

HWDSB

May 11, 2020

Dear families,

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we adjust to distance learning. We hope the following updates help us work together to support student learning and well-being.

This week, the Government of Ontario is expected to announce the final decision about the school year. We will share this decision with families through our website and social media channels (Twitter, Facebook and Instagram). Our next letter to update families will include details of the decision.

Have your say about distance learning

We are using the online engagement tool *Thoughtexchange* to have meaningful and productive online conversations. This will improve our work.

A *Thoughtexchange* is a way to crowdsource a community's answers to one question, in real time. You can respond, consider, and assign stars to the ideas shared by others (20 to 30 is ideal) and we can all learn what is important to the group.

Our first *Thoughtexchange* will ask the question: *Now that you have experienced distance learning during the COVID-19 school closure, what are your successes, questions, challenges and/or suggestions?*

This opportunity closes on Wednesday, May 13 at 11:59 p.m. Please learn more and have your say at www.hwdsb.on.ca/thoughtexchange

Thank you for participating. You can learn more in a video message at <https://youtu.be/53AQVkc0HwS>.

Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting

This week, teachers will be communicating to secondary students their grades as of March 13, 2020.

Virtual Classroom Guidelines for Privacy and Security

The privacy of our staff and students is always a consideration in physical and virtual settings. As we engage in virtual learning and use various platforms such as the Hub and MS Teams, we have created a [Virtual Classroom Guidelines for Privacy and Security Fact Sheet](#).

Students and their families are required to follow these guidelines when participating in learning that is being done in "live" real time with an educator as well as during times when the student can do the activity or access the material/resource on their own.

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Educators will monitor classroom activities to ensure these align with our expectations for privacy and information security and address any concerns directly with students and their parent/guardian, as appropriate.

A student's failure to respect these guidelines may result in a suspension of online classroom privileges. Should you have questions, please contact your child's school.

Public Access to School Buildings

The Ministry of Education has informed school boards that they can work with their local public health service on procedures for safe access to personal items in schools. A plan for building access by families is being developed. We will provide more information as soon as plans are finalized.

2020-21 School-Year Calendar

Every year, Ontario school boards must submit school year calendars to the Ministry of Education. Our Board of Trustees has approved our [draft elementary](#) and [draft secondary](#) calendars, but we are waiting for Ministry approval, which is delayed due to the closure. We will notify you when the Ministry approves our school year calendars.

Stay well and be safe,



Alex Johnstone
Chair of the Board



Manny Figueiredo
Director of Education