



**Town of Bedford**

97 McMahon Road

[Bedfordps.org](http://Bedfordps.org)

## Superintendent 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، - 学校 - يرجى الاتصال بمدرسة طفلك/طفلاتك - Если вам нужна помощь с переводом этого документа, позвоните директору школы вашего ребёнка

Friday, January 21, 2022

Hello Bedford School Community,

### Commissioner Riley

On Tuesday, January 18, 2022, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley notified us that DESE, DPH, and Governor Baker were going to provide a new testing option for schools. The new option would allow everyone participating in our pool testing program, including new enrollees, to be provided with weekly at-home antigen COVID-19 test kits. The test kits would be for students, faculty, and staff. The weekly at-home testing would eliminate the need for individualized contact tracing for in-school exposure and would no longer require the current test and stay protocol. It would however keep pooled or safety check testing in place. This would allow individuals to test twice a week, once at home and once at school. Please click on the link to read the [DESE/DPH Joint Memo on New COVID-19 Testing Program Option for K-12 Schools](#)

Today, we are enrolling in the new DESE/DPH COVID-19 Testing Program. Details will be forthcoming. Thank you to everyone involved in keeping our schools open and safe.

### DESE Announcement

On Friday, DESE announced the continuation of the program Summer Eats which will launch in June. Summer Eats is a program funded by the United States Department of Agriculture and administered with DESE by Project Bread. The program ensures that all children have nutritious food. For information on Summer Eats, including how to become a sponsor, call Project Bread at 617-723-5000.

### Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

On Monday, January 17, 2022, Bedford Embraces Diversity, the Parents Diversity Council, Rotary Club of Bedford, and Bedford METCO held a virtual Martin Luther King Jr. Day event. The event began with a wonderful piece by poet, songwriter, author, workshop facilitator, and educator Regie Gibson of Lexington. The morning also included a panel discussion with members of the Bedford METCO community. To view a recording of the Zoom meeting please navigate to [Bedford MLK Day Virtual Gathering 2022](#)

### Bedford Embraces Diversity, Parent Diversity Council, and Bedford METCO Upcoming Events Friday, January 21, 2022 at 6:30 pm

Saturday, January 15th marks Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s 93rd birthday, and January 17th is the federal holiday recognizing the Civil Rights leader. In partnership with Bedford Public Schools METCO Director/DEI Coordinator Akil Mondesir, our school communities will honor Dr. King's life and legacy with a virtual event on Friday, January 21, 2022, at 6:30 pm on Zoom.

Our keynote speaker is Ron Jones, an Emmy Award winner and Executive Director/Artistic Principal of [Dialogues on Diversity](#). Mr. Jones will present a performance lecture titled: MLK and the Strength of Shared Dreams. Through live character portrayal and video, MLK and the Strength of Shared Dreams depict how MLK's "Poor People's Campaign" was a turning point in intersectional advocacy. I hope that you will join us for this event on January 21st. Please [click here for the event flyer](#), and [RSVP in order to receive a zoom link in advance](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Andrew K. Nyamekye, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Concord and Concord-Carlisle Public Schools at [anyamekye@concordps.org](mailto:anyamekye@concordps.org).

### January 27, 2022, at 7:00 pm

Please join the Parents Diversity Council for a special workshop for parents and caregivers entitled The ABCs of Racism: Fostering Conversations about Race and Action with Kids. This virtual event will be held on January 27, 2022, from 7 until 9 PM, via Zoom. This program is geared for all audiences as it explores fundamental concepts of systemic racism, the barriers that block us from engaging with kids around race and racism, the social science of race awareness in children, and strategies to start and sustain antiracist action in school and at home. Presented in collaboration with Wee the People. To RSVP for the zoom link, email [pdcbedford@gmail.com](mailto:pdcbedford@gmail.com)

### NEW COVID-19 Email Addresses

As I wrote to you on Wednesday, January 12, 2021, due to the recent surge in COVID-19 related illness, the health offices are experiencing a much higher than usual volume of telephone calls, emails, and office visits. Much of this increased volume is inquiries related to tests, testing, quarantine, and isolation procedures. Please note that because of the higher volume our school nurses may not be able to reply as they would like or as quickly as has been their practice in the past. Please know that they are doing everything possible to meet the needs

of our students and families during these challenging times and that they truly appreciate your support, cooperation, and patience.

In order to streamline communication from families to our schools about COVID-19, we created school-based COVID-19 email addresses. Beginning immediately we would ask that ALL COVID-19 related inquiries be sent to the following COVID-19 email addresses.

