



Town of Bedford

97 McMahon Road

Bedfordps.org

Superintendent Update

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Friday, February 12, 2021

Dear 1st and 2nd grade families,

I am excited to announce that on February 9th the Bedford School Committee voted to expand the number of students who would be able to return to school for four days a week of in person instruction.

The expansion of in person learning means that we will be bringing all 1st and 2nd Grade Cohort A and Cohort B students back in four days per week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday) and folding them into a new Cohort 1 and 2. This will mean that we will no longer have Cohort A or Cohort B but only Cohort 1 and 2. This expansion will be done within the guidelines that were established this summer and include our continued adherence to our six health and safety protocols:

- Mandatory mask wearing for all students, faculty, and staff
- Six feet of social distancing at all times
- Increased hand sanitizing and hand washing practices
- Increased air flow through our HVAC systems, including improved filtration
- Inclusion of HEPA filtration systems in all classrooms and offices
- Disinfecting of all school buildings nightly

We will soon be adding a seventh health and safety protocol

A DESE sponsored voluntary pool testing option for students and staff

Recently a survey went out to 1st and 2nd grade families so that we could better understand the concerns of our school community. The feedback indicated that the overwhelming majority of hybrid families were interested in 1st and 2nd grade students returning for four days of in person learning each week and that most of our remote families would not be interested in this option. Instead their responses demonstrated that some families have adjusted to and or prefer the remote learning model. The additional information in the survey will help us to improve our practices as we continue to support in person and remote learning for all students.

Another piece of information in the survey was that over half of the families of hybrid students told us that they would be willing to change their child's teacher in order for them to attend school four days per week. This was important information for us to have since the potential change of teacher, classroom, and peers is a necessary part of our need to increase staffing, adjust schedules, change rooms, and balance classes. It is important to note that Ms. Benoit and her staff will do everything they can to provide a smooth transition from the current hybrid model to the new four day a week model. The Davis school staff will work closely with the principal to make sure that each family's transition takes into account the educational, physical, emotional, and safety needs of each child. As is always the case, the principal in conjunction with the teachers, teaching assistants, and custodians will be tasked with preparing the new classrooms, rostering each classroom, and assigning teachers. The principal's classroom assignments will be final.

This will be a large transition, but we believe that the long term benefits will outweigh the short term challenges. As always, thank you for your patience, your participation, and your continued commitment to our schools.

Wishing you continued health,

Sincerely,

Philip Conrad
Superintendent