



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, December 11, 2020

Hello Bedford School Community,

We have had a lot of information come at us this week. We began the week with Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day and ended the week with the beginning of a winter holiday. In the middle of the week we heard from the Commissioner of Education and the Governor. We actually heard from Governor Baker twice this week.

Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

This week began with Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day on Monday. It was on December 7, 1941 that the Japanese Airforce attacked Pearl Harbor Hawaii. Pearl Harbor Day is an opportunity for all of us to honor and remember the 2,403 people killed during the attack and the 1,178 who were injured in the attack. The attack sank to U.S. Navy battleships and destroyed 188 aircraft. To learn more about Pearl Harbor please visit the National Park Service website at [National Park Service Pearl Harbor](https://www.nps.gov/pearl/)

Happy Hanukkah

I'd like to wish all of the school community members who are celebrating a Happy Hanukkah. The festival of Lights began last night and will conclude on Friday, December 18, 2020. To learn more please visit Chabad.org

Vaccine Information

On Wednesday Governor Baker announced information about a COVID-19 Vaccine distribution plan for Massachusetts. The Governor announced that Phase I will prioritize clinical and non-clinical healthcare workers, police, fire, and emergency medical personnel. The estimated

timeline for Phase I is December through February. Phase II is scheduled to be between February and April. Educators, transit workers, food and agriculture workers, public works and public health workers will also be included in Phase II. [COVID-19 Vaccine in Massachusetts](#)

COVID-19 Testing Program

On Tuesday, December 8, 2020, the Town [announced](#) the launch of a free community COVID-19 testing program for Bedford residents ages 4 and older. The testing program begins on Saturday, December 12, 2020, and is anticipated to take place each weekend for the remainder of the month. All of the appointment slots for Saturday filled up within hours, and the Town has received a great deal of enthusiastic feedback about this opportunity. To register for an upcoming date Bedford Residents can use the following link. [Bedford COVID-19 Testing Sign Up](#)

Community COVID-19 Dashboard

The Bedford Board of Health Bedford COVID-19 Dashboard contains data related to case counts, active/recovered cases, case demographics and school case data. The majority of the data on the Dashboard will be updated Monday through Friday, with some data tables and charts updated on a weekly basis. We invite you to view the new dashboard here: www.bedfordma.gov/covid-stats

Military Impact Aid

The Massachusetts Senate and House have given final approval to the state's budget for the current fiscal year. State Representative Ken Gordon, and State Senator Mike Barrett have secured funding to mitigate the costs the town incurs for educating children of families living on nearby military bases. More than one-hundred Hanscom Air Force Base students attend Bedford High School at local expense. The town has opened its doors to these children for more than fifty years through an agreement with the Department of Defense. The federal government, through its Impact Aid program, supports the education of these children; but while the federal program was originally intended to pay half, it now only pays about 10%.

DESE PPE Distribution

The Commissioner announced that DESE, working with the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, will distribute cloth face masks from the federal government at no cost to school districts. Mask allocation is based on enrollment and is equivalent to at least 1 per student. The three-ply, 100 percent cotton jersey face masks have Sciessent's Agion antimicrobial treatment incorporated into the fabric.

DESE MCAS Postponement

The Commissioner also announced an adjustment of the schedule for MCAS testing and ACCESS testing. The changes include postponing the grade 11 (class of 2022) ELA and mathematics assessments from a January/February window to later in the school year. The testing window for grade 12 (Class of 2021) students has been extended and the window now

extends from January 14 through February 12, 2021. The ACCESS assessment window will be extended for several additional months from January through May 20, 2021.

Flu Shot Reminder

Thank you to all parents, families, and caregivers who have already sent in the documentation that their child has received the 2020 flu vaccine. As you know, the Flu Vaccine is required for all students in Massachusetts and must be completed and reported by December 31, 2020. It does not matter whether your child is hybrid or remote, the requirement is for all students. The Massachusetts guidance around the vaccine requirement can be found [here](#). If your child has not yet received the flu vaccine please be in touch with the school nurse of your child's school so that we can comply with the new regulation.

Teaching Assistants, Educational Assistants and Building Substitutes Needed

If you would be interested in joining the Bedford Public Schools as a teaching assistant, an educational assistant, or a building based substitute please check out our openings on our website at [BPS HR Website](#) and thank you!

Bedford Fire Department Toy Drive

The Bedford Fire Department will be hosting a toy drive in the back parking lot at Bedford High School for the next two Sundays. Donations of new unwrapped toys can be made by driving up to and dropping items off in the collection box. The box will be open from 10:00 until 2:00 Sunday, December 13 and Sunday, December 20.

Town and School Staff Support Webinar Offered

On Wednesday, December 16th from 2-3 pm, the Bedford Health and Human Services Department and Bedford Public Schools Counseling Department are sponsoring a support webinar for town and school staff with Jon Mattleman, a mental health counselor and presenter for over 35 years. Jon will present "Supporting Families Is Rewarding...And So Challenging During COVID-19. Understanding our new norms and supporting ourselves during the COVID-19." Recognizing that the challenges that families face during these challenging times are complex, and often exhausting, Jon's work is grounded in delivering tools and techniques that can be implemented in real time. Please set the time aside to join us for this informative presentation for Town of Bedford Staff and Bedford Public Schools Staff with a Q&A period at the end. Please register by navigating to: <https://event.webinarjam.com/register/172/q7m5rswr>

Technology

If you have questions about this or any other technology issue or concerns please contact tech_support@bedfordps.org

Resources for Families

The BPS Counseling Department has put together a list of resources for families ahead of the holiday season. If you, your child, or anyone in your family is in need of services over the

upcoming vacation please contact the service providers listed. You are always encouraged to call the counseling department of your child's school for assistance while school is in session.

Counseling Services

For **non-emergency services** contact Social Worker Christopher Bang in the Bedford Youth and Family Services Department at 781-918-4328 or email at cbang@bedfordma.gov.

In case of a **mental health emergency** or crisis, please go to your local emergency room, or in Bedford please contact the [Advocates](#) at (800) 540-5806 or at (800) 640-5432 for 24-hour Crisis Support. In Boston please contact Best Teams at 617-884-4357. For families on the Hanscom Air Force Base please contact the HAFB Mental Health Clinic 781-225-6392 (counseling support not crisis response) or the Crisis Text Line by texting TALK to 741741. If you are anxious about coronavirus please text HOME to 741741 to connect with a Crisis Counselor.

Another resource is HandholdMA.org which is a new website designed for parents who are worried about their children's mental health. The website, created by a team of mental health and child development experts in partnership with parents who have "been there," was designed for parents of school-aged children in Massachusetts. HandholdMA.org was developed with input from individuals representing the diversity of Massachusetts' communities, and is available in six languages: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Simplified Chinese, Haitian Creole, and Vietnamese.

Food Needs

The Bedford Food Bank currently operates out of the back side of the Town Center Building (yellow building behind Town Hall) at 12 Mudge Way on the Town Campus. This is the side with the parking lot, and is the main entrance to the Council on Aging, NOT the entrance at the rotary. For questions about the food bank please email bedfordfoodbank@bedfordma.gov or call 781-275-7727. The schedule for the Town Center Food Bank is Thursdays from 4:00 - 5:30 pm.

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

Wishing you continued health,

Sincerely,

Philip Conrad
Superintendent