

SEPTEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

Superintendent: I. Fortino Director: Mr. D. Hansen Trustees: M. Nardini & P. DiFrancesco Pastor: Fr. Mariusz Durbajlo
Principal: C. Martino Principal Assistant: A. Gris Secretary: D. Simpson Assoc. Pastor: Rev Mike Downey

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Welcome back to all our students, staff and parents, as well as the new families and staff that have joined our wonderful school community. I pray all are refreshed and invigorated by the summer holidays and the enthusiasm for the new school year. We begin a new and exciting journey together for the year of 2016-2017. I thank Mrs. Simpson, our secretary, for all her hard work in setting up for the new school year. Thank you to Mr. Gonzalez, and Matthew U., our summer student for making sure our school is spotless and oh so shiny! Thank you to our dedicated staff for committing to set up the classrooms and preparing all materials so that everything is ready for the first week!

We strive to maintain and embrace our Catholic Community of Faith, believing in learning for all in a safe and caring school community. We also welcome back our Pastor, Father Mariusz Durbajlo and the new associate Pastor, Father Andrew Quarshie.. Our home and Parish connection has always been very strong and helps guide us on our spiritual journey. We look forward to working with Father Mariusz Durbajlo, Father Andrew Quarshie and Wes Moga, Youth Minister, to celebrate our faith. Our Board theme this school year is *Catholic Education: "Walking Forward Together"*. Our school community has so much to celebrate and be joyful for, we thank God for our blessings and pray for a school year filled with new opportunities in all areas! We look forward to Walking Forward Together with God's blessings.

Prayer for September

*Jesus, Our brother and friend,
You have given us many examples of how to serve faithfully.
We can serve You in big ways and in small ways.
We serve You by loving everyone in our class and in our school.
We serve You each day when we know kindness here and at home.
We are Your disciples when we show others what Jesus would do!
Amen*



SEPTEMBER 2016 BELL TIMES

8:38 am ENTRY BELL: Students should be on the playground and lined up with their classmates at bell time. Students are not to use the front door of the school. Once this bell rings, students are to enter the school and get ready for class to begin. The time before school begins is a **WALK and TALK time only! No equipment is permitted.**

8:40 am Bell: School day officially begins. All students should be on time and at their desks at this time. Announcements and Prayers are a very important part of the school day. All students are to be in the classroom for prayers and announcements.

9:50 am-10:05 am - Recess: Only Nerf is permitted. Remind your children of the rules on the yard. Safety is always first. Slow it down. All games are just a game!

11:25 am - 12:15 pm - Lunch 11:20 to 11:50 students remain in class / **11:50 until 12:20** outside play time. We ask that only Tennis balls be used for the four square areas and basketballs only for basketball. This is to avoid any injuries. Only Nerf for football and soccer are allowed on the school yard. No hard rubber balls are to be used at any time.

1:25 pm - 1:40 pm - Recess

3:00 pm - DISMISSAL: At dismissal time, students are asked to leave the school grounds as quickly as possible using the sidewalk on the far side of the school to get to the major crossing area. Only bus students exit from the front door. Parents who are picking up are asked not to block the bus lane and to park in the parking spots. Safety first at all times. No pets are permitted on the school yard.

CROSSING GUARD

We welcome Ms. Carol Lee Coisard, new crossing guard. The hours of duty are: **8:20 am to 8:45 am** and **3:00 pm to 3:20 pm**, Monday to Friday. At the present time, there will be no crossing guard at the lunch hour.

PARKING CONCERNS

We have a limited number of parking spots and student safety is **First and Critical at All Times!** When you arrive to drop off students, please park your car in the parking spaces. **The front is reserved for KISS and RIDE ONLY!** Cars cannot park in the bus lane area. Follow the entrance into the parking lot and exit out by the opposite end, near the front door. Only one flow of traffic is permitted. **Please be reminded that the driveway in front of the school cannot be used for PARKING, STOPPING OR IDLING as this is the bus zone as well as the fire route.** Traffic flow enters the driveway at the east end of the school and leaves by driving slowly in front of the school and exiting at the west driveway. If a babysitter or other caregiver is picking up your child, please inform them of the expectations. No cars should be parked behind the wheelchair accessible parking in the far west lot. Please be considerate and follow the procedures for everyone's safety, not just your convenience. **SAFETY IS FIRST AT ALL TIMES!** Be considerate of parking in front of our neighbours homes. Do not block driveways.

VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS

Sign in book is located in the front foyer. Once you have signed in, see Mrs. Simpson for a visitor tag. We ask that visitors do not wander around the school. Student safety is first and all visitors are strangers to our students.

All students, if late, must report to the office and will be given an admittance to class slip. **PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO WALK STUDENTS TO AND FROM CLASS OR DOWN THE HALLWAYS. THIS IS A MATTER OF STUDENT SAFETY AND CONFIDENTIALITY.**

SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE



Please join us at the Open House on **Monday, September 19th from 5 - 7pm.**

UNIFORM SWAP

Gently used school uniforms will be available at no charge at the school Open House. If you have any uniforms to donate, please send to the school office **before Friday, September 16th.** Uniform is mandatory. McCarthy is our school supplier. We sell crests in the office for \$ 3.00



STUDENT AGENDAS

Students from Grades FDK-8 will once again be provided with an agenda book to assist in recording assignments, tests, reminders for each day. To enhance the communication between home and school a parent is requested to please sign the agenda each evening to ensure the contents of the entries have been reviewed and completed.

In turn, the teacher will also be signing the agenda book each day as well to ensure it is being maintained each evening. Parents may wish to send notes to school and are encouraged to do so using the plastic pouch found at the front of the agenda book. Please refer to the insert in the front of the agenda, particularly pages 2—8 that are specific to St. Clare. Please read these pages with your child/ren and sign and date the form on page 8.

Special thanks is extended to our Catholic School Council for their continued financial support of the agenda books for each student. We are accepting a \$2.00 donation for the agenda's and to start funds up for the school year. We do however encourage all families to support your Catholic School Council so that efforts similar to this can continue at St. Clare.

PARISH CONNECTION:

Liturgy times at St. Francis Parish: Saturday: 5:30 pm; Sunday: 8:30 am, 10:00 am—Children's Liturgy, 11:30 am —Children's Liturgy. We will celebrate our First School Mass on Tuesday, September 20th at 10:00 am. All parents, guardians, grandparents are welcome to attend. Our goal this school year is to fully know and understand the responses of the Mass.



First Communion - TBA

Confirmation will take place on **Saturday, November 19th at 10:00 am** at St. Francis Xavier Parish.

First School Mass: Tuesday, September 20th at 10:00 am. St. Francis Xavier Church. All parents, grandparents are welcome to join us.

CATHOLIC YOUTH ORGANIZATION ATHLETICS CALLING ALL COACHES!!!!

Please consider volunteering your coaching expertise to assist with coaching some of our school teams. The more coaches we have available, the more teams we will be able to field during the different seasons this year. Although a teacher must be part of the coaching staff, parents are most welcome to take on a head coach position. We welcome parent coaches of all skill levels....our focus is to provide our students with access to athletic programming to help them stay active and learn the value of effective team play! Please contact the school office if you are interested in volunteering in this capacity for the 2016-2017.

Being a part of a team is a commitment and a privilege. Students are reminded that Respect and Student Safety are vital. Students must listen to their coaches, respect their team mates and the other teams and referees and also be committed to make the scheduled practices and game times.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Communication between home and school is a key component for student success and I encourage parents to speak with their child's teacher early in the year to address any concerns and/or share information. As always, I am here to support all members of our community in creating the best possible learning situation for our students. If you have a concern, please call the school or send a note; appointments are needed. Protocol should always be followed: teacher first and address the concern.

OFFICE AREA

The main office is a busy area, and we are aiming to cut down on interruptions at the office. Students are reminded that homework and daily supplies are their responsibility and they are **not** allowed to call home if items are forgotten. Lunches can be dropped off in the front foyer in the bin; please mark your child's name, first and last!

No guests are permitted to walk into classes without a visitor tag. Instructional time is precious and guests entering the classroom affect the learning environment.

