



HAMILTON-WENTWORTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PHONE: (905) 523-2581 FAX: (905) 692-0711

"A proud feeder school of Bishop Ryan Catholic Secondary School"

Principal: Mrs. L. Fama

Superintendent: Mr. C. Ciapanna

Vice-Principal: Mrs. J. Cannon

Trustee: Mr. L. Agro

Pastor: Father D. Reitzel

Secretary: Ms. D. Pelz

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OLOA FALCON FLYER SEPTEMBER 2019 NEWSLETTER

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to the 2019-2020 school year! We hope that the summer months have provided you with some rest, relaxation, and an opportunity to rejuvenate. On behalf of the Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic School Staff, I would like to welcome new and returning families to our school community. We also welcome Mrs. Cannon our new Vice-Principal. She comes to us with great experience and many new ideas that will continue to enhance our Catholic School Community. I would also like to welcome new staff Mr. Perrin, Mrs. VanUlzen, Mrs. Capoferri-Liota, Mrs. Marcantonio, Mrs. Filice-Black, Mr. Martin, Mrs. Vrakela, Mr. Zavarise, and Miss Hamilton.

It is a privilege to be the principal of this wonderful and growing school community. I look forward to seeing our families at the October Meet the Staff dinner and fundraiser. Throughout this school year your children will grow spiritually, intellectually, physically, and emotionally. We consider each of them to be a gift from God with unique talents and abilities. Their spiritual growth, successful education, and personal safety are our main concerns at Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic School. Our entire staff remains committed to providing your children with a rich Catholic environment as well as a high quality curriculum. I invite you to continue to work in partnership with the school to ensure that the best interest of our children always remains first and foremost. Your awareness of the curriculum and support of the student agendas will enable you to ask relevant questions about your child's progress. We are looking forward to an exciting and rewarding school year. The theme for Catholic Education week this year is Igniting Hope.

Yours in Catholic Education.

Mrs. L. Fama

OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION SCHOOL PRAYER



Loving God, true light of the world, creator of heaven and earth

Through our Lady's intercession, we ask that You give us the wisdom to make wise decisions and to seek the good in others

We ask that You give us the ability to be good communicators, so we can learn from each other; to focus and be engaged in our studies and have the strength to put forth our best efforts in everything we do

We thank You, Lord Jesus, for our school community and pray that Mother Mary, guides us through each day

Bless our Families, Principal, Teachers, Staff and Students

We ask this through Christ our Lord,

Amen

BELL TIMES

Student supervision begins at 8:55 am. For the safety of your child, we request that students DO NOT arrive on school grounds prior to 8:55 am.

9:10 Morning Bell / Morning Prayer and Announcements. Students that do not enter the school prior to 9:10am must obtain a late slip from the office. Announcements begin promptly at 9:12am and academic instruction begins after announcements. All walkers are dismissed at the end of the day to the playground. Parents are asked to pick up their child(ren) on the playground. Beginning at 8:55am teachers will be at the entry doors (primary, junior, and intermediate) letting students into the school where staff will be in the hallways supervising students as they walk into their own classes and prepare to start their morning instructions so as to begin promptly at the 9:10am bell.

10:30am to 10:45pm Recess begins all students. (15 minutes)

11:55am to 12:20pm Outdoor Recess for grades 4-6.

11:55am to 12:20pm Indoor lunch for grades 1-3 and grades 7-8.

12:19pm to 12:45pm Indoor Lunch for grades 4-6.

12:19pm to 12:45pm Outdoor Recess for grades 1-3 and grades 7-8

12:45 Instruction in the PM begins for all students

1:55 to 2:10 Recess Break #3 begins. (15 minutes)

3:30 Dismissal

PD DAY

Friday September 20, 2019 will be a PD day. No school for our students.

MEET THE STAFF DINNER AND FUNDRAISER

This school year in conjunction with the CSC we will be having our second annual Meet the Staff Dinner and Fundraiser. We will be combining our meet the staff night with a fundraising initiative. In the past the school's major fundraiser has come from a golf tournament where funds were in large part raised by donors outside of the school. It is our hope again this year that we can combine our meet the staff night with a dinner where families can come and not only meet the staff, but also have an opportunity to gather as a community and visit your child(ren) classroom(s). Save the date for Thursday October 3rd, 2019. More details will follow the week of September 10th in a separate letter.

