



Town of Bedford

97 McMahon Road

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, February 18, 2022

Hello Bedford School Community,

Masks

As I wrote in [Last Week's Letter](#) we will no longer require masks in our schools as of Monday, February 28, 2022. In preparation for the return to school, we ask that everyone please test themselves for COVID-19 on Sunday, February 27, 2022, prior to coming back to school from February Vacation. Those signed up with [The DESE/DPH COVID-19 Testing Program](#) had test kits provided to them this week for that purpose. Everyone else can obtain free test kits from the town. For more information about obtaining a free test kit navigate to [COVID-19 Test Kits Available in Town Buildings](#).

As was expressed on Tuesday night at the school committee meeting it is our collective expectation that everyone's decision on whether or not to wear a mask will be respected. This is a personal decision with many layers and complicators. As the old saying goes, "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle." This has been especially true throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Students and staff will choose to wear a mask for a wide range of reasons which we will not know about, be kind to everyone, and be helpful to them as each of us continues to navigate the pandemic. Throughout COVID-19 we have supported one another, I know that we will continue to do that.

For more information please review this public service announcement produced by BHS Now and our Student School Committee Representative Prakhar Gupta at [PSA on Mask Wearing and Testing](#). Thank you to the staff of BHS Now for producing this PSA!

Also, please note that masks are still required on all school buses, as buses are regulated by the Federal Department of Transportation. For more information see [US DOT FAQ](#).

Masks for those who test positive for COVID-19

Please keep in mind that for infected individuals the current guidelines require masks to be worn within the ten-day infection period.

- Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 will need to wear a mask after a 5-day isolation and/or quarantine period when around others for an additional five days, except when eating, drinking, or outdoors.
- Individuals who experience COVID-19 symptoms should stay home and obtain testing. If they receive a negative result and their symptoms improve (including remaining fever-free for a 24 hour period without fever-reducing medication), they can return to school but should continue to wear a mask until their symptoms fully resolve.
- Unvaccinated individuals should continue to wear a mask in school settings.

DESE/DPH COVID Testing Program Opt-in Home Tests

[The DESE/DPH COVID-19 Testing Program](#) provides a test kit to anyone who opts into the program. This program is in addition to our pooled and symptomatic testing programs. Everyone who opts in will receive a new kit every two weeks. If you would like to opt-in to the program please navigate to the [At-Home Antigen Test Opt-In Google Form](#)

This week all students and staff who have opted-in have received a home test kit (2 tests per kit). It is recommended that everyone use a test on their recommended home testing day. Days are determined by the school attended and then also test on Sunday, February 27, 2022, prior to returning to school after the February break.

Please sign up by Monday afternoon by 5 PM, to set our distribution lists for each school. The home tests are meant to offset the testing days done at school so that there are two days a week of testing monitoring being done.

DESE Recommended Testing Schedule

School	In-school testing	At home testing
JGMS	Monday	Thursday
Lane	Tuesday	Friday
Davis	Wednesday	Sunday
BHS	Wednesday	Sunday

It is important to note that this program is available to all who opt-in regardless of whether you are enrolled in pooled testing or not. The link to the opt-in form will allow you access to a

two-week (at a time) supply of in-home antigen COVID-19 tests. These tests will augment our pooled tests giving each of us the opportunity to have two COVID-19 tests per week.

To be clear, both programs are voluntary and both are independent of one another. You can sign up for one or both. The at-home test should be used weekly, regardless of whether you have symptoms. If your child tests positive on an at-home antigen test, they should stay home and you are asked to inform your school nurse of the positive result.

Click Here to opt-in to [At-Home Antigen Test Opt-In Google Form](#)

Click here to view a video on [How to use the iHealth COVID 19 Test](#)

Click here for instructions [on how to use the iHealth COVID 19 Test in multiple languages](#)

Click here to consent to the ongoing Pooled Testing [Pooled-Testing Consent Form](#)

COVID-19 Email Addresses

Please continue to utilize the COVID-19 email addresses for all COVID-19 related inquiries.

For the Davis School please email: daviscovid@bedfordps.org

For the Lane School please email lanecovid@bedfordps.org

For JGMS please email jgmscovid@bedfordps.org

For BHS please email bhscovid@bedfordps.org

All cases of COVID-19 (both home tests and tests from a medical provider) should be reported to your child's school nurse using the above-listed email addresses. When reporting a positive case of COVID-19 please include the following information.

- Name of child
- Grade of child
- Date of symptom onset or the date the positive test was taken
- Date of testing and type of test performed (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

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 with a positive result 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 (AKA Pooled testing/weekly PCR tests)

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.

We are using the single swab collection, 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.

Pooled Testing Results Week of February 14, 2022

BHS 102 students, 47 staff, 0 positive cases

JGMS 238 students, 42 staff, 0 positive cases

Lane 339 students, 45 staff 1 positive case

Davis 268 students, 44 staff, 0 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.

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, February 11, 2022, to Thursday, February 17, 2022, we have had a total of 16 cases reported. Please note that these numbers have been reported on the [Bedford COVID-19 Dashboard](#). Our case information to date is broken out by school below

BHS had 2 cases

JGMS had 5 cases

Lane School had 3 cases

Davis School had 6 cases

BPS had 16 cases

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

RULER Team brings smiles to JGMS Staff

On Monday, February 14th, the RULER team (Andrea Edmunds, Renee Anderson, Kim Comeiro, Corinne Amirault, Marcy Beinert, Maureen McDermott, Nick Bacigalupi, Les Eggleston, and Elizabeth McCarthy) offered hot cocoa, [Moodmeter](#) colored cupcakes, granola bars, and Swedish fish to every adult working at JGMS. The purpose was to remind the staff that they are appreciated and cared about. It was a great way to start our day by spreading happiness throughout the building. See a picture of our RULER team sporting their Valentine's Day cheer [here](#).

Bedford Education Fund News

The BEF is disappointed to have to share the news that due to the permanent closure of the DoubleTree Hotel, the planned venue of the BEF May Soirée the event will not be taking place on May 6, 2022. Since finding out about the hotel's closure the board has been working to investigate other possibilities. However, the BEF does not have a definitive announcement to make at this time. The BEF will be in touch soon with alternative plans and appreciates very much tour support and understanding.

Bedford Dollars for Scholars

CSF of Bedford Dollars for Scholars will be kicking off their 57th annual Dollars for Scholars Fundraising Campaign. Bedford High students are stuffing and labeling the letters, which will be mailed to Bedford neighbors the week of March 7.

Please help make this year's scholarships for the Class of 2022 the largest awards yet. In May 2021, CSF of Bedford awarded over \$157,000 to graduating seniors. For additional information, please see their website, 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](#).

February Vacation

The close of school today marks the start of our February school vacation. I wanted to take a moment and wish everyone a healthy, happy, and rejuvenating vacation! While at this writing it does not look as if it will snow over vacation, I did want to share with you one of my favorite poems about winter and our ability to see things in a positive light.

Dust of Snow by [Robert Frost](#)

The way a crow
Shook down on me
The dust of snow
From a hemlock tree

Has given my heart
A change of mood
And saved some part
Of a day I had rued.

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

Stay positive, test negative!

Sincerely,

Philip Conrad
Superintendent