask-policy-1-day-after-introducing-it-1.5709461?fbclid=IwAR1PEQzLmZdsSs4_oL6A1bA2jnA_uTbmR5G9Jc1CPHe3d2lfsqYfILZom60)

[fbclid=IwAR1PEQzLmZdsSs4\\_oL6A1bA2jnA\\_uTbmR5G9Jc1CPHe3d2lfsqYfILZom60](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/port-moody-principal-forced-to-retract-in-class-mask-policy-1-day-after-introducing-it-1.5709461?fbclid=IwAR1PEQzLmZdsSs4_oL6A1bA2jnA_uTbmR5G9Jc1CPHe3d2lfsqYfILZom60)

According to the Ontario Education Act, the Board duties and powers first of all are:

1. Promote student achievement and well-being
2. Promote positive school climate that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils
3. Promote the prevention of bullying

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/view>

Covid-19 does not present significant danger to children. The mortality rate among those 19 and under in Canada is 0%.

This is supported by scientific evidence (McMaster Children's Hospital):  
<http://www.hamiltonhealthsciences.ca/back-to-school/covid-risk-to-children/>

Covid-19 is rarely transmitted by children, since most of them do not have symptoms and if occasionally there might be those who do have mild symptoms, they are expected to stay at home (the self-screening and staff reporting processes were introduced to ensure that).

This is supported by scientific evidence (McMaster Children's Hospital):  
<http://www.hamiltonhealthsciences.ca/back-to-school/can-children-spread-covid-19/>

We ask that the Board reconsiders the decision immediately and makes masks at HWDSB schools voluntary.

Thank you

Antonina Kumka  
Parent

**This message is from outside HWDSB. Watch your content. External email conversations are not secure.**

## COMMITTEE REPORT

Presented to: Board

Date of Meeting: September 28, 2020

From: Finance and Facilities Committee

Date of Meeting: September 17, 2020

The committee held a virtual meeting from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on September 17, 2020 with Trustee Dawn Danko presiding. Due to technical difficulties, this meeting was not able to be recorded.

Members participating were: Trustees Becky Buck, Dawn Danko, Cam Galindo, Alex Johnstone and Paul Tut.

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### MONITORING ITEMS:

#### **A. Capital Priorities Submission Update**

On September 16, 2019, the Board approved the Capital Priority Projects for submission to the Ministry of Education. Results of the submission were received by HWDSB on July 23, 2020. Staff reviewed the results and noted that \$13,528,858 had been approved for a new 615 place school in Binbrook to alleviate accommodation pressures in that area. The other projects that were submitted were: Rousseau (new school); SJAM Hub (new school); Sherwood (new school); and Upper Stoney Creek (new school). Committee members discussed the projects that had not been approved and requested staff to bring back additional information on the SJAM Hub and Sherwood Secondary School.

Trustee Becky Buck, supported by the Finance and Facilities Committee requested that staff be bring back a report on options for Sherwood Secondary School based on ministry feedback to the business case(s) that have been submitted.

#### **B. Capital Projects Update**

Staff presented the ongoing quarterly report on Capital Projects in progress. Work has been progressing well and to date there has been minimal impact on construction timing from COVID.

#### **C. 2020-21 Budget Discussions Grants for Student Needs Update**

In June 2020 when the 2020-21 Budget Estimates were approved a motion was made that if the actual GSN was more than estimated, then funds would be added to the contingency to support: equity and delivery issues related to COVID-19; recommendations of the bullying panel; secondary pathways; and special education and that staff would bring back an update to Trustees in the fall. Staff reviewed the additional funding received and how it was being allocated.

#### **D. COVID Financial Update**

Funding from various Ministry grants has been received by HWDSB to support COVID related issues. Staff presented the report which consolidated the information received from several announcements into one document and reviewed how it has been allocated and is being utilized.

#### **E. 2019-20 Average Class Size Report - Secondary**

Reporting Secondary Average Class size is an annual requirement of the Ministry of Education. HWDSB is in compliance with Ministry secondary average class size requirements in 2019/20.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dawn Danko, Chair of the Committee

**COMMITTEE REPORT**

Presented to: Board

Date of Meeting: September 28, 2020

From: Governance Committee

Date of Meeting: September 21, 2020

The committee held a meeting from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on September 21, 2020 at 20 Education Court, Hamilton, ON, virtually through MS Teams, with Trustee Paul Tut presiding.

Members present were: Trustees Alex Johnstone, Dawn Danko, Penny Deathe, and Paul Tut. Regrets were received from Carole Paikin Miller.

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**MONITORING ITEMS:****A. Strategic Directions - Update**

Staff provided an update regarding Strategic Directions. As schools re-open under COVID-19 restrictions, students, parents, staff and our communities are busy learning how to navigate the new education world that we are facing and new routines being developed. Staff noted for the Governance Committee, that it is important that there be some consistency in terms of measuring success and opportunities within our system as it relates to Strategic Directions and as such, the recommendation is to maintain the current Strategic Directions for this school year. Staff will return in January 2021 with a timeline for the Governance Committee to review and advise upon next steps as it relates to the review of the current Strategic Directions.

