



TOWN OF BEDFORD
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bedfordps.org

Superintendent Update

August 14, 2020

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Hello Bedford School Community,

It has been another busy week as we prepare for the start of school. Thank you to the nearly 80% of families that completed the enrollment and transportation survey! We are still tabulating the results but the initial data shows that 79.5% of families intend to send their students back to school in the hybrid model while 20.5% are going to opt for the Bedford for Bedford (B4B) remote model.

On Tuesday, August 11, 2020 Governor Baker introduced an enhanced community data map which tracks COVID-19 cases and gives a colored rating from clear through red. This information is also being utilized by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to alert school communities about the risk in their particular city or town. Here in Bedford we are fortunate to receive weekly updates from Town Manager Sarah Stanton. This week's update can be found at [Bedford August 13, 2020 COVID-19 Update](#).

As part of our reopening planning we have created Cooperative Teams at each school, active at each level and coordinated at the district level by Assistant Superintendent Clifford. These teams are picking up the work of the task forces and will work to operationalize all aspects of our reopening plan. Our Updated plan was submitted to DESE today (the deadline was extended from the original August 10, 2020 deadline) and can be found on our website [here](#). It outlines the hybrid model and begins to outline the B4B remote model which is still under development. Both models were approved by the Bedford School Committee on Wednesday, August 5, 2020.

As we prepare for a return to school please let us know if you or your family are having internet connectivity issues. Our technology department can assist you and we'd like to make sure that everyone starts the school year connected to the internet. If you are having an issue please contact our Director of Technology and Library Media Ms. Donna Clements at donna_clements@bedfordps.org.

This week we have also been planning for our students who need additional support, our Cohort C group. This select group of students will be invited to school four days each week based on their specialized educational needs. Our enrollment data and classroom capacity suggest that we will need to limit this cohort to a small number of students at the outset of the school year. Depending on the metrics, and classroom capacity we may be able to add additional students at a later date. This cohort will be limited at first to students in special education programs, particular English Language Learners, and students who are homeless or in foster care. We are limiting this cohort to select students to ensure that we can remain within classroom capacity limits. At some point we hope to add to this cohort, but to start this group will be limited to select students only.

Many of you have written to me and I appreciate hearing from you. I know that some of you have read the letter by my friend and fellow superintendent Bill Burkhead of Scituate, others have seen the Op-Ed written by Tom Scott and Bob Baldwin of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS), while others have sent pieces written by local and national medical professionals, educators, researchers, and parents. I have read most if not all of the articles, letters, op-ed pieces, and studies you have sent. Each is a helpful piece of information and helps inform our decision making in this unprecedented time. Thank you for sending these to me and thank you for your kindness and patience as we continue to make our way towards the fall.

Thank you for your patience, your participation, and your continued commitment to our schools.

Wishing you continued health,

Sincerely,

Philip Conrad
Superintendent

DESE Covid-19 Website <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>