HOME FOR LUNCH

It is a unique opportunity now that many of our students live close enough to the school to walk home for lunch. Please note that if you as the parent decide you want your child to go home to eat lunch, it must be on a consistent basis. Therefore, if your child goes home for lunch, it is the expectation that they go home every day as the option to choose different days to go home or stay at school will not be permitted. This is to ensure that in case of emergency evacuations/lockdowns etc., staff can accurately account for all students. If your child will be going home daily at lunch, please have your child pick up a lunch form at the office, fill it out and send it back to stay on file for this school year.

LEAVING SCHOOL PREMISES AT LUNCH

If you decide to pick up your child(ren) at lunch to take them out that is at parental discretion, however please note that no child will be permitted to leave school property either alone or with friends to pick up or go out for lunch. Student safety in the school day is of the utmost importance to staff. Thank you for your cooperation.

STUDENT VERIFICATION FORMS

A package of forms will be sent home the second week of school for both office and classroom use. Please carefully read the instructions pertaining to the family forms and the individual student forms, ensuring that they are properly completed and signed. All forms are due back to the school on or before Monday, September 30, 2019.

WALKING TRIPS PERMISSON FORM

Attached you will find a permission form for the 2019-2020 school year giving permission for teachers to take their class on neighbourhood walks. This would only be utilized in the event of the occasional use of the field at the park beside us or community awareness walks.

STUDENT AGENDAS

The agenda is a very important organizational tool for both students and parents. Student agendas will be used daily in the classroom to assist our students in developing sound organizational skills to be used throughout the school year. Student success begins with the nurture and development of personal responsibility and organization.

The agendas also include important school information such as: the Catholic values; historical information; study tips; and educational information to ensure a successful school year. Please take the time to walk through the agenda with your child and encourage them to use it on a daily basis.

Classroom teachers will be monitoring the use of the agendas on a regular basis and we would ask you to do the same at home. Each student has different needs - some may need daily reinforcement while others may need less. We ask for your cooperation in signing your name on the corresponding date each time you check it over.

We believe that the use of the planner will effectively assist the students in doing their best during the school year. It should never become a behaviour log of student conduct; this is not an acceptable use of the tool.

The cost of each agenda will be \$5.00. You are strongly encouraged to use the School Cash Online system. Here is the link to sign up and register. <https://hwcdsb.schoolcashionline.com/>

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

As required we will be conducting our emergency evacuation procedures throughout the school year to ensure that all students and staff are aware of the routes for evacuation.

In addition, we will be conducting practices for "lock down procedures" and "bomb threat procedures" as well to keep all staff and students informed as to our practices. The teachers will be addressing this aspect of school safety within their classrooms with dialogue that is age appropriate.

SCHOOL NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters will be made available online. If you require a paper copy, please request it through Ms. Pelz at the main office.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

In conjunction with our Board of Trustees and the Catholic School Council, the expectation is that all students will be in complete and proper uniform. A reminder that all tops must have a collar. Cargo pants (pants with pockets along the leg), track/warm-up pants and corduroy pants are not permitted. Jackets and coats are non-uniform pieces; sweaters for inside must be navy blue or white or our spirit-wear hoodie. Crests, available for \$3.00/crest, can be either embroidered or on a patch which is sewn to the garment. In addition, spirit-wear (ie: team t-shirts) are not part of the school uniform. If you need assistance with the purchase of uniforms, please contact the school to speak with the Principal, Mrs. Fama.

