

HAMILTON-WENTWORTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



St. Joachim Catholic Elementary School
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Mrs. N. Ciapanna, Principal
Mrs. J. Gunby, Principal Intern

Mrs. T. Kovach, Superintendent of Education
Mr. P. Homerski, Trustee

Thursday, September 2, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year. Together with the staff, I look forward to working with the students and families of the St. Joachim Catholic School Community. Our focus will be to continue to build a strong Catholic School Community where each individual uses his/her gifts to the fullest and to become an instrument of God.

As we journey together may we continue to be respectful of one another and know that God is with us. Together we plan to continue to make St. Joachim School a happy faith-filled place of learning that truly gives witness to our school motto: **Heart to hand...Through Christ... We belong.** We can work together to help our children be the best they can be. We want to welcome our new students and their families to the school. A special greeting is extended to our Junior Kindergarten children who are beginning school for the first time in our Full Day Kindergarten Program. We hope that everyone has enjoyed a restful summer with opportunities to rest, relax, and enjoy family and friends.

As with every new school year there are always changes. As many of you know, as the Principal of St. Joachim Catholic Elementary School I am pleased to be part of a vibrant and exciting school community. We also welcome our new staff members Mrs. Gunby (Principal Intern /Gr. 8 teacher), Mrs. Salciccioli (French/PPT), Mrs. Buitenwerf (FDK), and Mrs. Cowitz (Grade 1). We look forward to their insight and expertise that they will contribute to our Catholic school community. We are fortunate to have an excellent staff at St. Joachim Catholic Elementary School and we are grateful for their dedication and efforts in preparing for this new school year.

St. Joachim is an active school that relies on teamwork and cooperation. We are truly blessed to have a dedicated parish team, under the spiritual guidance of Father Peter Tuyen Nguyen and an involved Catholic School Council, St. Joachim Children's Centre and supportive parents who give their time and energy to enrich the learning experience of all our students in an inclusive and safe environment.

As we return back to school a few points of information and **Frequently Asked Questions**. All students must be in full uniform. Please send your child with an extra mask and a reusable water bottle with their name on it.

Class placements will go out on **Friday, September 3, 2021 via School Messenger**. The classes are set and will not be altered at this time. **A reminder that Monday, September 6th is the Labour Day Holiday and Tuesday September 7th is a Professional Development Day.** All children in grades SK to Grade 8 begin school on **Wednesday September 8, 2021**. The JK Students (Year 1) will follow the staggered entry schedule already provided. This will allow teachers and support staff to help build routines. Again, this year the students will use a staggered free entry beginning at 8:40 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. They will use the doors indicated below.

Parents you *are our first line of defense* in regards to ensuring that if your child is showing early symptoms of illness please keep your child at home. If your child has a medical/dental appointment try if at all possible to make appointments after school hours. There should be no parents coming in and out of the building, except in case of emergency situations. Communication with parents and teaching staff or administration will be through phone calls or emails. Elementary students with special education needs will be attending school daily, and receive the programming indicated in the Individual Education Plan (IEP). Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) meetings may be held either virtually or in person. In person IPRC meetings must comply with all Public Health protocols.

Please send all students **with a lunch to school** and please consider a waste free/litter-less lunch, again as parents you will have no access to come to the school and drop off a lunch. [Waste free lunch.png](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What is the school start time and end time of the school day?**

- The school start and end time will remain the same. The school day will begin at 9:00 a.m. and will end at 3:20 p.m.

2. **What will happen when my child arrives at school?**

- When the students arrive to St. Joachim school, students will enter through their designated doors as they have done in the past. A staff member will be on supervision in the bus area to help direct students. The staff will also be on supervision in the hallways to help ensure physical distancing. When students arrive they will make their way directly into their classroom. (Free Entry) – Therefore once dropped off at the FDK gates there should be no parents in the courtyard.
- Parents are welcome to drop off their child at the designated doors. You may want to walk your child to their respective door/ FDK gates / Primary doors.

