



Town of Bedford

97 McMahon Road

Bedfordps.org

Superintendent Update

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Monday, December 14, 2020

Hello Bedford School Community,

I am excited to announce that on November 24th the Bedford School Committee voted to expand the number of students who would be able to return to school for four days a week of in person instruction. We have targeted two groups for this expansion, our moderate special education students and our kindergarten students. Throughout the fall we have been looking for ways to provide these two groups with more in person learning. This priority is in line with the wishes of our teachers, our parents, many of our students, our administrators, and the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The expansion of in person learning means that we will be inviting all of our students with moderate special needs (as outlined in their Individual Education Plans) in Cohorts A and B to come back into school four days per week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday). This expansion will be done within the guidelines that were established this summer and include our continued adherence to our six health and safety protocols:

- Mandatory mask wearing for all students, faculty, and staff
- Six feet of social distancing at all times
- Increased hand sanitizing and hand washing practices
- Increased air flow through our HVAC systems, including improved filtration
- Inclusion of HEPA filtration systems in all classrooms and offices
- Disinfecting of all school buildings nightly

This will be a large transition for the district as we prioritize in-person learning for more students. Each school's capacity for adding more students is different and therefore the transition at each school will look a little different.

At BHS and JGMS the changes will mean that a small number of classes (teacher and students) may have to change location as a group.

At Lane School we may be adding classroom teachers in fourth and fifth grade. The addition of staff would allow us to create a new fourth grade class and a fifth grade class. If this is necessary it will be so that we can accommodate the number of students we anticipate returning for in-person learning as part of Cohort C. This increase could mean that some students may need to change their classroom. This change could mean that some students will be in a new classroom with a new teacher and new classmates. It is important to note that Mr. Ackerman and his staff will do everything they can to provide a smooth transition from the current hybrid model to the new four day a week model. The Lane school staff will work closely with the principal to make sure that any transition takes into account the educational, physical, emotional, and safety needs of each child. As is always the case, the principal in conjunction with the teachers, and teaching assistants will roster each classroom, and assign teachers. The principal's classroom assignments will be final. Mr. Ackerman and the Lane School staff are working on these changes now and will be in touch with students and families about their transition to a new learning environment if that is to happen for your child.

At the Davis school the changes will be limited to a few students changing classrooms. These students will be changing peer groups but will not be changing teachers.

While we are excited to be able to increase the number of students returning to four day a week in-person learning we recognize that it comes with some disruptions. For that we are sorry. We will work to minimize the disruptions, create clear transition plans, communicate those plans with families, and work to keep students connected to their previous teachers and classmates.

As always, thank you for your patience, your participation, and your continued commitment to our schools.

Wishing you continued health,

Sincerely,

Philip Conrad
Superintendent