



## Town of Bedford

97 McMahon Road

[Bedfordps.org](http://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, January 8, 2021

Hello Bedford School Community,

I had hoped to open my first letter of 2021 with lighthearted remarks about the end of 2020 and our looking forward to ushering in the new year. However, the events of Wednesday evening in Washington D.C. changed the trajectory of my message. Like so many Americans, I was overcome with sadness for our country. The events in Washington DC were difficult to watch and impossible to believe. My thoughts immediately turned to our teachers and administrators who would be greeting our students on Thursday morning. I sent them a quick message thanking them in advance for the courageous conversations to come. I was grateful that each principal worked with their faculty to provide a moment of reflection and community building. The principals and other colleagues also offered age appropriate resources to help guide those important classroom conversations. This thoughtful approach is so important to our students and families and I am grateful to our faculty and staff for everything that they have been called on to do and the grace with which they do it.

If you are having difficult conversations about Wednesday's events at home the principals have offered you resources to assist in those conversations. I wanted to offer two more resources that may help. The first is an article on how to talk to students about violence from the National Association of School Psychologists. The article and accompanying infographic can be found at [NASP: Talking to Children about Violence](#). A second resource is primarily for teachers but will help all of us as we reflect on the events and how to speak to children about what they saw and heard. That resource from EdElements can be accessed at [EdElements Resources for School Communities in Times of Crisis](#)

### DESE Updates

Commissioner Riley announced flexibility for the Class of 2021 and others by lengthening MCAS and ACCESS assessment windows, pledging to use the MCAS assessment as diagnostic and not for accountability purposes, and to allow seniors to obtain their competency determination with approved coursework. This is very good news, but still places a burden on our schools to conduct in person assessments. We will have more information on that in the upcoming months.

On Wednesday we received word from DESE that school nurses may be moved to Phase I Stage II of the vaccine distribution. For more information about the vaccine distribution process please visit [MA Vaccine Info](#)

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted to send the draft updated [World Languages Curriculum Framework](#) out for public comment. It includes a commitment to high quality world language programs for all students, regardless of age, ability, or linguistic background; the adoption of the terminology of world languages rather than foreign languages; and the presentation of standards by proficiency level rather than grade level. DESE is accepting feedback on the draft [via an online survey](#) until Monday, February 22.

### 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](http://www.bedfordma.gov/covid-stats)

### Flu Shot Reminder

Thank you to all parents, families, and caregivers who have already sent in the documentation that their child has received the flu vaccine. As you know, the Flu Vaccine is required for all students in Massachusetts. The deadline for compliance has been extended to February 28, 2021. 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!

Technology

If you have questions about this or any other technology issue or concerns please contact [tech\\_support@bedfordps.org](mailto:tech_support@bedfordps.org)

In closing I wish all of us a wondrous New Year and hope that the words of the poet Rainer Maria Rilke come to fruition with positive events for all, "And now we welcome the new year. Full of things that have never been."

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

Wishing you continued health,

Sincerely,

Philip Conrad  
Superintendent