SAFE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF STUDENTS

The Safe Arrival and Departure Procedures initiated in September 2008 have been very successful thanks to the cooperation and assistance of parents. Please be reminded that vehicles are not permitted in front of the school as it is a fire access route and is enforced by by-law. These times are clearly posted at both entrances of the driveway. Please follow the traffic flow arrows when using the parking lot to enter and leave. There are stop sign on Fletcher, namely the one closest to the school parking lot exit, please be extra careful in this area as many of our walking students cross the street at this point. Please remind your child(ren) to use the crossing guard and be very mindful whenever crossing any street coming to and from school. Thank you for your continued cooperation as we work together to keep everyone at OLOA safe.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR PICKUP/DROP OFF

Together we need to work as a caring community to alleviate the challenges that are presented as a result of calls and visits to the office. The office is a very busy place at the end of the school day, with this in mind, it is important that your child's exit routine be firmly resolved well before that time of the day. In order to ensure a seamless process, you are kindly asked to send a note with your child to the attention of the classroom teacher and the teacher will work to make sure your child is ready for pickup. Interrupting classrooms during instructional time should be kept to a minimum.

BUSSING OF STUDENTS - HWSTS

HWSTS has a "Parents Portal" feature on our website that allows parents or guardians to create an online transportation account. This account will provide access to their student transportation information with the ability to receive email notifications of service delays. Go to www.hamiltonschoolbus.ca. For security purposes you will need the HWSTS ID # issued with your transportation letter in August or contact the office at 905-523-2318. IF THE NATURE

OF YOUR CALL IS AN EMERGENCY SAFETY ISSUE, PLEASE NOTIFY THE TELEPHONE OPERATOR OF THAT IMMEDIATELY." Students are permitted only to ride the school bus if they have been assigned a seat. Please do not send notes to school informing us that your child will be riding the bus to a friend's house if your child is not a bus student. Further to this, if your child does ride the bus, they are to use their assigned stop unless you have made alternate arrangements through the Transportation Services.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

If your child has a life-threatening allergy, or has diabetes, asthma, a seizure disorder or any other medical condition, please ensure that you return the signed medical packages to the school with your child's medication. A reminder that anaphylactic students must provide the school with an Epi-pen/Allerject to be stored in the office and another should be worn on their person at all times. Please contact Mrs. D'Alesio, our school Special Education Resource Teacher, through the school office for further office forms that must be completed.

In alignment with Policy/Program Memorandum No. 161 Supporting Children and Student with Prevalent Medical Conditions (anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, and epilepsy) in Schools, parents/guardians are encouraged to visit the board website to access:

- board policies;
- roles and responsibilities;
- annual parent(s)/guardians request and consent for intervention forms; and,
- physician authorization forms. Physician authorization forms are for completion only if medical information is new or if there are changes.

Parent(s)/guardians are asked to:

- become familiar with the parental responsibilities;
- inform the school principal of medical conditions on an annual basis through the request and consent for intervention form; and,
- participate in the co-creation of the Individual Plan of Care on an annual basis.

Policies can be accessed through the following link: <https://www.hwcdsb.ca/board/policies/>

Roles and forms can be accessed through the following link:

<https://www.hwcdsb.ca/support/childyouthhealth/>

This information is documented and shared with the staff to keep everyone informed. In addition, we maintain copies of pictures with accompanying emergency action plans for children with anaphylaxis, allergies, asthma, etc. both in the office area and respective classrooms.

For some of our children their allergies can be considered life threatening (nuts, tree nuts, etc.). The term anaphylaxis is used to identify those students. As a result, our school does not permit any peanut and nut products to be brought to the school. Please read labels carefully and watch for the peanut/nut free symbol that now accompanies many baked goods. Only those goods can be shared with students to celebrate birthdays. We suggest considering an alternative

treat to share such as a pencil, eraser, sticker, etc. Thank you for your cooperation in this regard.

Please note that there are many other allergens in the school as well, but they will be dealt with on an as needed basis. If your child is in a classroom where these allergies are important to be aware of, a separate letter will come home to you through your child's teacher containing some information about the sensitivity required and the reason why.

The following guidelines must be strictly adhered to by all of the students in the school:

- All foods must be eaten in the classroom - absolutely no food is to be eaten outside or on the bus.
- Snacks are not to be shared with other students.
- Utensils are not to be shared with other students.
- Hands are to be washed before leaving home after eating anything that may contain peanut products.

Traces of peanut butter or oil can get on the bus seats or playground equipment, desks, and personal belongings.