ANAPHYLAXIS ALERT / UPDATE:

All parents need to be aware that there are children in our school with a severe life threatening food allergy (anaphylaxis) to peanuts and nuts. This is a medical condition that causes severe reaction to specific foods and can result in death within minutes. Although this may or may not affect your child's class directly, we want to inform you so that you will choose to send foods to school with your child that are free from nuts and nut products.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Education and supervision are paramount in dealing with issues regarding food allergies. Guidelines for all children include:

- 1) Review, recognize and understand the meaning of the no nuts symbol in our school.
- 2) No trading and sharing foods, food utensils and food containers.
- 3) Hand washing before and after eating is highly encouraged.
- 4) The use of food in crafts and class parties may need to be restricted depending on the allergies of the students.

In the interest of ensuring a safe school environment for all of our children, St. Clare of Assisi school asks that parents send snacks/lunches that are **peanut/nut free**. This requires extra vigilance and label reading on the part of the parent initially, but it is our experience that over time, students also gain awareness of this issue from classroom education as well as broader school initiatives. For more information on snack/lunch ideas as well as Birthday treats, please refer to the school website at: www.hwcdsb.ca Please note that Tim Horton's products are baked in a facility with nuts and are therefore **not** nut safe. Similarly, any product which states "may contain traces of nuts" is also **not** a nut safe product and should not be sent to school as a snack for your child. Letters will be sent home to children in classes where there are specific concerns which require the support, understanding and cooperation of all parents and students. We thank you for keeping our school nut safe! Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. For more information, please contact the Principal.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

If you wish, you may send a special treat for your child's birthday. **Please remember that due to peanut and nut allergies, we cannot accept any baked goods.** Examples of treats that may be sent are: Dare cookies, fruit snacks, Bear Paws, Nestle chocolate bars such as Smarties, Kit Kat or Aero Bars. **ALL TREATS SENT TO SCHOOL MUST HAVE A LABEL, PEANUT AND TREE NUT SAFE.** As always, we encourage the reading of labels to ensure the nut safety of any foods coming into the school. Throughout the year we will continue to raise student and parent awareness on this issue in the interest of providing a safe school environment for all of our children. I thank you in advance for your continued support and cooperation.
ALLERGIES ARE LIFE THREATENING AND ALL MUST BE AWARE!

CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS & POLICE CHECKS, UNIFORMS & DRESS CODES, APPOINTMENTS, ABSENCES &/OR LATES.

Please refer to the inside of your child's agenda for above information. This is for the safety of all children.

BUSSING OF STUDENTS

In the event that you require assistance from the Consortium staff during start up phase, all you need to do is call the contact centre 1-800-691-6402 or 905-523-2318 and provide them with the details pertaining to your inquiry. All telephone calls to the Board Office will be re-directed through the contact centre during the start up phase. **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.

PUBLICATION OF NAMES/PHOTOS/ WORK OF STUDENTS

From time to time teachers will display samples of student work, announce names of students over the PA to recognize achievements, include names of students in newsletters, website (first name and last initial only) etc. as part of our celebration of student success.

In the event a parent wishes to decline their child's recognition of these achievements we ask that the parent make this request in writing and send it to Mrs. Martino directly. The respective teacher(s), coaches will be informed of this parental decision and your request will be strictly adhered to.

STUDENT VERIFICATION FORMS

It is extremely important that we update our school records each year. Student Verification Sheets will be sent home shortly. If you have had a change of address, phone number or emergency contact please let the school know ASAP. Please continue to update this information as needed during the school year.

CASUAL DAYS

Occasionally there will be Casual Days during the year. On these days, students are permitted to wear clothing other than school uniforms. However, regular school dress code applies: Length of bottoms (maximum 4 inches above the knee), no profanity, excessive skin, etc. No muscle shirts are permitted or thin strap t-shirts. A loonie or toonie is collected from the students that participate to support a specific charity. First dress down day will take place on **Friday September 30th**. Students are asked to contribute toonie for first dress down which can be paid online. **Please see page 7 for instructions.**

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

PITA LUNCH

We will have our first PITA lunch on **Friday September 30th**. We are aiming to have all parents use the Cash Online System. Pita Pit now has gluten free PITA's as an option! More information will be coming home soon!