**B. Standing Committee – discussion**

Staff provided an update to the Governance Committee on the purpose of Standing Committee noting that a standing committee meeting is to be called when there is a need for a report to be presented to the Board of Trustees that does not have an opportunity to first go through a Trustee Special Committee because it is not part of the committee mandate. A standing committee may also be called when identified as necessary by a Trustee Special Committee.

Staff noted that the need for a decision by the Board of Trustees should not be held up by the process of needing to go through a committee – urgent matters may go straight to a Board Meeting agenda. Staff will endeavour to ensure timelines are in place during the initial planning process which include reports going through a standing committee where applicable – such reports may include Naming in Whole or in Part of Schools, Boundary Reviews etc.

Respectfully submitted,  
Paul Tut, Chair of the Committee



## EXECUTIVE REPORT TO BOARD

**TO:** BOARD

**FROM:** Manny Figueiredo, Director of Education

**DATE:** September 28, 2020

**PREPARED BY:** Peter Sovran, Associate Director of Education, Learning Services

**RE:** SCHOOL RE-OPENING (COVID-19 Pandemic) UPDATE #5

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### ACTION      MONITORING X

The following report provides a fifth update on the HWDSB planning for the re-opening of schools for the 2020-21 school year.

#### Background

With a few weeks into the start of the 2020-21 school year, implementation efforts remain focused on two key areas:

- The safety and well-being of students, staff and families; and
- Establishing a renewed sense of school community, with new routines for everyone.

At the August 31 Special Board Meeting, staff presented the [School Re-Opening \(COVID-19 Pandemic\) Update #4](#) report that outlined the HWDSB re-opening plan including a staggered start from September 8 to 15 with all in-school classes commencing on Wednesday, September 16.

Elementary schools have opened in conventional mode (Scenario A) with a remote learning program option for those choosing not to attend in-person. All students are expected to attend each day. School start and end times have remained the same and classes sizes have been adjusted to ensure physical distancing. A system-wide re-organization took place prior to the start of classes in order to achieve lower class size averages in kindergarten and grades 4 to 8 (\$9 million reserves funding) and to provide staff for remote learning. A further re-organization will need to occur later this Fall to ensure compliance with provincial class size regulations and fiscal responsibility.

Secondary schools have opened in adaptive mode (Scenario B). Students are following a rotational model of a half-day in-person class (alternate days within a cohort of approximately 15 students) followed by three shorter periods of teacher-directed remote learning classes (every day with all students). Some students have chosen a full eLearning timetable for the semester. School start and end times have remained the same. Students have the option of remaining at their school location on alternative days in an assigned study hall to participate in their afternoon classes.

The HWDSB Plan for Re-Opening Schools for the 2020-21 school year has been guided by the principles of: safety for all, minimizing the disruption to regular school day routines as much as possible, ease of transition between the three potential scenarios, honouring collective agreements and employee terms and conditions and fiscal responsibility.



## **HWDSB Plan for Re-Opening of Schools for the 2020-21 School Year**

### **1. Enhanced Public Health Measures**

The following provides a summary of the measures being implemented as outlined in the previous report ([Update #4, August 31](#)) in order to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Enhanced Public Health measures are constantly being reviewed as COVID-19 within the local community changes. This includes ongoing collaboration with Hamilton Public Health Services as local and provincial information evolves. It is worth noting again that in an effort to maximize safety, HWDSB is using a "layered" approach with multiple measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread.

#### **A. Cleaning**

The enhanced cleaning protocol outlined in Update #3 continues to be implemented. Signage (i.e. posters) at each school highlights the protocols.

#### **B. Physical Adaptations**

Elementary school classrooms are set-up to maximize physical distancing. Plexiglass barriers have been installed where students are sitting at a table facing each other (e.g. kindergarten) and a staggered use of the tables (e.g. nutrition break) is being followed. It is worth noting that as in-school enrolments potentially change at the established transition points throughout the year the need may arise to re-purpose other areas of the school, such as the learning commons and gymnasium(s) for use as regular classrooms.

Secondary school classrooms are set-up to accommodate cohorts of approximately 15 students spaced about 2 metres apart. Study halls have been organized, based on the number of students choosing to remain at the school, for the most part in common/larger areas such as the learning commons and cafeteria with desks spaced at least 2 metres apart. Should the public health circumstance change and the board is directed to transition to a conventional mode (Scenario A), classrooms and other areas will be adjusted to accommodate the additional students while still being mindful of maximizing physical space.

#### **C. Masks**

Students from kindergarten to grade 12 are required to wear a non-medical or cloth mask while indoors in a school or on a bus, including in hallways and during classes. Outdoor times like recess are used as opportunities to provide students with breaks from wearing masks within their cohorts. School-based staff are also encouraged to problem-solve individual situations where a student may require a mask break that can be achieved in a physically distanced and supervised way. Masks must cover the nose, mouth and chin.

As directed by the provincial guidelines, reasonable exceptions are in place where a student is unable to wear a mask. Parents/guardians (or students 18 years and older) are required to complete a *Student Mask Attestation Exception Form* which attests to the need for an exception. Approximately 10% of students attending school in-person have completed an exemption form. School-based observations indicate that the vast majority of students are wearing masks or face coverings on a daily basis, even where an exception form has been completed.

A student mask exception is noted in a student's profile with the HWDSB student information system and available to authorized users.