For the Davis School please email: [daviscovid@bedfordps.org](mailto:daviscovid@bedfordps.org)

For the Lane School please email [lanecovid@bedfordps.org](mailto:lanecovid@bedfordps.org)

For JGMS please email [jgmscovid@bedfordps.org](mailto:jgmscovid@bedfordps.org)

For BHS please email [bhscovid@bedfordps.org](mailto:bhscovid@bedfordps.org)

Please note that if you are reporting that your child has tested positive to COVID-19, please include the following information:

- Name of child
- Grade of child
- Date of symptom onset (if no symptoms were experienced, please note the date the test was taken)
- Date of testing, type of test performed (home, PCR or antigen).
- If the positive test was obtained from a home test, if possible, please schedule a PCR lab test to confirm.
- Date the last time your child was present in school
- Does your child attend school activities or sports and list the activity or team

### Masks

The district has purchased a large amount of disposable child-sized masks. These masks are available at each of the health offices of Davis, Lane, and JGMS. Please let your child know they are there and available. BEST (Bedford Elementary Schools Together) is still pursuing child-sized KN95 masks. As soon as those are available we will let you know.

We have also purchased a large amount of adult-sized KN95 and N95 masks. These masks are available at all four schools. Please stop by the main office to pick up a mask if you need one.

Please note that masks are required in all of our buildings and that proper use of masks will be particularly important during the current Omicron surge.

### Case Update Information

Moving forward we will continue to track reported positive student and staff cases via self-administered home-style antigen tests, as well as point of care tests (either PCR, rapid PCR, or rapid antigen). DESE guidance has been updated, and with the shortage of testing available, self-administered home-style antigen tests are accepted and treated as a positive case of COVID-19. The dashboard is now up-to-date and can be accessed here:

### [Link to COVID-19 Cases in the Bedford Public Schools This Week](#)

Please be sure to report any positive COVID-19 test results to the absence line or your school's covid email address listed above.

#### Safety Check Testing

It is important to note that our COVID-19 safety check testing protocol is up and running weekly at each school. We urge everyone to sign up to be part of our protective testing program.

This week it was necessary to switch from our double swab pooled testing collection to a single swab collection due to the unacceptable delay in results last week. With the single swab collection, we are placing 2 swabs in a "pool" to be processed by the lab, and if the pool detects a positive result, the school nurses will retest those 2 individuals with rapid antigen tests, and if positive families will be notified and instructed on isolation procedures. If the rapid test is negative and the individual is symptom-free, they will be retested the following day, and if still negative and symptom-free, they can resume weekly COVID-19 testing. We will return to double swabs once the lab is able to ensure a faster turnaround time for results.

Pooled Testing Results Week of January 17, 2022

BHS 119 students, 64 staff, 4 positive cases

JGMS 206 students, 50 staff, 5 positive cases

Lane 353 students, 45 staff, 6 positive cases

Davis 260 students, 44 staff, 5 positive cases

If you have not done so already and would like to you can sign up for testing at

### [BPS COVID-19 Testing Sign Up Link](#)

By signing up for testing you provide an additional layer of protection for your child, your family, and our schools. I cannot urge you strongly enough to participate in this free service. The percent of students and staff who are participating in Safety Check Testing has increased. At Davis and Lane, we are at about 60% of students and staff, at JGMS we are at about 40% of students and staff, and at BHS about 15% of students and staff have signed up for testing.

#### COVID Case Updates

Please check the link below to review current and past cases of COVID-19 cases within our school community. Thank you to our school nurses who have been continuing to update the case numbers daily. From Friday, January 14, 2021, to Thursday, January 20, 2021, we have had a total of 92 cases reported to date. Please note that these numbers have not yet been reported on the [Bedford COVID-19 Dashboard](#) as cases are still being added. Our case information to date is broken out by school below

Davis School had 18 cases  
Lane School had 26 cases  
JGMS had 20 cases  
BHS had 28 cases  
BPS had 92 cases

[Link to COVID-19 Cases in the Bedford Public Schools This Week](#)

**Due to a shipment being delayed, Pool Testing at JGMS will be on Tuesday the week of January 24, 2022.**

#### Budget

A budget hearing and final vote are scheduled for Tuesday, January 25, 2022, with a presentation to the Bedford Finance Committee on Thursday, January 27, 2022. Please feel free to join us virtually for the meetings. If you are not able to join us, know that all of the presented materials will be posted to our BPS website later next week.

#### Bedford Dollars for Scholars Trivia Night

Registration is now open for the Citizens Scholarship of Bedford Dollars for Scholars Trivia Night! Trivia Night will be held on Saturday, February 12, 2022, from 7:00 pm until 8:30 pm. Get your team ready for some Trivia Fun. Similar to last year, this will be a virtual event, brought to you by Stump! Trivia. Virtual Doors open at 7:00 pm, the Trivia game is from 7:30 pm until 8:30 pm. Teams of 6-10 players, \$25 per person. REGISTER EARLY, as this event sells out! Proceeds go to scholarships for Bedford/Hanscom graduates who plan to continue their education. Team Captains, please register your team [HERE](#), for more information please visit the CSF of Bedford website at <http://www.bedfordma.dollarsforscholars.org>

#### Positions available

The Bedford Public Schools are seeking substitute teachers and Special Education Teaching Assistants. If you are interested please apply at [BPS Substitutes](#) or to [BPS Special Education Teaching Assistants](#).

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

Sincerely,

Philip Conrad  
Superintendent