3. **What door will my child enter and exit from?**

- **FDKA-** Praden/Kellner and **FDKE** - Buitenwerf will enter through the main doors of the school.
- **FDKC** – Parra and **FDKD**- Dyack/Bier will enter through the Kindergarten doors (in the courtyard)
- **FDKB:** - TBA/Babic and Mrs. Farrugia (Grade 2) will enter through the side front door (by the small parking lot).
- **Grade 1's, 2's:** will enter in through the Primary door on the playground
- **Grade: 2/3 and ¼ classes:** will enter in through the classroom exit door on Symphony Place.
- **Grade 3, 4 and 5 classes:** will enter through the Intermediate doors off the playground
- **Grade 6/7, 7 classes** will enter through the portable on the playground
- **Grade 6 and grade 7/8 classes** will enter the junior doors off the playground
- **Grade 8 class** will enter the classroom door off the Intermediate playground.

• **Note:** Parents with students in grade 3 and under, are asked to meet their child at the primary doors at the end of the day. This is to ensure student safety when parents are picking up children.

- If someone other than a parent is picking up, we ask that parents notify the teacher. If unable to notify the teacher, please contact the main office
- If you usually meet your child in the playground you may continue to do so but please do not congregate and socially distance from other parents. All walkers and those being picked up will exit onto the playground.
- The bus students will remain in the classroom until their bus has arrived. The staff will escort the students on the bus using the front doors. Students will have a seating plan; siblings will need to sit together. We are encouraging all students to use ACTIVE Transportation (walking / biking) to reduce vehicle congestion and bus riders at our school.

4. **Will there be recess/lunch?**

- Students will eat snacks and lunch in their classroom. If you are not comfortable with your child removing their mask to eat at school, the option to go home for lunch would be an alternative. If you decide to do this, please call in the departure and return in Messenger and the students can be picked up the front doors.

5. **When will students get to go outside?**

- During recesses students will be able to remove their mask once outside and are reminded to maintain social distancing.
- Students will be asked to stay in their cohort and maintain a distance of 2m.

6. **What equipment can my child use?**

- Students are asked to use equipment provided by the school and are asked to leave personal items at home. All gym equipment that teachers use will be disinfected with Oxivir.

7. **How will my child exit the building to go outside?**

- During instructional time, the classroom teachers will take students outside through a designated door.
- Teachers will ensure that only one class is exiting and entering while socially distancing.
- Students will be asked to sanitize their hands as they exit and enter the building.

8. Does my child need to wear a mask while playing outside?

- Students do not need to wear a mask while playing outside.
- The classroom teacher will walk the class outside and ensure that students remain a safe distance from each other and will take students to their designated area on the playground.
- When students re-enter, the teacher will again ensure that a safe distance is maintained and students will sanitize their hands as they enter the building.
- Before students re-enter the school, students will put their masks back on.

9. What will my child do with their mask while they are outside?

- It is encouraged that students have a way to store their mask while outside.
- Mask clips, pouches, or pockets will be a way for students to keep their mask safe.
- Parents are encouraged to send students with at least one extra mask in case one gets misplaced.
- Below are some links a variety of mask storage solutions for outdoor time:
 - [Mask Lanyards](#)
 - [Mask Storage Clip Holder](#)

10. What will happen if my child needs to go to the bathroom?

- One student from each class will be allowed to go to the bathroom at a time.
- There will only be three students allowed in the bathroom at a time.
- If there are three students in the bathroom, students will be asked to stand outside of the bathroom until one of the students leaves.
- Students are asked to wash their hands well as they exit the bathroom.

11. What cleaning products will be available in my child's class?

- The custodial staff will be using OXIVIR to clean.
- Teaching staff will also receive a bottle of OXIVIR to use as necessary.
- Each classroom will have a bottle of hand sanitizer available for student use. To ensure safety of all students, we are asked to use cleaning products provided by the school.
- All highly touched areas will be washed on a regular basis.
- Bathrooms will be cleaned every two hours.

12. How will dismissal happen at the end of the day?

- Students will be dismissed in small groups (cohorts) and are asked to leave through their respective doors.
- Students who are being picked up will be dismissed by class and will meet parents outside on the playground.
- There will be staff stationed at each exit door to ensure safe pick up and dismissal.
- The classroom teacher will remain with bus students, and once all other students have been dismissed then bus students will be called by bus number. Bus students will line up in the hall way and exit the front doors to go directly on the bus.

Our school is blessed with a caring and committed staff working with all of its partners to support the students in their quest for spiritual development, knowledge and happiness! This year let us continue to work together at building resilience in our children and developing a growth mindset.

I look forward to meeting you this coming school year and serving your children in our mission of Catholic education. On behalf of the staff, I wish to extend our best wishes and prayers for a successful school year.

Yours in Catholic education,

Mrs. N. Ciapanna
Principal