## Exception Criteria:

- underlying **medical, developmental, sensory or mental health reason** which inhibits my/my child's ability to wear a non-medical mask in the manner required by the Ministry of Education or Public Health authorities
- unable to remove the mask without assistance or anyone who has trouble breathing in the manner required by the Ministry of Education or Public Health authorities

## Student Mask Attestation Exception Form (as of September 24, 2020)

	# of Students	% of Students Attending In-Person Classes
Kindergarten to Grade 3	1287	10%
Grades 4 to 8	1299	9.3%
Grades 9 to 12+	1536	10.5%

School-based staff have been issued medical-grade masks and eye protection (i.e., face shield). Upon further clarification from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour, and in consultation with Hamilton Public Health, school-based staff are required to wear HWDSB-issued masks at all times indoors and eye protection when physical distancing of at least two metres is not able to be maintained. Eye protection is not required if physical distancing is possible.

## D. Hand Hygiene

Practicing good hand hygiene is an essential layer which supports minimizing the spread of COVID-19. This is being supported in schools through the availability of alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water in each learning space; signage highlighting how to properly wash/sanitize hands and frequently scheduled hand hygiene breaks throughout the school day. In addition, students and staff are expected to practice good hand hygiene on entry to the school and/or on entry to the classroom. Recent guidance by the Ontario Fire Marshal has permitted the use of alcohol-based hand rub inside school entrances.

## E. Cohorting

Secondary school students attending in-person have been assigned to a cohort (A or B). Cohort A attends on Mondays, Wednesdays and alternate Fridays and Cohort B attends on Tuesdays, Thursdays and alternate Fridays. Cohorts have been established such that there are approximately 15 students per class per day. As the rotation change-over dates approach there may be a need to re-balance cohorts. While every effort will be made to minimize disruption, some students may be notified of the need to change. Rotation change-over dates are noted in Section 6 – Secondary Schools.

## F. Ventilation (HVAC)

As outlined in previous reports, third party consultants contracted by HWDSB performed reviews of the Board's ventilation/HVAC systems. The reports from the consultants have been posted on the Board's website and any issues identified have been addressed prior to the start of classes or interim solutions have been found.

Installation of 150 air purifiers with HEPA filters to assist with filtration and ventilation for rooms/areas where there is insufficient air flow has commenced.

## G. Signage

As a result of changes to the Provincial Screening tool, external door signage is being updated to incorporate the changes.

## H. Access to School Sites

Community partners providing essential services and supports to students have been working with staff on how to continue to provide services while meeting the enhanced public health measures. Consistent with the *Visitor Protocol*, general guidelines include:

- Contact Tracking: maintaining a log of students they have come in direct contact with each day; checking in and out of the main office each day, following HWDSB visitor guidelines;
- Private (1:1) Sessions: use of a separate work area that is cleaned/sanitized following each session; use of plexiglass divider if physical distancing of two metres is not possible; wearing a medical grade mask;
- Group Sessions: must only be conducted within a designated cohort and must adhere to the direct/indirect contact protocol; and
- Virtual Sessions: where possible, virtual sessions would be preferred; for secondary school students these should be scheduled during days that students are not attending in-person. Meetings with school-based staff should also be conducted virtually.

## I. Screening

Screening for COVID-19 symptoms and remaining home is one of the strategies which support minimizing the risk and potential spread of COVID-19. All students (excluding those attending elementary school remote learning or secondary school full eLearning) and staff are required to complete a daily screening before arriving at school. Those unable to pass the screening must not attend and are required to follow the steps outlined in the relevant HWDSB Outbreak Protocol (see Section J – Outbreak Protocol).

## J. Outbreak Protocol

*The Operational Guidance: COVID-19 Management in Schools* document was released by the province on August 26. Based upon that document, the following HWDSB protocols have been developed:

- *Students Who Fail the Daily Screen*
- *Students Who Become Symptomatic at School*
- *Staff Who Fail the Daily Screen*
- *Staff Who Become Symptomatic at School*
- *Exclusion*
- *Communications – Symptomatic Student or Staff Member/Confirmed Positive Case*

In addition, a parent-friendly document entitled “*My Child Has COVID-19 Symptoms, Now What?*” to support initial questions and next steps for families has been developed. Public Health also released two flowcharts to support family and staff understanding related to failing the screen and being symptomatic. (see Appendix-A)

Staff continue to report to the Ministry as per daily reporting requirements and each school and the board have a *COVID-19 Advisory* section on the website where positive COVID-19 case information (subject to privacy) is posted.

Between September 14 and September 25 there have been 116 staff and 1057 students that have recorded absences due to not meeting the COVID-19 screening requirements. There have been zero confirmed cases

of COVID-19 amongst students and HWDSB staff during this time. There has been one confirmed case involving a before/after school care staff member from a partner organization and one confirmed case involving a childcare staff member prior to the start of the school year.

#### K. Supplies

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) continues to be distributed to schools from the Education Centre. Board staff monitored the usage of supplies during the month of September and orders will be adjusted moving forward based on usage. The October order from the Ministry of Government and Community Services (MGCS) is expected to be delivered to the Education Centre by September 29, 2020. There are supplies that are required by the Board that are not available for order from MGCS. These include items such as wipes, clear front masks and hand sanitizer in pump bottles. District school boards across Ontario are working with MGCS to increase the supplies available centrally to support the needs at the Board level.

