



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

Thursday, December 23, 2021

Hello Bedford School Community,

Here we are on the eve of December School vacation. I want to wish each of you a safe and restful vacation. Yesterday was the Winter Solstice, which means the shortest day of sunlight is behind us! From here we begin to add sunlight each day until the summer solstice.

This year [People Magazine](#) celebrated America's teachers as one of their [People of the Year](#). The magazine used the opportunity to, "thank the three million-plus classroom heroes who have gone above and beyond to ensure our nation's kids have bright opportunities ahead." With that as the backdrop, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Bedford Public School Educators for the amazing job they have done and continue to do on behalf of all of our students! Thank you!

COVID-19

As we are all aware the OMICRON variant of COVID-19 has become the prevalent variant here in Massachusetts and in Middlesex County. With that in mind, I would ask that everyone please consider signing up for our testing protocols. The testing program is one way that we can keep one another safe. [BPS COVID-19 Testing Sign Up Link](#)

As reported on the [Link to COVID-19 Cases in the Bedford Public Schools This Week](#) we continue to see a rise in COVID-19 cases in our schools and community. For up-to-date numbers please click the link above. This rise in cases has also meant an increase in the number of close contacts, contact tracing, and test and stay tests being performed by our nursing staff. To assist you with our DESE safety protocols I have added two DESE documents

to this letter. Please click the [Decision Tree](#) or [Protocols](#) links to see the DESE documents. Please also refer to the Bedford Health Department OMICRON Information Page for more information [Bedford Health Department OMICRON Information Page](#)

As I write this, I looked back at our communication from one year ago where the idea of a vaccine seemed like a miracle. We are grateful that we have three vaccines to choose from and urge everyone who is eligible to be vaccinated and to receive a booster shot if appropriate.

December Break

Merry Christmas to those who are celebrating the holiday. Christmas, which occurs on December 25th is an important holiday for Christians throughout the world. In the United States, it may mean a Christmas Tree and Christmas Cards as well as a very special Midnight service. To learn more please visit <https://www.history.com/topics/christmas/history-of-christmas>

Happy Kwanzaa to those who are celebrating the holiday. Kwanzaa, which is celebrated from December 26th through January 1st is a celebration of African-American culture that includes the lighting of seven candles in a Kinara. The holiday created by Dr. Maulana Karenga was inspired by traditional African harvest festivals. For more information please visit <https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/kwanzaa-history>

It seems appropriate to share the last stanza of “New Year’s Morning” by poet [Helen Hunt Jackson](#) with you as 2021 comes to an end. The thought that each and every morning is a new year’s day is an intriguing idea. To read the complete poem please visit [New Year's Morning by Helen Hunt Jackson](#)

Always a night from old to new!
Night and the healing balm of sleep!
Each morn is New Year's morn come true,
Morn of a festival to keep.
All nights are sacred nights to make
Confession and resolve and prayer;
All days are sacred days to wake
New gladness in the sunny air.
Only a night from old to new;
Only a sleep from night to morn.
The new is but the old come true;
Each sunrise sees a new year born.

Wishing you and yours a wonderful vacation and a Happy New Year! Here is hoping that 2022 brings us relief from COVID-19, as well as equity, and justice for all.

As a good friend and fellow superintendent is forever saying, "Stay Positive, Test Negative!" As always, thank you for your patience, your participation, and your continued commitment to our schools.

Wishing you continued health,

Sincerely,

Philip Conrad
Superintendent