

“And suddenly you just know it is time to start something new and trust the magic of beginnings”.

Welcome back St. Teresa of Calcutta Families! We hope that everyone has enjoyed a wonderful summer. We are looking forward to re-connecting with our students, whether in-person or through remote learning. We know that this year will present us with various challenges and opportunities; but we remain optimistic, confident that with the grace of our Lord, we will find many creative and innovative ways to work through this “new normal.” We thank you in advance for your continued partnership in Catholic education.

On the FIRST DAY:

Dear parents,

Let me take this time to welcome you all back. I know I speak for the entire staff when I say we have missed you. Let us assure you that we have taken extraordinary efforts and have been involved in tremendous professional development that will allow us to keep your children happy, safe and learning.

The first day of school, with all its excitement, can also feel over whelming especially for our younger grades. This year we have implemented a procedure which we are confident will ensure that students are received on the first day of school in a way that makes them feel welcomed yet safe.

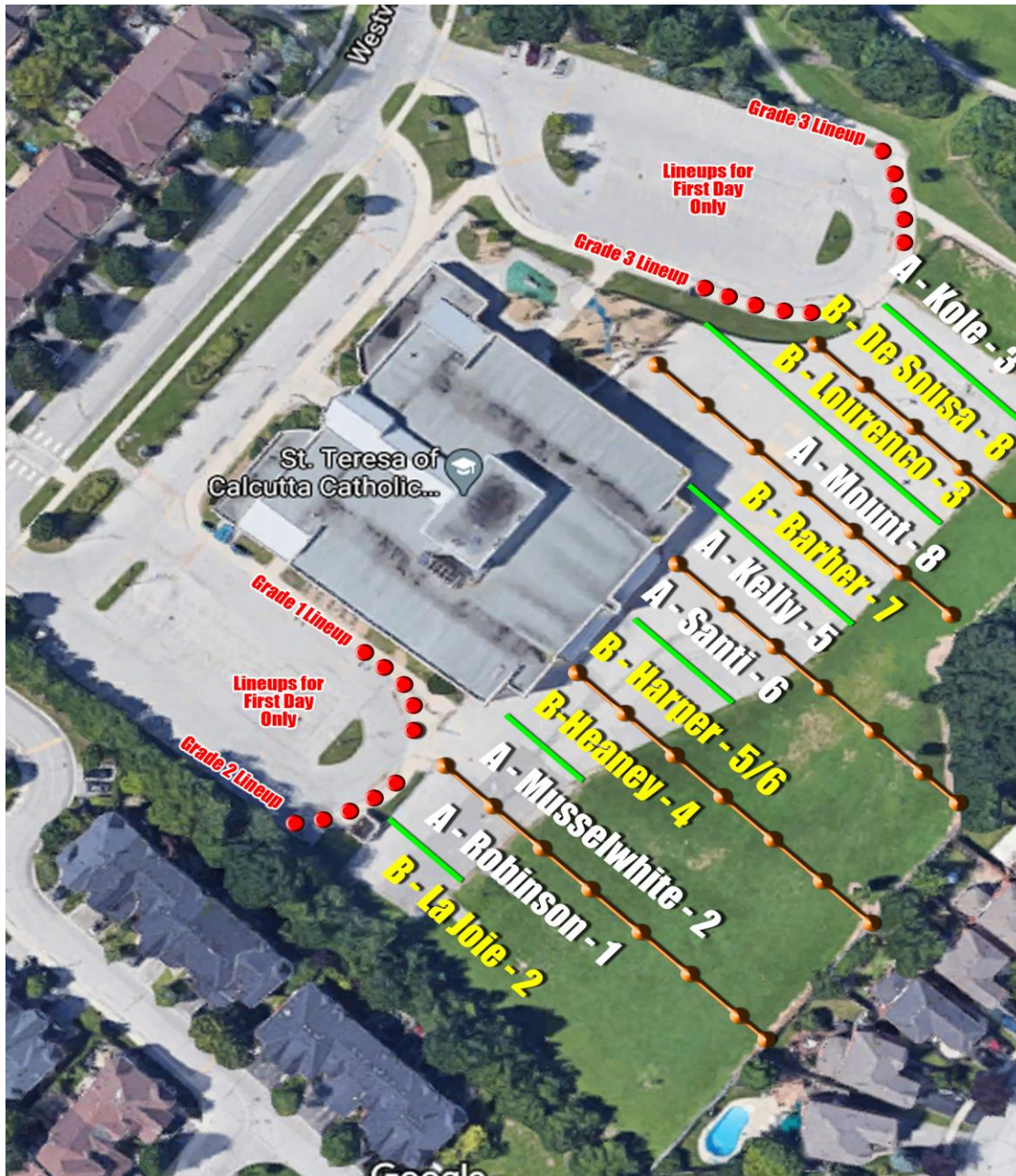
First, please understand that parents are not permitted under any circumstance to enter the playground on the first day of school. I recognize how exhilarating it was for all of us to be gathering in the playground, getting reacquainted and enjoying the coming together. Regrettably this cannot be the case this year. Safety is paramount.