#### L. Public Health/CJHSC engagement

Hamilton Public Health supported a learning session with HWDSB system leaders focussing on infection prevention and control, outbreak and the role of the new Public Health nurses in schools. In addition, a number of weekly structures have been established to support ongoing communication and proactive information sharing between HWDSB and Hamilton Public Health including:

- Emerging Issues: status updates, support needs (board specific and joint boards/public health sessions);
- Implementation of Public Health Nurses to Support COVID-19: school board and public health leadership; and
- Early Years: support birth to age 3.8, before and after and EarlyON programs in schools.

The HWDSB Central Joint Health and Safety Committee will now begin to meet monthly and Board representatives will seek feedback from the worker representatives and address items as they are brought forward.

## 2. Support for Students

#### A. Public Health Nurses

The Ministry of Education has committed funds to phase in the hiring of Public Health Nurses to support schools and boards with local health protocols related to COVID-19. Each Family of Schools has a team of 2 to 3 nurses who provide support to that group of schools. (see Appendix B)

#### B. Student Mental Health and Well-Being

In addition to the usual services available to support student mental health and wellbeing, supports specifically related to COVID-19 and the impact this is having on students and families are being developed. For example, a seven-session group will be offered multiple times over the year for students on *Coping with COVID-19*. Access to social workers for virtual support has been increased and will be available to all students, including those choosing to learn remote only. As well, resources from School Mental Health Ontario are being made available to staff and the *We Help HWDSB* website is being re-designed to make it more accessible for parents and caregivers. Finally, professional learning sessions will resume this year on Emotion Coaching with a focus on how to apply Emotion Coaching when supporting students who have concerns about racism, bullying and COVID-19.

### **3. Support for Staff**

In addition to the support noted in previous reports, work has continued throughout the early Fall to prepare a variety of resources and professional learning for staff. These include:

#### **A. Remote Learning**

Throughout September, teachers and designated early childhood educators (DECEs) have been begun Remote Learning assignments. On-boarding for staff has focused on using The HUB and MS Teams as virtual learning spaces, as well as PowerSchool training to be able to take attendance and contact parents/caregivers. Each Remote Learning educator has participated in an orientation session and has access to on-going support through self-paced on-line learning modules and live on-demand support from the Program Division.

The next phase in support for staff will focus on subject-specific learning and supporting students requiring support from Specialized Services. As well, the Program Division is working with a variety of educator resource vendors to provide a wide selection of resources for remote learning, including digital resources for the revised Mathematics curriculum and French Immersion programming. In support of the All Students Reading goal, professional learning on small group instruction in a remote classroom, as well as assessing and responding to reading acquisition needs, will be provided.

Similarly, the Program Division has supported eLearning in secondary schools with an orientation session for all new eLearning teachers and on-going support provided through the Program Support Team. Secondary School Department Heads networks (via MS-Teams) are being established to facilitate professional learning and collaboration. The current focus for the networks is sharing practices for student learning in an adaptive program and collaborative problem-solving program delivery challenges such as how to provide music or dramatic arts programming within the enhanced public health measures and protocols.

#### **B. System Leaders**

Vice Principals and Principals continue to be supported with a number of learning structures including networks later this fall within family of schools. The focus remains on operationalizing, at the school-level, the vast amount of new protocols related to school re-opening. Professional learning this fall will build on the introductory session in August on the comprehensive resource: *Learn. Disrupt. Rebuild. @HWDSB: Building a Community of Care* with an emphasis on student mental health and building an inclusive and caring school community.

### **4. Engagement and Communications**

HWDSB employee groups continue to be involved in the return-to-school planning and implementation process. School Contingency Action Teams, involving the various employee groups are established to discuss, problem solve and adjust plans where needed in support of the effective application of school re-opening protocols.

Beginning in October, the HWSB Research and Analytics Department will be using *Thoughtexchange* and surveys to gather information regarding the implementation of re-opening efforts. Through *Thoughtexchange*, monthly check-ins with students, parents/caregivers attending both in-person and remote programs will allow staff to track emerging themes and inform the need for potential adjustments to plans throughout the school year. Similarly, surveys with staff will allow for the collection of feedback on areas requiring particular attention. Regular updates will be provided in future reports.

Working with a third party vendor, HWDSB launched *The ABCs of Safety* campaign. The objective was to spread awareness to HWDSB communities around school reopening safety and public health protocols. The

focus of the campaign was “caring for our kids means keeping them safe.” Caring for kids through safety was demonstrated in the campaign through the advertising of six protocols: Every Doorknob Disinfected, Keep to the Right in Hallways, Disinfect then Disinfect Again, Hand Hygiene at Every Turn, Mask On, and Student Screening.

Graphics and messaging depicting each of these six protocols were shared through posts and paid ads on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The Student Screening graphic and messaging was also placed in an ad in the Hamilton Spectator.

Social media advertising on these platforms was successful, with each ad reaching approximately 68,000 people within Hamilton and surrounding areas. Instagram was the most effective in reaching Hamilton communities and target audiences.

