



TOWN OF BEDFORD
97 MCMAHON ROAD
BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01730

Bedford Public Schools Update on COVID-19

April 6, 2020

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Dear Families, Faculty and Staff,

In today's update you will find information regarding April Vacation.

Best wishes,
Jon

The Bedford COVID-19 Task Force met Sunday, April 6, 2020 to review the latest guidance from the Department of Public Health (DPH), the office of Governor Charlie Baker, and Town Legal Counsel.

The COVID-19 Task Force is comprised of the following Town officials:

Sarah Stanton, Town Manager
Jon Sills, Superintendent of Schools
Heidi Porter, Director of Health and Human Services
Robert Bongiorno, Police Chief
David Grunes, Fire Chief
Taissir Alani, Facilities Director

Active Cases

As of today, April 6, 2020, there have been a total of twenty-two (22) presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 reported to the Town of Bedford Board of Health by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MA DPH). Five (5) of these cases have already recovered and have come off of isolation and there are zero known (0) Persons under Investigation. It is likely that there are other individuals impacted by COVID-19 in the community that have not sought medical attention, and/or have not been tested and are isolating at home regardless. Those individuals do not appear on the surveillance reports the Town receives from the MA DPH.

The Board of Health continues to do the appropriate follow-up and outreach to those residents and close contacts known to us. Many of the identified close contacts of the initial cases never exhibited symptoms, have completed their required quarantine period and have been released from quarantine by the Board of Health.

Town Update

At the Select Board Meeting on April 1, 2020, the Town Moderator, with a vote of the Selectmen, declared the Bedford Annual Town Meeting, previously rescheduled for April 6, be recessed and continued to May 4, 2020. Please see the link for additional information: <https://www.bedfordma.gov/town-meeting>

School Update

This week, I plan to recommend to the School Committee Thursday evening that BPS cancel April Vacation this year. Before the school committee makes a decision on this proposal, however, I would like the School Committee to have the benefit of knowing what our families and faculty think.

Please share your thoughts at:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdGGcuyuHAahw4Y25pM_GOSCK4TOhJ5ztT6o1AazGSq2HsFQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

The district leadership team, and Superintendent, agree that it would best serve our students to cancel April Vacation for the following reasons:

- We have recently missed two weeks of learning, with the exception of those students who participated in enrichment activities'
- We are just building up steam with our remote/online learning, and to take four days off a few weeks from now would interrupt momentum and set learning back. Many families are working hard to adjust to this challenge at home and may hit their stride in the next week or so, and they would be particularly impacted should we add in a vacation;
- While some families and teachers would welcome a break, we anticipate that most would prefer to continue to benefit from the added structure that remote/online learning is now providing;
- While it is possible that school will reopen before the end of the year and that the four days would be better spent face to face at that time, this is not likely;
- Planned for travel at this point is highly restricted.

General Guidance

For previous updates on COVID-19, please review the COVID-19 News and Announcements Page at on the Town website (www.bedfordma.gov).

It is important to remember that while the COVID-19 outbreak is evolving quickly, influenza is still circulating in the area. Many of the things you do to help prevent colds and the flu can help protect you against COVID-19:

- Comply with the Governor's Stay at Home Order and non-quarantined residents should only leave the house for grocery shopping, doctor's appointments or some socially distanced fresh air. Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Clean things that are frequently touched (like doorknobs, countertops, cell phone, television remote, computers, sink faucets, etc.) with household cleaning spray or disinfecting wipes.
- Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue or your inner elbow, not your hands.
- Stay home if you are sick and avoid close contact with others.
- Employ social distancing and keep 6 feet apart from others if you are not otherwise required to be in quarantine and must go out.
- For those at home, a little moderate exercise or meditation goes a long way. Get up, stretch, and maybe have a short walk.

The best source of guidance and recommendations is the DPH website: www.mass.gov/covid19

Alternatively, if you are without internet capabilities, please call the State hotline: 2-1-1

You can also the Town of Bedford website for local updates and actions: www.bedfordma.gov

Town and School officials, and the Bedford Health Department, remain in continuous communication about this issue, and further updates will be provided to the community as we receive them.