PIZZA MONDAYS



Our Pizza Mondays lunch program will continue starting after Thanksgiving on **Tues., Oct. 11th**.

PARENT CONFERENCE 2016

The 24th Annual Parent Conference at the new Bishop Ryan Secondary School will be on **Saturday, November 5, 2016., 7:45 am - 2:30 pm**. It is open to all parents of students in our Board and will feature outstanding workshops and displays. Registration pamphlets will be available at the school in September. Please plan to attend.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL

We were blessed with a wonderful Catholic School Parent Council last year and many incredible volunteers. We pray for the same hearts and hands to help us out. We encourage all Parents/Guardians to come and be a part of the school community. Our first meeting will be held on **Monday, October 3rd** in our School Library at **6:00 pm**.

A reminder that, under the guidelines from the Ministry, School Council elections will be held in September. **ALL** positions are open because terms are one year in duration. Please consider forwarding your name to be part of the election process for our 2016-2017 Catholic School Council. Positions/roles on the council will be determined at the first meeting of the new Council to take place in October of 2016. You can make a difference!

Parents/Guardians interested in holding a position on council shall submit a brief paragraph outlining why they wish to stand for office to the Principal by **September 28, 2016**. This information shall be posted for the parents/guardians of children in the school prior to the election (if an election is necessary). Voting day is scheduled for **Monday, October 3, 2016**. Ballots will be available in the school office from **9:00 am to 11:25 am** and **1:00 pm to 3:30 pm**.

Thank you to Mrs. Sulug and Mrs. Staresinic for taking care of our garden over the summer.

The election of parent members shall be by secret ballot. Positions available will be filled by the top vote getters to the number required. In the event that the required number of candidates can be met based on submissions, those applicants will be acclaimed to the school council. We invite all parents to consider joining the council this year. Election packages will be sent home with the youngest /only student during the first week of school.

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. 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 (this service is not yet available to schools. 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, juice boxes 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
- Pre-packed lunches, single-serve snacks & lunch items are more expensive. You'll save money!
- 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.

CELLPHONE USAGE

Our school has a Bring your own Device Policy (BYOD) for the Junior and Intermediate students. The students and the parents must sign the form in order for the device to be used at school. The device is only to be used during appropriate teaching time with teacher instruction and supervision. Read the BYOD carefully with your son/daughter.

We have been challenged with many situations with cellphones not being used properly. We will take the cell phone from the student if they are being used in class when they are not instructed to do so. No cellphones are permitted during recess or the lunch hour. Cellphones must be turned off during the school day until otherwise instructed.

If the phone is taken three times during the term, the BYOD right will be lost for the term. Parents will be notified if a cell phone is taken and given to the Principal.

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.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM

Current educational research indicates that learning or maintaining a second or third language has a positive effect on all aspects of a child's educational development. The focus of the International Language Program is to offer an opportunity to develop and/or maintain the ability to listen, speak, read, write and understand a new language or the language of the home or heritage. The Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, through St. Charles Continuing Education Centre, is offering free International Language classes to elementary students in the city. For information on schools in your vicinity offering international languages, please refer to the flyer that is posted on the Board web site under International Language Elementary, or www.st.charles.ca.

SCHOOL CASH ONLINE - REGISTER NOW

Parents now have the convenience of paying for school trips, spirit wear, special lunches and other items online. After registering for School Cash Online, you will receive emails notifying you of school trips, events, activities and other items available for purchase online.

Convenient - Make secure payments 24/7 from the comfort of your home.

Easy - Easy-To-Use Online shopping with various payment methods.

Safe - Your child won't be carrying cash or cheques to and from school.

Saves Time - Manage your school expenses and view payment history in one place.

How to Register: Visit hwcdsb.schoolcashonline.com Click "Get Started Today" and enter your information.

A confirmation email will be sent to your email. View the email and follow the steps to log into School Cash Online.

Find your child / Add additional child. Start viewing items!

Future newsletters will be online only at www.hwcdsb.ca at the beginning of each month.

If you require a paper copy please request one from the office.