## **5. Elementary Schools**

Elementary schools have opened in conventional mode (Scenario A) with a remote learning program option for those choosing not to attend in-person. All students are expected to attend each day. School start and end times have remained the same and classes sizes have been adjusted to ensure physical distancing. A system-wide re-organization took place prior to the start of classes in order to achieve lower **class size averages (kindergarten and grades 4 to 8, \$9M reserves funding)** and to provide staff for remote learning. A further re-organization will need to occur later this Fall to ensure compliance with provincial class size regulations and fiscal responsibility.

### **A. Remote Learning**

The Elementary School Remote Learning Program continues to add students, staff and classrooms (see chart below). Following the initial pre-registration period in late August, nearly 2500 more students have chosen the fully remote learning option. This increase in demand has been accommodated through the addition of almost 100 temporary educational staff. The process to onboard new staff, establish classes and contact families has been streamlined to approximately four days. Nonetheless, it has meant a delay for many students. While the vast majority of students began remote learning classes on September 16 as anticipated, others have commenced as soon as the classes have been established and teachers on-boarded.

Throughout the start-up process, communication has remained a priority with staff using multiple strategies to connect with parents, guardians and caregivers. The team of principals provide updates at least two times per week via School Messenger to the school community. As well, a dedicated page on the HWDSB website that includes a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section is provided to anyone seeking general information or has emailed [Remote@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:Remote@hwdsb.on.ca). However, the volume of questions and growth in the program has resulted in longer than preferred delays in responding to specific concerns. Additional staff will be added to address this noted gap in service.

The program currently has over 1100 students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and nearly 2800 students who are English Language Learners (ELLs). Support for students requiring Specialized Services and English as a Second Language programming continue to be provided through the students' home (in-person) school. This support may include working directly with students remotely or it may involve working with the remote learning educator to assist them with implementing the necessary supports and interventions.

## Elementary School - Remote Learning Program Enrollment (September 23, 2020)

Grade	English-language	French Immersion
Kindergarten	1767	
One	850	75
Two	800	81
Three	863	75
Four	801	57
Five	827	53
Six	775	68
Seven	831	40
Eight	752	41
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8266</b>	<b>490</b>

## B. Transitions

As noted in previous reports, parents/guardians have the opportunity to choose between remote and in-person school programs at specific times throughout the year (October 13, January 4 and March 22). As a result of the staggered start, the significant demand for remote learning, the additional time needed to assess school-level space in order to maintain physical distancing, and the anticipated number of changes to student and staff class assignments, the implementation of the first transition date has been delayed and will begin November 3. The October time frame will continue to be used as the due date to request a change. It is worth noting that every effort will be made to accommodate requests and that extraordinary circumstances requiring specific attention should continue to be discussed with respective Family of Schools Superintendent of Student Achievement. Further information will be provided to families the week of September 28.

**6. Secondary Schools**

Secondary schools have opened in adaptive mode (Scenario B). Students are following a rotational model of a half-day in-person class (alternate days within a cohort of approximately 15 students) followed by three shorter periods of teacher-directed remote learning classes (every day with all students). Sample daily schedules for both 4-period and 5-period day school were provided in [Update #4](#). Some students have chosen a full eLearning timetable for the semester. School start and end times have remained the same. Students have the option of remaining at their school location on alternative days in an assigned study hall to participate in their afternoon classes. As noted in previous reports, students requiring high levels of special education supports and services will be provided an opportunity to attend daily (see Section 7 – Students Requiring Special Education Supports and Services).

The staggered start, during the week of September 14 allowed students to transition to the new, adaptive mode of delivery. Students were introduced to school-specific routines including the enhanced public health measures, entry/exit protocols, study hall as well as remote learning.

## A. Study Hall

On days that students are scheduled to be at school in-person with their cohort they have the option of remaining at school to complete their remote learning courses. Each secondary school has established study hall locations and school-specific routines. During the first two weeks of classes the number of students attending study halls has varied from school to school. While some schools have had approximately 100 students each day others have only had a handful. Most schools are reporting between 30-40 students attending study hall each day. Schools continue to adapt study hall set-ups as student participation stabilizes.

## B. eLearning

Students deciding that in-person attendance is not something that they will be choosing for the first semester, placement was facilitated into eLearning courses. All students requesting a full timetable of eLearning courses were accommodated through the allocation of additional staff. There are currently 102 students enrolled in eLearning courses exclusively. There are approximately 1600 more students that are enrolled in at least one eLearning course for the first semester.

## C. Rotation Start Dates

Rotation	Start Date	End Date	Instructional Days	4 Period School		5 Period School	
				In-Person Course <sup>(1)</sup>	Remote Learning Courses <sup>(2)</sup>	In-Person Course <sup>(1)</sup>	Remote Learning Courses <sup>(2)</sup>
1	September 14	October 9	20	Period 1	Periods 2,3,4	Period 1	Periods 2,3/4,5
2	October 13	November 10	21	Period 2	Periods 3,4,1	Period 2	Periods 3/4,5,1
3	November 11	December 10	21	Period 3	Periods 4,1,2	Period 3/4	Periods 5,1,2
4	December 11	January 22	21	Period 4	Periods 1,2,3	Period 5	Periods 1,2,3/4
<b>Please Note:</b> September 14 and 15 are full remote learning days for students in Grades 11 & 12 (regardless of Cohort)							

(1) In-Person Course: Students will attend for approximately 150 minutes on alternate days based on their cohort. Students will engage in independent study on the days their cohort is not scheduled to attend in-person.