Students in grade 4 to 8 will be able to access the playground, locate their teacher and line up independently on the play ground. Each teacher will be at the front of the line with a sign to indicate the grade. They will be holding up chart paper with a class list.

Students in grades 1 to 3 who require direction and help getting to the proper spot will remain behind the fence in a line. There will be a sign posted to indicate where grade 1,2 and 3 students may stand with their parents. They will be received by a teacher designated to escort your child to the proper line if need be. Please be cognizant that distancing markers will not be placed behind the fence and we ask parents to Escorting Teachers will be Mrs. Laic, Mrs. Commisso, Mrs. Di Guglielmo and Ms. Ribau. Please be cognizant that distancing markers will not be placed behind the fence and we ask parents to use their best judgement to space out safely. Parents are asked to be patient as we receive the students and escort them to the proper line.

We ask, of course, that everyone on school property wear a mask and is respectful while allowing our staff to escort your children to the appropriate line.

Please review the diagram attached which highlights the procedure for bringing your students to school on the first day. * This Map will also Indicate how we will dismiss the students at the end of the day.



Preparing for a Safe and Healthy Return to School

We are working diligently at St. Teresa of Calcutta to ensure that the Board directives, as outlined in the [Return to School Plan](#), are implemented. Prior to the start of this new school year, St. T of C parents will receive information specific to our school related to new routines (entry, dismissal etc.) via e-mail and our website. One suggestion for parents is to consider having children try on their masks to begin to get used to wearing them for an extended period. As per the Return to School Plan, masks are required, and it should be noted that face shields are **not** a suitable or endorsed substitution.

Our staff is working tirelessly to limit the risks of transmission of COVID-19. This week, we have had extensive training on infection control measures such as hand washing, respiratory etiquette, social distancing and the use of medical and non-medical face masks. We have developing plans to ensure that each of our students who are returning to school will have a smooth and positive transition back. We miss all of our students and are very much looking forward to being together again!

On Tuesday, August 25th, at 7:00 pm, Dr. Meghani, our Medical Officer for the Halton Region conducted a live webinar for all parents. For more information : <https://learnathome.hcdsb.org/2020/08/22/webinar-preparing-for-a-safe-and-healthy-return-to-school/>

Elementary Schools

At the elementary level, we will be easing into the new school year by bringing Grade 1-8 students back to school in smaller groups on September 9, 10 and 11th. All Grade 1-8 students will be in school beginning Monday, September 14th.

As per our usual practice, we will implement a staggered entry for Kindergarten students. Year 1 and 2 orientation will take place on Tuesday, September 8th, and Wednesday, September 9th. Year 2 students will begin on Thursday, September 10th. Year 1 staggered entry will take place on Friday, September 11th, and Monday, September 14th. All Kindergarten students in school beginning Tuesday, September 15th.

Students in the self-contained Community Living, Essential Skills, and Structured Teaching special education classes in our elementary schools will begin in-class instruction on Wednesday, September 9 and attend school daily thereafter.