- Parents are asked to read labels carefully for the following products that may contain nut products: granola bars, crackers, chocolate bars and cookies, some cereals, store baked goods or snacks.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

The Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board does not provide accident insurance coverage for student injuries that occur on school premises or during school activities. Some injuries incur medical, dental or other expenses that are not covered by provincial healthcare or employer group plans. As a parent or guardian, you become responsible for these expenses. Insurance forms will be sent to your attention. Please consider this low cost opportunity to enhance your child's safety. This is an optional program that you may choose to be involved in. Ordering information will be found in the flyer that is sent home to your attention.

PIZZA DAYS AND MILK

Milk and pizza lunch days will be offered again for the 2019- 2020 school year. Order forms will come home in the coming weeks. Both will be made available at the start of October.

ANNUAL BOARD PILGRIMAGE - Sunday, October 20th, 2019

On Sunday, October 20th, 2019, students of the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board will be participating in a Pilgrimage which will raise money to support projects in Uganda, Haiti, Dominican Republic & African Famine Relief. The pilgrimage will serve to create awareness around world hunger, need for health care, shelter, and proper education. As Catholics we are

called to promote Christ's presence and love for the poor. We encourage the intermediate students, as well as parents and staff to participate in this " Walk with Christ, Justice for the Poor."

SCHOOL SECURITY

Student safety is of the utmost importance at OLOA. Please note the following informational items regarding school security:

1. All entry doors to the school will be locked during the school day to ensure student and staff safety.
2. The intercom system must be used to gain entry into the school. The intercom system is at the front of the school. At this entrance you will be given access to the school and should immediately report to the main office.

Please refrain from walking out to the school yard to retrieve your child or walking up the front stairs, as staff will redirect you to come through the main office. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

ONLINE PAYMENTS NOW AVAILABLE!

For safety and efficiency reasons, we want to reduce the amount of Cash & Cheques coming into our school. School related expenses are now available online for you to make payment.

This year we are putting a strong focus on having full participation by our families using cash online. It is easy to register and user friendly. When you choose to use online payment as an option you are greatly assisting the school by minimizing the transfer of money from home to school to bank. Please consider if you have not yet done so registering and using this easy and safe mode of money payment.

Go to this website: <https://hwcdsb.schoolcashionline.com>

When paying online you will need to print a receipt and attach it to the permission/order forms that are sent back to the school with your child. This acts as a receipt of payment for the school's accounting.

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

As part of our shared efforts to ensure the health and safety of all students, parents/guardians play a critical role in administering the Board protocol effectively. Please note that if a Concussion Protocol package arrives home with your child, it requires your immediate attention. The package contains directions for you to follow and depending on your action and immediate return communication to the school, the school is required to act accordingly. Prior to your child returning to school, there is a form that requires your detailed and signed response and this

form is contained in the package that will arrive home in the event of a suspected concussion. The key to ensuring that we are responding appropriately requires action on both the part of the school and the parent/guardian. We look forward to diligently working with you through the proper application of this protocol. **Please note that if a concussion protocol is sent home it MUST be returned back to school, even if the physician reports that a concussion is not suspected or you as parents decide that you do not suspect a concussion. All signed protocols MUST be returned back to school for the safety of the children.**

PARENT CONFERENCE 2019

The 26th Annual Parent Conference at Bishop Ryan Secondary School will be on Saturday, November 2nd, 2019. It is open to all parents of students in our Board and will feature outstanding workshops, displays and a dynamic keynote speaker. Registration pamphlets will be available at the school in September. Please plan to attend.

CELL PHONE USAGE

The internet and cell phones are wonderful creations of technology, but they come with RESPONSIBILITY attached to them. All students are responsible for their actions and their consequences. In the interest of student safety all calls home and to students should take place through the office. We have been challenged with situations with cell phones not being used properly. We will be taking the cell phone from the student if they are being used in class when they are not instructed to do so. No cell phones are permitted during recess or the lunch hour. Cell phones must be turned off during the school day until otherwise instructed. Parents will be notified if a cell phone is taken and given to the Principal. **Reinforce with your child that no images or recordings of others without consent is permitted and can lead to serious consequences.**

SOCIAL MEDIA

OLOA communicates school events to our families through the school newsletter, agenda, School Messenger and Twitter. In a school community that has many great things happening for our students, items of information that may not have been on the monthly school newsletter may be added. Having said that, there are other sources that families may try to obtain information from regarding school events, such as Facebook groups. Please keep in mind that those groups are not run by school officials and the information is not always accurate and can be "opinion based". If for any reason you have a question and need clarification on a matter, *please* do not hesitate to contact the school for clarification and further information.