(2) Remote Learning Courses: Students will participate in 150 minutes of remote learning each day. They will receive 40 minutes of direct instruction for each of their three courses each day with their entire class. Students will also be expected to engage in 10 minutes of independent study per course on each day. Students may participate in remote learning at home or at school (see section – Study Hall, below).

Exam Days (5): January 25 to 29, 2021

Professional Activity Days (5): September 1, 2, and 3, 2020; November 27, 2020; and February 1, 2021

## D. Continuing Education

Programs offered through Adult and Continuing Education such as International Languages, Adult Credit and Literacy and Numeracy must align with the Ministry of Education guidance document. Options for program delivery include remote, in person and hybrid models and take in to account the health and safety of students. HWDSB is using a variety of approaches as described below.

Adult credit programs are being offered online through the board's online platforms: The HUB and MS Teams. Registration for Session 1 was high, and classes are underway. Registration for Session 2 in November has started. Adult Hybrid Online Courses have started for the current session. Adult English as a Second Language (ESL) classes are underway although overall enrolment is down, however, registration continues with new students starting every Monday. Online adult ESL Night classes are beginning soon. Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) classes have good student participation and new programs are beginning in October that



include Food Handling Certificate training and a math skill program to support adult students returning to college. LBS night classes are delivered online.

International Languages classes will be moving to a remote learning model. This change requires extensive training for instructors and site supervisors which is scheduled in the next few weeks. Classes will begin in mid-October and be delivered using the HWDSB standardized digital platform.

The Strings Instruction program for students in grades four to eight will take place virtually. Registration has begun for individual and group lessons online and lessons begin in mid-October.

Continuing Education is developing the concept of online After School Homework Help sessions for grades 7-10 for help with Literacy and Math. More information will be shared with schools and families once these offerings are available. Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) Assessments for adults are continuing online including PLAR assessments for Grade 9-10 credits.

## **7. Students Requiring Special Education Supports and Services**

### **A. Supports and Services for Students**

As school is now underway for all learners, practices continue to be adjusted to support students requiring special education supports or services in school buildings as well as in remote learning options. Changes to existing practices will maintain the connection for students engaging in remote learning to have daily contact with peers and staff in the school building. For example, in elementary schools, Learning Resource Teachers (LRT) are resuming direct and indirect support with students that attend in person as well students who are engaged in remote learning.

For students that have been placed in self-contained classes and whose parent/guardian has chosen full remote learning, the educators in the home school class will engage the student in daily learning alongside peers who are attending in person. Small and large group instruction is being provided by the classroom educator team. Knowing that a small percentage of students may not be able to attend for the minimum, daily learning time, school teams have created a personalized schedule in consultation with families. For students to receive daily instruction alongside their peers, additional supports such as System Learning Resource Teachers will be collaborating with the teacher colleagues and the other members of the classroom educator team in a job embedded manner.

Specialized Services staff are continuing to provide direct support to learners in school buildings as well as the young people attending the fully remote. Board Certified Behaviour Analysts are currently accepting referrals from school teams for *Family Consult* sessions for children and their parents who have chosen remote learning.

### **B. External Third Party Providers**

External Third Party Providers that offer essential services to children and youth in school settings are now present in school buildings. An example of a third party provider is the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network (LHIN). The LHIN provides nursing support to students. HWDSB staff have been collaborating with the LHIN and Hamilton Public Health officials on requirements to ensure that appropriate health measures are in place for students with medically complex conditions that require an Aerosol Generating Medical Procedure (AGMP). Information to support AGMP can be found in Guidelines from

the Ministry of Health. In addition, other essential health professionals are now providing support to students in schools such as occupational therapy. All external service providers will follow enhanced public health measures when in school buildings.

## **8. Transportation**

As previously reported, Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation Services (HWSTS) has been experiencing a bus driver shortage. Prior to the start of the school year, the shortage was between 59-67 drivers. Through route reorganizations, the shortage was reduced to approximately 45 drivers. In the past, routes that did not have permanent drivers were able to be covered by doubling-up routes or splitting runs apart. However, as a result of COVID-19 concerns, some companies were not able to cover their open runs and last minute bus cancellations were required.

On September 28, 2020, HWSTS will begin a planned rotation of cancelled bus routes. The strategy will cancel routes on a prescheduled rotating basis, allowing families to make alternate transportation plans for their children during their route rotation. HWSTS continues to investigate other options to address the ongoing bus driver shortage, including driver incentives and driver recruitment programs.

In October, staff will review the possibility of providing mid-day runs in certain secondary school communities starting in early November. Staff will collect updated data on study hall usage; the number of eligible riders using school buses at the end of the day and driver availability. The focus will be on communities that do not have HSR access, such as Flamborough, Mount Hope and Binbrook.

## **9. Technology**

Technology supports for students learning remotely continues to be provided. As of September 23, approximately 350 devices were issued to students choosing elementary school remote learning. There were just over 20 devices issued that included internet connectivity. Needs assessments and distribution continues.

