



TOWN OF BEDFORD
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bedfordps.org

COVID-19 Update

If you need this document translated, please call your child's school principal - Si necesita este documento traducido, por favor comuníquese con la escuela de su hijo - Se você precisa este documento traduzido, entre em contato com a escola dos seus filhos - Si vous avez besoin de traduire ce document, s'il vous plaît contacter l'école de votre enfant - 如果你需要这份文件翻译，请联系您的孩子的学校 - إذا كنت تحتاج /تحتاجين إلى ترجمة هذه الوثيقة إلى اللغة العربية يرجى الاتصال بمدرسة طفلك/طفلاتك، -

Thursday, October 29, 2020 - Update to BHS School Community

- **Bedford designated a “red” (high COVID-19 risk) community by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health**
- **Recently acquired contact tracing data supports the occurrence of in-school transmission of COVID-19 at Bedford High School**
- **Community metrics and contact tracing details support changing the learning model at Bedford High School to an all remote model, with a planned return to the hybrid model on Friday, November 13, 2020**
- **Transition to our Remote learning model at Bedford High school is based on a number of factors and is NOT an automatic closure per the “red” designation**
- **As of today, October 29, there remain eight (8) active COVID-19 positive cases in the BHS Community, and eight (8) cases have recovered**
- **There are currently eighteen (18) quarantined close contacts of the BHS COVID-19 positive cases identified to date.**
- **Continued reports of small and large social gatherings without social distancing and mask wearing**
- **In-person school closure ONLY applies to Bedford High School. At this time, The Lt. Eleazer Davis Elementary School, the Lt. Job Lane Elementary School, and the John Glenn Middle School will remain in the Hybrid Model.**

Dear parents, caregivers, and guardians:

Recently acquired data and contact tracing details from current cases support the occurrence of in-school transmission of COVID-19 at Bedford High School (BHS). While there are currently 8 active cases with COVID-19 in BHS, and 18 BHS school community members under quarantine, new case information received today indicates that there are many other BHS community members who are under quarantine at home as a result of close contact, outside of school, with COVID-19 positive household or community members. Testing results are pending for many of these close contacts, and some have developed symptoms.

We continue to get reports of gatherings and after-school and weekend “hang-outs” where lack of social distancing appears to be contributing to transmission. Over the last 2 weeks, 19 new COVID-19 positive cases were identified in Bedford. **As a result of this increase in positive cases, Town leadership was notified by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health today, October 29th, that Bedford is now designated as a “red community,” which indicates the highest risk of COVID-19 community spread. See [MA COVID Map](#).**

The increase in pending cases, the widespread scale of the associated contact tracing, evidence of in-school transmission, continued social gatherings of social groups including Bedford High School students, families, and friends, and the contributing risk of community spread to the BHS school community, result in the potential for increased COVID-19 risk to the BHS school community. The aforementioned factors support the need to close BHS to students for in-person learning, and temporarily transition from the Hybrid Model to the Full Remote Model. Therefore, BHS will be closed from Friday, October 30, 2020 and reopen on Friday, November 13, 2020.

Please note that state guidelines do not allow high school athletics to take place while the school is in the Full Remote Model. Therefore, no athletic activities will be permitted through at least Friday, November 13, 2020.

The closure relates to Bedford High School only. The Lt. Eleazer Davis Elementary School, the Lt. Job Lane Elementary School, and the John Glenn Middle School will remain in the Hybrid Model.

We continue to closely follow DESE and DPH guidelines to keep our BHS school community safe, and collectively we agree that this action is necessary and is the most prudent course of action given the cumulative impact of the mentioned conditions. After all of the hard work and planning that enabled us to successfully start school with students in a hybrid model, we are profoundly disappointed to have to transition to our full remote model at BHS for a two-week period of time.

During the school closure, it is important for the BHS school community to be mindful of necessary precautions and adhere to the social distancing and mask wearing guidance that has been promoted in the state of Massachusetts since the early days of the pandemic. While we are witnessing various modes of transmission within our community, many cases are generated within households. Please remember, if you test positive for COVID-19, you are to isolate, while your household contacts Quarantine. In both instances you should remain at home but those in Isolation are to stay away from others, including separating from household members and wearing a mask when that is not possible. This includes, staying in a specific “sick room” or area and using a separate bathroom (if available). People who are in Isolation must stay home until it’s safe for them to be around others and cleared by the Board of Health or Community Tracing Collaborative.

We recognize that Halloween will fall during this period and want to remind families that traditional trick-or-treating is a high COVID-19 risk activity and alternate ways to celebrate should be explored. Please view [Halloween Guidance - 2020](#) for lower risk options.

We are deeply sorry for this disruption to your and our plans. However, if we want to be able to continue to have our children in school and to enjoy school sports moving forward, we must come together as a community to continue to take the necessary precautions to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

We have planned for such contingencies since the start of school and are very much looking forward to having our high school students back in school when it is determined that it is safe to do so. We need your help, diligence, and cooperation in making this possible. Principal Galante will send additional information to Bedford High School students, families, and staff regarding the logistics of our change to our Full Remote model.

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

Wishing you continued health,

Sincerely,

Philip Conrad, Superintendent of Bedford Public Schools

Dan Brosgol, Chair, Bedford School Committee

Sarah Stanton, Bedford Town Manager

Heidi Porter, Bedford Health and Human Services Director

Resources/Questions

For some Frequently Asked Questions on how the Bedford Board of Health responds to COVID-19 positive cases and the contact tracing protocols, please navigate to: <https://www.bedfordma.gov/bedford-board-of-health/files/responding-to-positive-cases-of-covid-19-and-contact-tracing-faq>

Parents should be aware of the signs and symptoms of Covid-19. If you believe you or your child may have symptoms of Covid-19 , you can check your symptoms at: https://www.buoyhealth.com/symptom-checker/?configuration=ma_covid&concern=coronavirus

Anyone exhibiting symptoms of Covid-19 should avoid contact with others and contact their healthcare provider and/or get a molecular diagnostic Covid-19 test. For more information on COVID-19 symptoms and free testing sites, visit: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-covid-19-testing#where-can-get-a-test?-.>

You can also find a map of testing sites at: <https://memamaps.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=eba3f0395451430b9f631cb095feb13>. Please contact your school nurse immediately should you or someone in your home begin to show symptoms