



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

January 19, 2022

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Earlier this month, the provincial government announced the suspension of COVID-19 reporting requirements for schools, including the requirement to notify parents/guardians of a confirmed COVID-19 case in their child's class and/or cohort. To support ongoing monitoring and transparency, and mindful of our responsibility to report, the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School will continue to support class/cohort-level reporting of *known* cases of COVID-19.

Principals who are notified by a parent/guardian or staff member of a positive COVID-19 test result will be required to notify any affected classes and/or cohorts. A positive test result can be from a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test or Rapid Antigen Test (RAT). As per past practice, the notification will be in the form of a letter which will only be sent to the affected class and/or cohort, as a courtesy rather than an actionable item. Under the updated provincial guidance, students and staff are no longer considered to be high-risk contacts and classes/cohorts will not be dismissed.

Class-level reporting of positive COVID-19 cases will only be as good as the information available to schools. Principals can only report what they know. To ensure full transparency, parents/guardians are asked to notify the school if their child tests positive for COVID-19 on either a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test or Rapid Antigen Test (RAT). Out of privacy considerations, the identity of the individual(s) will not be shared.

Reporting will only continue at the class level. The HWCDSB will no longer be reporting cases in the COVID-19 Advisory, as case counts may not be indicative of actual COVID-19 cases within our schools or system.

Case reporting/notification will begin on Monday, January 24 to allow for distribution of the provincially supplied Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs). Central staff have been working diligently over the weekend and into the early part of this week to package the tests for distribution to all students and staff. Schools should receive their shipment by Thursday, January 20.

**Absenteeism reporting**

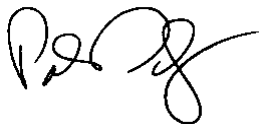
Starting January 19, 2022, schools are required to monitor their own absenteeism rates and report on student and staff absences and school closures daily on the Ministry absence reporting tool. The daily school reports will be published on the [public-facing provincial website](#), starting January 24, 2022. Data on school absenteeism rates can be accessed from this site. Hamilton Public Health Services will be notified if absenteeism rises to a defined level and a letter will be sent home to families. The defined level is still being determined.

**School vaccination clinics**

The Ministry of Education continues to prioritize vaccination for children and youth as an effective strategy to protect Ontarians from COVID-19 and keep schools safe and open for in-person learning. Clinics are being organized by our public health partners to provide first or second doses to students in schools, both during and outside of school hours. Any vaccination during the school day would require a consent form signed by the student's parent in advance. Parents/guardians will be provided ample notice and participation is voluntary.

Information on other vaccination opportunities is posted on the [HWCDSB](#) and school websites. Hamilton Public Health Service and our local healthcare partners continue to provide multiple options for pediatric vaccination, including mass clinics, primary care and pharmacies.

We look forward to a safe return to in-person learning and pray that, through the intercession of Our Blessed Mother, you and your families have a happy and safe new year.



Patrick J. Daly  
Chairperson of the Board



David Hansen  
Director of Education