A key element of the HWDSB 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Strategy is 1:1 device deployment for all secondary school students to ensure that they have access to a device to support remote learning and eLearning courses. Devices were distributed to incoming grade nine students prior to the start of school.

As indicated in previous reports, students issued a device during the school closure period and now attending in-person will be required to return the device for use in class kits.

## **10. Financial Implications**

The total COVID-19 funding to date received by the Board is \$9,546,067. A detailed analysis of this funding was presented at the September 17, 2020 Finance and Facilities Committee.

## **11. Other**

The next regular update on school re-opening (COVID-19) will be provided at the Board Meeting on October 26, 2020.

# HWDSB

## My Child Has Displayed COVID-19 Symptoms, Now What?

At Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB), we adopted enhanced health protocols to ensure that we can keep students, staff, and families as safe as possible during the COVID-19 pandemic.

When a child displays COVID-19 symptoms – at school, or when their family does daily screening – it is important to stay calm and to understand next steps.

For an overview of this process, please review the attached flowchart *Symptomatic Student or Staff at Home/School Decision Guides* produced with Hamilton Public Health Services.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact Hamilton Public Health Services (905-974-9848, option 2) to book a test for their student.

### How to get a COVID-19 test:

We encourage students and staff with symptoms to get a COVID-19 test. You must schedule testing at local Assessment and Testing Centres to decrease wait times, ensure an orderly flow and to protect patients and staff.

Book your appointment by calling Hamilton Public Health Services at 905-974-9848, option 2.

### Assessment & Testing Centres in Hamilton

#### **Dave Andreychuk Mountain Arena (Drive-Through COVID-19 Testing Centre)**

25 Hester Street, Hamilton. Hours of Operation: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily

At your allotted appointment time drive around the rear of the building to the Zamboni entrance and wait for staff to signal you to drive inside the arena for testing. Booking an appointment ensures a fast and efficient process.

If you arrive at the testing centre without an appointment:

- Park your vehicle in the lot behind the testing centre near the Zamboni entrance.
- Walk to the open registration door and line up to register. Please ensure that you are wearing a mask, stay 6 feet apart, and have your health card with you.
- Return to your car, drive towards the Zamboni door and await staff to signal you inside to be tested.

#### **East End Assessment Centre**

2757 King Street East, Hamilton.

Hours of Operation: Monday to Friday 4 to 8 p.m. | Saturday & Sunday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

# HWDSB

## West End Assessment Centre

690 Main Street West, Hamilton

Hours of Operation: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily

Learn more about testing locations at [www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus/assessment-centres](http://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus/assessment-centres)

Any student suspected to have COVID-19 awaiting test results must be in isolation and cannot attend school in person. Students can do work from home if they feel well enough to participate. Their siblings may continue to attend school and continue monitoring for symptoms.

**Please inform your school about your COVID-19 test result.**

## When can my child return to school?

- Students who **test negative** for COVID-19 must isolate until they do not have a fever (without using medication) and without symptoms for 24 hours. Household contacts should continue to monitor for symptoms.
- Students who **test positive** for COVID-19 must remain in isolation and follow Hamilton Public Health Service guidance and cannot attend school for at least 14 days. Household contacts should self-isolate at home and follow public health guidelines.
- Ill students **not tested** and given an **alternative diagnosis** by a health care provider, the individual is to isolate at home until without a fever (without the use of medication) and free of symptoms for at least 24 hours.
- Ill students, if **not tested**, must not return to school for 14 days from the start of symptoms and be without symptoms for at least 24 hours. Household contacts should monitor for symptoms.

## How to continue learning, at home:

While your child is isolating at home, we want learning to continue. Please speak with your child's teacher or contact their school for learning materials and resources.

## COVID-19 Symptoms

- Fever (Temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius/100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher)
- Chills
- Cough that's new or worsening (Continuous, more than usual, not related to other known causes or conditions for example, COPD)
- Barking cough, making a whistling noise when breathing (Croup, not related to other known causes or conditions)

# HWDSB

- Shortness of breath (Out of breath, unable to breathe deeply, not related to other known causes or conditions for example, asthma)
- Sore throat (Not related to other known causes or conditions for example, seasonal allergies, acid reflux)
- Difficulty swallowing (Painful swallowing, not related to other known causes or conditions)
- Runny nose (Not related to other known causes or conditions for example, seasonal allergies, being outside in cold weather)
- Stuffy or congested nose (Not related to other known causes or conditions for example, seasonal allergies)
- Decrease or loss of taste or smell (Not related to other known causes or conditions for example, allergies, neurological disorders)
- Pink eye (Conjunctivitis, not related to other know causes or conditions for example, reoccurring styes)
- Headache that's unusual or long lasting (Not related to other known causes or conditions (for example, tension-type headaches, chronic migraines)
- Digestive issues like nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain (Not related to other known causes or conditions for example, irritable bowel syndrome, anxiety in children, menstrual cramps)
- Muscle aches that are unusual or long lasting (Not related to other known causes or conditions for example, a sudden injury, fibromyalgia)
- Extreme tiredness that is unusual (Fatigue, lack of energy, not related to other known causes or conditions for example, depression, insomnia, thyroid dysfunction)
- Falling down often (For older people)
- Sluggishness or lack of appetite (For young children and infants)

## Key Contacts and Resources

### HWDSB Daily Student Screening Tool

[www.hwdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Student-COVID-Screening-Checklist.pdf](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Student-COVID-Screening-Checklist.pdf)

### COVID-19 Resources at HWDSB

[www.hwdsb.on.ca/covid19](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/covid19)

### Hamilton Public Health COVID-19 hotline

905-974-9848 or [phscovid19@hamilton.ca](mailto:phscovid19@hamilton.ca). [www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus](http://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus)

# HWDSB

## **HWDSB Social Workers**

If you feel that your child could benefit from support, HWDSB social workers are available. Please speak with staff if this would be helpful.

