



Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board
Believing, Achieving, Serving

June 16, 2021

Dear Parents and/or Guardians of Elementary School Students:

Although school doesn't end for another couple of weeks, planning began a number of months ago for the 2021-2022 school year. As COVID-19 case counts continue to come down across the province and more people, including youth 12-17, get their vaccinations, we hope to see a very different reopening this September.

Following the advice of public health experts and leading pediatric hospitals, including McMaster Children's Hospital, children need to be in school. Citing the significant impact of COVID-19 and more specifically, physical isolation on the mental health and wellness of children and youth, they assert that in-person learning is an important remedy to the mounting crisis.

"In-person learning provides routine, daily structure, accountability, human contact and a broad range of interpersonal situations that children need to thrive," stressed Bruce Squires, President of McMaster Children's Hospital, in an open letter to the community. "This helps young people build important life skills and coping strategies for challenging times, and supports overall development, growth, health and well-being."

As a Board, we have and continue to fully support the return to in-person learning as best for the academic, spiritual, physical and mental well-being of children. Saying this and as directed by the Ministry of Education, school boards, including the HWCDSB, will be offering a remote learning option for elementary students in 2021-2022. **Families interested in remote learning must contact their child/children's school before Wednesday, June 23, 2021. Please note that if you opt for remote learning, you are committing to remote learning for the full 2021-2022 school year. Specialized programs (French Immersion, Reading Recovery, etc.) will not be offered in the elementary virtual school.** If the school does not hear from you by June 23, 2021, it will be assumed that your child/children will attend in-person learning in 2021-2022.

We will continue to encourage and accept JK/SK registrations for 2021-2022 throughout the summer months. Parents/guardians are invited to register online at <https://www.hwcdsb.ca/elementaryregistration/>.

As we approach the end of the school year, details on graduation and other year-end events will be communicated to you by your school. We pray that you enjoy these final days of school and have an enjoyable and relaxing summer.

Patrick J. Daly
Chairperson of the Board

David Hansen
Director of Education