



Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board

Believing, Achieving, Serving

September 23, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are now well into our first month of school and after an understandable initial period of adjustment, have settled well into our new routines. As always, we want to express our deep appreciation to our students and parents for their patience, understanding and resiliency as we adapt to the ever-evolving landscape that is COVID-19. Despite the challenges of the times, we are hearing great things about our in-school programs and virtual schools. We thank in a special way our principals, vice-principals, teachers and all support staff for their tremendous Christian witness and outstanding service.

In an earlier communication, we indicated that there would be an opportunity to change learning modalities, e.g. virtual to face-to-face or face-to-face to virtual. As we approach Thanksgiving, the first possible opportunity to move to a different model of learning for your child, we want to alert parents and guardians that you will be receiving a message inviting you to contact your child(ren)'s home school if you plan to change from in-school to virtual or virtual to in-school. Only parents seeking to make a change for their child(ren) need to contact the school. Parents who wish to have their child(ren) continue in their current learning modality do not need to contact the school.

The timelines for the change are as follows:

Sept 24 -28: window for parents to call the school if they wish to change the learning modality

Elementary	Secondary
October 14-16 – Parents informed of changes	October 9 – Parents informed of changes
October 19 – Session begins until Christmas	October 14: New course begins (until February 4)

Please contact your child(ren)'s home school if you do not receive information in the next couple of days and wish to make a change to your child's model of learning.

In our last update to you, we expressed our deep regret over the ongoing significant challenges associated with the bus driver shortage which has caused severe disruption in the level of service that we are able to provide to our students and their families. Although members of the Consortia Administrative Team, HWSTS staff and the bus carriers are working hard to address the situation, there is no short-term solution to the bus driver shortage. We continue to explore strategies to lessen the disruption and will be providing more information to you by the end of the week.

In other developments, the Province has recently unveiled a [COVID-19 school screening tool](#) to assist parents in deciding whether or not their child(ren) should attend school. As you know, our staff are doing everything they can to keep our students safe at school, but what happens outside

of the school environment is just as important to the continued health, safety and well-being of the school and broader community. Following public health measures, such as staying home when you are sick, physical distancing, hand washing and wearing a mask are essential to reduce the likelihood of infection, contain/manage outbreaks and protect those who are most vulnerable. Everyone has a part to play to help reduce the spread of COVID-19, including staff, students, school boards, parents and guardians, and public health.

Thank you for your understanding regarding these matters, and please be assured of our continued commitment to keep you informed and up-to-date on any new development and as new information becomes available.

As you know, throughout the month of October, we give honour to and pray in a special way to our Blessed Mother Mary. Through her intercession, we pray to her son Jesus for the well-being of our students, staff, families and parish communities.



Patrick J. Daly
Chairperson of the Board



David Hansen
Director of Education