## **HWDSB Helps app**

Get help or share anonymous tips, using:

- Text to 905-963-0066. Standard rates apply.
- The HWDSB Helps app for iOS and Android.
- Web chat

In case of emergency, call 911.

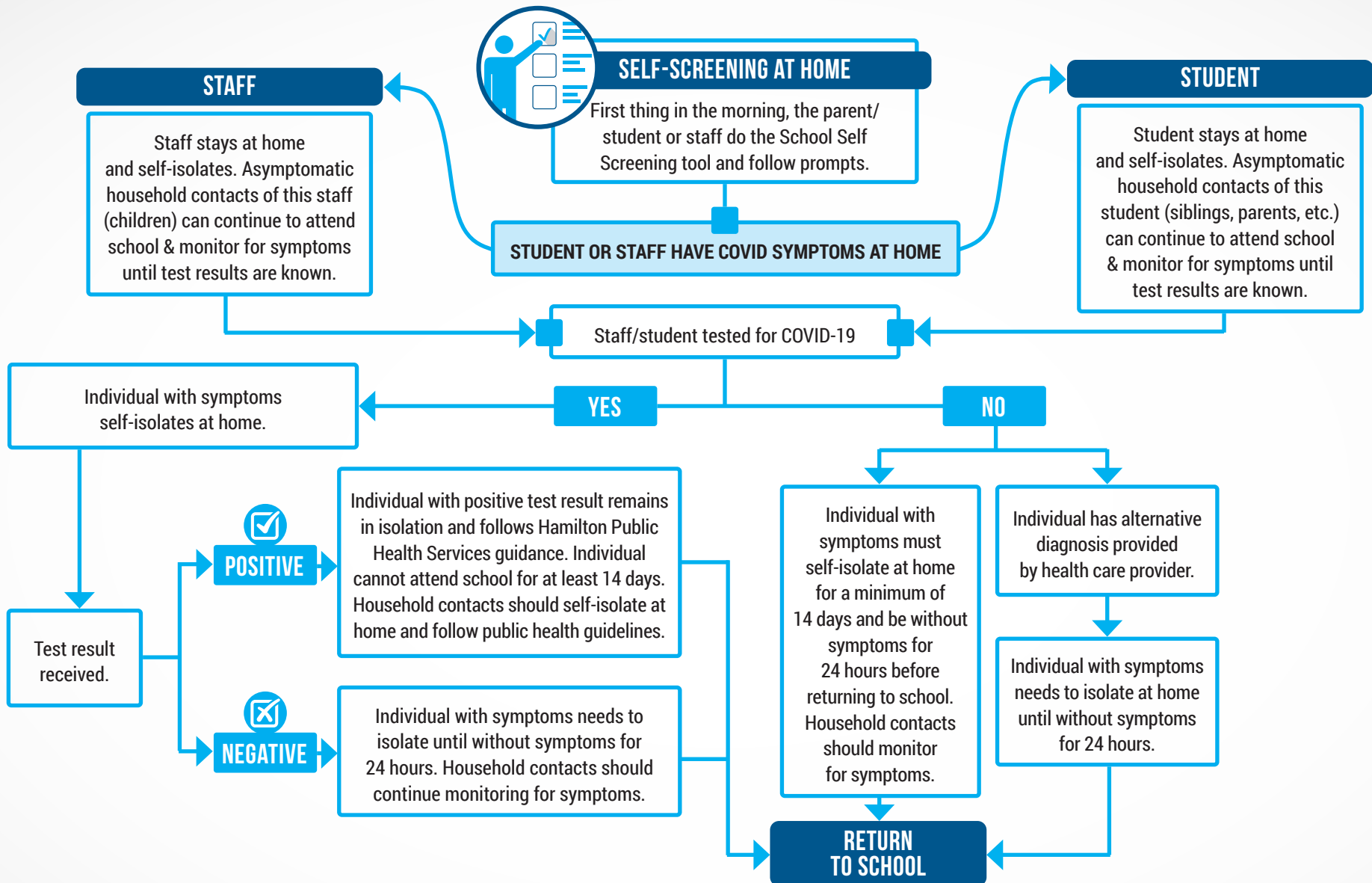
If you have questions about next steps, please contact your school, your family doctor, or Public Health.



# SYMPTOMATIC STUDENT OR STAFF AT HOME <sup>10-16</sup> DECISION GUIDE



Hamilton  
Public Health Services





# SYMPTOMATIC STUDENT OR STAFF AT SCHOOL DECISION GUIDE

10-17



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