



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 يرجى الاتصال بمدرسة، - طفلك/طفلاتك

Friday, September 24, 2021

Hello Bedford School Community,

Bedford Day

It was so wonderful to see so many parents, students, and staff at Bedford Day! Thank you to everyone who ran in the road race, marched in the parade, worked at a booth, got the flu or COVID shot, or who purchased books at the library sale. Thank you too to everyone who introduced themselves in person! It was a great day for meeting and greeting the entire community! To learn more about the origins of Bedford Day check out the recent Bedford Citizen Article about The origin of Bedford Day [The origin of Bedford Day](#)

Founding Day

Happy birthday Bedford! On Thursday, September 23, 2021, the town of Bedford celebrated its 292nd anniversary of incorporation. Although Bedford was settled in 1640 it was not incorporated as a town until 1729. To read more about Bedford's history check out the information on the [Town Website](#) or at the [Bedford Historical Society](#) website.

Mid-Autumn Festival

Tuesday, September 21, 2020 was the Mid-Autumn Festival or Mooncake Festival. Happy Mid-Autumn Festival to all of our families that celebrated! Mid-Autumn Festival, or Mid-autumn Day, is the second grandest festival in many Asian countries after the Lunar New Year. The holiday is celebrated on the 15th day of the 8th lunar month, which is always in the middle of the autumn season in Asia. The day is also known as the Moon Festival, as the moon is believed to

be at its fullest and brightest on this date. The holiday is a time for family gathering and reunions. For more information navigate to [Britannica Harvest Moon Festival Information](#)

Streamlining our COVID Communication

Now that we have entered our second year of the pandemic we are going to change our reporting of COVID-19 cases within our school community. We will NOT be making any changes to our COVID-19 protocols. Cases will be identified, close contacts traced, and notification made to those affected as well local and state agencies.

What will change is that we will no longer send individual or daily letters as we have been up to this point. Instead I will add a [LINK](#) to my Friday letter that will bring you to the current cases in our schools. The [LINK](#) is to the [Town of Bedford COVID-19 Statistics Page](#) This page is continuously updated by the Bedford Department of Health and Human Services in conjunction with our School nurses and the Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiologic Network (MAVEN) and has the most up-to-date information. I will only send emails to the entire community if we experience a spike or have signs of an in-school transmission.

Again, this will not change the process of contact tracing and ensuring that everyone who needs to know about an exposure is aware and the needed steps are taken. This new process will allow the nurses to focus their attention on caring for our students and staff and will streamline our communication about COVID-19 cases in our schools.

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

COVID-19 Information

We have added a COVID-19 information page to our website. It can be reached via the yellow banner on the home page or at [BPS COVID Information Page](#) The page contains information from DESE, DPH, AAP, and CDC. It also contains a short four-minute video that does a great job reviewing the DESE/DPH Guidance for Schools [ArxEd COVID Video](#) It also has a link so that you can sign up for our testing program which includes symptomatic testing, routine COVID-19 safety checks, and the “test and stay” program. When you enroll you are automatically enrolled in all three parts of the program. Feel free to use this link [BPS COVID-19 Testing Sign Up Link](#)

We are working with the state’s testing vendor CIC and will implement pooled testing in our schools as soon as possible. We will begin as soon as our supplies arrive and our on-site scheduling has been finalized with CIC Health. We are requesting that everyone who is not vaccinated to sign up for weekly COVID-19 testing in order to help keep our schools open and safe.

We urge everyone to sign up for the testing program as an additional protective measure. Keep in mind that Test and Stay allows non-symptomatic close contacts to come to school, get tested, and if negative go to class. If a child tests positive they are sent home. Symptomatic testing is

used when a student starts to have symptoms of COVID-19 at school; students should not come to school if they are feeling sick while at home. Routine COVID-19 safety checks (previously called Pooled testing) allows students and staff to be tested on a regular basis. This year each of us will be providing two samples so that in the case of a positive pool each individual can be tested in the lab and the positive COVID-19 case easily identified. The samples will be taken via nasal swab at school. To date, 22% of BHS, 33% of JGMS, 56% of Lane, and 56 % of Davis students have signed up for the testing program.

Please keep in mind that to date our test and stay program has not revealed any in-school transmission.

Please note that this afternoon DESE added an infographic flowchart that helps clarify close contacts called the [Close Contact Decision Tree](#). Please access it here [HERE](#)

Vaccination Rate Update

To date according to the Massachusetts Immunization Information System (MIIS), 71% of students who are eligible for vaccination (12 years or older) at JGMS, and 72% of students are vaccinated. For more information about MIIS please visit their website at [Mass Immunization Information System](#)

MCAS

DESE has released the Spring 2021 MCAS results to school districts throughout the state. State-wide results show that many more students had gaps in their knowledge of math and, to a lesser extent, English language arts, compared to students in the same grades before the COVID-19 pandemic, and that fewer students met or exceeded grade level expectations.

Our Bedford MCAS data is being analyzed currently, by district-wide and school based teams. We are examining the results carefully, and are using this information in our grade level, and department level data meetings, along with our internal student assessment data to continue to inform our instruction, our RtI (Response to Intervention) planning, and our differentiation work with students. Families will receive individual MCAS student reports as they have in the past. We will also be presenting an overview of our Bedford MCAS results to the school committee this fall.

Latinx Heritage Month 9/15-10/15

Hispanic Heritage Month is an annual celebration of the history and culture of the U.S. Latinx and Hispanic communities in the United States. The event, which spans from September 15 to October 15, commemorates how those communities have influenced and contributed to American society at large. For more information on this topic please go to [History Channel Latinx and Hispanic Heritage Month](#) or check out the [ASCD Hispanic Heritage Month Infographic](#)

National Suicide Prevention Month

Please be aware that September is National Suicide Prevention Month. All month long mental health advocates, prevention organizations, schools, and community groups will be highlighting ways we can unite and promote suicide prevention awareness. For more information please go to <https://afsp.org/national-suicide-prevention-week>

2021 Impact Aid Survey Opens on October 1, 2021

Beginning on October 1, 2021 and going through October 31, 2021 we will be asking parents and guardians to complete the annual Military Impact Aid Survey. Completing this survey allows us to meet the requirements of Public Law 874. Under the provisions of Public Law 874, The Bedford Public Schools must conduct an annual Military Impact Aid Survey. The Town of Bedford receives a substantial sum of money under this provision, which lowers the cost of education for ALL taxpayers.

Parents/Guardians will receive a unique email with a survey link for each student. **It is very important that all surveys are completed and electronically signed for each student**, as reimbursement is made for all eligible students on a per pupil basis. This survey is repeated annually.

If you have any questions, please contact the Business Office of the Bedford Public Schools at (781) 275-7708. We thank you very much for your assistance with this important annual survey.

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