The following schedule will apply for all elementary schools:

Date	Who attends?	Focus
Tuesday September 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School staff ONLY 	<p>Rehearse new health and safety protocols.</p> <p>Set up learning management systems and resources.</p> <p>Co-ordinate the use of space in the school and on the school yard.</p> <p>Kindergarten Year 1 and 2 Orientation Virtual Interviews</p>
Wednesday September 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School staff Students in Grades 1 – 8 with surnames beginning with the letters A-F Students in self-contained Special Education classes 	<p>Practice new health and safety protocols Student well-being</p> <p>Kindergarten Year 1 and 2 Orientation Virtual Interviews</p>
Thursday September 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School staff Students in Grades 1 – 8 with surnames beginning with the letters G- N Students in self-contained Special Education classes All Year 2 Kindergarten students 	<p>Practice new health and safety protocols Student well-being</p>
Friday September 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School staff Students in Grades 1 – 8 with surnames beginning with the letters O-Z Students in self-contained Special Education classes All Year 2 Kindergarten students and half of Year 1 Kindergarten students 	<p>Practice new health and safety protocols Student well-being</p>
Monday September 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School staff Students in Grades 1-8 All Year 2 Kindergarten students and half of Year 1 Kindergarten students 	<p>Regular in-class instruction and remote learning begin.</p>
Tuesday September 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School staff ALL Students (Kindergarten – Grade 8) 	<p>All Kindergarten students begin in-class instruction.</p>

New to the Community or Leaving?

If you are registering or moving out of our school community, please let our office know as soon as possible so we can ensure our class lists are accurate.

Bussing

Transportation information for bus students will be available at www.haltonbus.ca. To access this information, you will need your child's Ontario Education Number (OEN). Please note that there will be no option for Courtesy Seats this year.

Medical Concerns

If your child has a medical condition, the existing *Student Plan of Care* was sent home in June when you picked up your child(ren) belongings. Please return the updated Medical package on the first week of school. If you have mis-placed or did not receive the Medical package please connect with Ms. Myers to discuss medical conditions regarding plans for this year. If your child has an epi-pen, please ensure that you provide one to the school on or before the first day of school. **You may drop off any medications in the drop off bin located at the front doors of the school. Please ensure that the epi-pen is labelled clearly with your child's name.**

*If your child has had a change in their condition over the summer, please inform the school in the week prior to students returning.

Arrival & Departure: All students will report directly to their designated area on the playground once they have arrived at school. Students have been given sectioned off areas for them. This will ensure that all students remain within their cohorts, this includes all walkers, bus students, and students who are dropped off. When the teacher arrives to their designated spot at the bell students will line up and be escorted in to the school.

DISMISSAL: At dismissal, staff will have students ready to be dismissed on the playground from their lines. Walkers and students who are to be picked up by a parent/guardian will be accompanied to the backyard to exit using the assigned school gate. PARENTS are NOT permitted on the playground as was permitted in past years. Parents will wait behind the designated fence and staff will dismiss students accordingly. Students must be wearing their masks until they are outside and must remain within their cohorts. Bus students will be escorted to the Forum. Please keep the following in mind:

- Only one designated parent/guardian drop-off/pick-up
- All entrances will be used and assigned to classes based on location
- Outdoor drop-off/pick-up
- Staggering entry for recesses
- Physical distancing ground markings
- Limit student personal belongings brought to school to include essential items only (e.g., backpack, clothing, sun protection, water bottles, food).

- Kindergarten students will remain in their cohorts and using both gates, students will be dismissed to parents/guardians, buss students are to follow the same expectations are those who are in Grade 1-8.

Parents Drop off/Pick up: If families choose to drop off and pick up students, parents are to remain in their cars. For primary students, one designated parent will drop off at the gate. **NO Parents/guardians are allowed on school property (including the backyard) while dropping off and/or picking up.** Parents are not to come on school property and are to wait for their children by the specific gate. Kindergarten students will be dismissed using the front and back gates and based on their cohorts. Kindergarten educator teams will share with their families which gate their classes will dismiss and enter from.

Tips

As summer comes to an end, and back-to-school season begins, getting back into routines is important for children and families. Some tips to help with a smooth transition:

1. **Keep a positive attitude** and reinforce the positive aspects of going back to school to help build your child's excitement for school.
2. Establish routines that provide consistency and structure at home. Consistent bedtime and wake up time, morning and nighttime routines decrease stress for children so that they know what to expect.
3. Prepare lunch and snacks the night before: parents will not be permitted to enter the school to drop off lunch or snacks to the children. Any homework assignments forgotten at home will also not be able to be dropped off at school.