COUNT YOURSELF IN!

Did you know that every time you move to a new home, you must re-designate your Catholic school support? Otherwise the education portion of your property taxes will automatically default to the public school system.

The number of Catholic ratepayers is also a strong indicator of support for the Catholic school system. To vote for Catholic Trustees you must be registered as a separate school ratepayer. We urge you to check your property tax bill to ensure that your support is directed to the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board. We also encourage you to share this information with family and friends who are Catholic but do not have children in the school system. If you need help checking or changing your school support designation, please call the Assessment Department at 905-525-2930, Ext. 2188, or email webmaster@hwcdsb.ca.

VOLUNTEERING AND CRIMINAL REFERENCE CHECKS

The Board requires all employees and volunteers, including parents attending trips, to have a Criminal Reference Check on file at the school. If you are planning to volunteer at the school in the 2019-20 school year, please obtain a referral letter from the office before attending the Police Station for the Reference Check. (This letter reduces the Reference Check fee.) If you obtained a Criminal Reference Check this past year, you need only sign a *Declaration of Offences Form* which can be picked up in our school office. It is necessary for every volunteer to have a criminal reference check as a measure to ensure the safety of all students.

STUDENTS' AWARDS ASSEMBLY

Our Catholic Tradition tells us that God creatively and lovingly calls each of us to use the power of the Holy Spirit throughout our human journey. We are God, and we need to recognize the goodness that each child offers. Pope Francis states: "It's in school where one learns truth, good and beauty". Therefore, throughout the school year, we will recognize and celebrate students in various aspects of school life and honour their achievements with a certificate and group photo which will be taken at the end of each assembly. Our focus will continue to be the Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations. Students will be encouraged and guided by staff, parents and community leaders to achieve their best in all key areas and, hence, reach a level of personal success.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES

As part of our Eco-School plan, we will be instituting daily Boomerang Snacks and Lunches in order to emphasize waste-free snacks and lunches. We ask that all waste from snacks and lunches go home with your child. This includes all plastic bags, wax paper, aluminum foil and

uneaten foods. Recyclable cans and plastic water bottles can still be left here at school for recycling, although with our hydration stations we strongly discourage the use of single use water bottles. **We are really focusing this year on minimizing plastic straws and therefore the use of juice boxes at school.** Why are we recommending Boomerang Snacks and Lunches? There are several positive benefits: families take responsibility for the waste they produce, food wastes can be added to the family green bin and parents can see what their children are not eating. Here are some suggestions for making this work:

- Pack snacks & lunches in reusable containers
 - Pack drinks in a thermos or reusable container
 - Use a reusable lunch box or backpack
 - Keep a plastic bag in the lunch bag for the uneaten food items and any packaging material to avoid messes.
 - Be sure to monitor food quantities, especially JK to Gr. 1. We often find half eaten fruit, yogurt, etc. in the garbage.
 - Reusable containers are often easier for the children to open than the single-serve items
 - Packing lunches, the night before will save time in the morning.
 - Older students can be taught to prepare their own nutritious waste-free lunches & snacks
 - Avoid sending drinks in packaging that can't be re-sealed. Many children just take a few sips and throw out the rest.
 - Children of all ages can take responsibility for returning reusable containers, assisting with snack & lunch preparation & putting recyclables in the recycle bin at home.
- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

SAFE ARRIVAL

1. Parents please use the SafeArrival website, <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca>. Sign up to create your account using your email address. Select Attendance to Report an Absence. NOTE: Once you are logged in, please ensure that you update your message preferences.
2. Using your mobile device, download and install the SchoolMessenger app From the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store [or from the links at <https://go.messenger.ca>] Use your new login information to access your account. Select Attendance to Report an Absence.
3. Call the toll-free number 833-275-6703 to report an absence using the automated phone system.

THE LEARNING COMMONS

If you have found any library books at your home over the summer, please send them into the school.