



**TOWN OF BEDFORD**  
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BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01730

[bedfordps.org](http://bedfordps.org)

## Superintendent Update

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Friday, November 20, 2020

Hello Bedford School Community,

As Always this has been a busy week in the school district. Our faculty and staff continue to work diligently to meet the needs of all learners through our remote, hybrid, and in person learning models. We have been supported in these efforts by our parents, the community and especially the school committee. It is wonderful to see everyone continuing to work together to make the best of these difficult times. We are heartened by positive talk of vaccines and hope this will help us to get control of the virus.

This week I am sharing with you a number of updates and changes. Nationally there have been changes to the CDC website, in Massachusetts DESE and DPH have put out new guidance, and locally there is new information from a number of town departments including the creation of a new COVID-19 dashboard.

### Changes at CDC

The CDC has removed guidelines for schools posted this summer in order to “reflect current knowledge about COVID-19 and schools.” In studying the changes it appears our precautions outlined in our August 2020 Reopening Plan [BPS Reopening Plan 8 28 2020](#) remain in good standing. Namely our six foot distancing, mandatory mask wearing, inclusion of hand sanitizing/washing protocols, nightly disinfecting, improved filtration of our HVAC systems, and inclusion of HEPA filtration in every office and classroom in the district. For more information please visit the CDC website for school information at [CDC Schools Page](#)

### DESE Guidance

DESE sent out a reminder with helpful links about the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday and the winter holidays as well. DESE reminded all of us about the Department of Public Health Departments list of best practices including to:

- **Limit gathering size:** Indoor gatherings at private residences are limited to [10 people](#), and outdoor gatherings at private residences are limited to [25 people](#).
- **Individuals should stay within their household:** For a [lower-risk celebration](#), people should limit in-person holiday gatherings to only people they live with or limit the gathering to a small group of individuals with whom they are regularly in contact.
- **Avoid travel:** Anyone considering travel should review and abide by Massachusetts [travel orders](#), and people who want to travel to another state that is not a [lower-risk state](#) should be aware of the quarantine requirements involved with such travel.

We all appreciate everything that everyone is doing to limit their risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19. Working together we can keep our community safe.

### DPH Guidance

Earlier this week the Department of Public Health updated their guidance around quarantine. In the statement DPH issued they updated the quarantine guidance for those who have been exposed to COVID-19. Specifically, an individual must remain quarantined for:

- At least 14 days from the date of last exposure; or
- At least 10 days, provided ALL of the following are satisfied:
  - You have not had, and do not have, any symptoms;
  - You are tested on day 8 of your quarantine period or later using a molecular diagnostic test (e.g., polymerase chain reaction (PCR)) to detect the presence of the virus;
  - You receive a negative test result; and
  - You monitor yourself for symptoms for the full 14 days. If you develop symptoms you should contact your health care provider and be re-tested.

The change of being able to shorten a quarantine to 10 days is new and will be used by all school districts going forward.

### MIAA Guidance

We are still awaiting guidance from the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) COVID-19 Task Force and the MIAA Board of Directors regarding winter athletics. I expect that Athletic Director Keith Mangan will have more information on this soon and will disseminate it to high school families as soon as it is available. Reminder that there will be a Winter Pre-Season Meeting on Monday, November 23, 2020 at 6:00 via Zoom.

### School Committee News

The school committee has decided to meet weekly from now until the end of December in order to discuss potential changes to our current learning models and to discuss the FY22 budget process. Links to the Zoom meetings will be posted as required. We hope to see you there.

### Department of Public Works Updates

We would like to thank the Department of Public Works for the new covered bicycle rack at JGMS. The bike rack was purchased and installed as part of the Shared Streets Grant and the Community Connections Grant.

The DPW would also like to remind all of us to use extra caution in the area of Fawn Lake and the Lane School. Students walk and ride their bikes on the trails around Fawn Lake and through the Fawn Lake parking lot.

### Bedford Police Department Updates

While we are talking about Fawn Lake and picking up students at all schools the police department would like to remind all of Massachusetts General Law chapter 90/16 section A which prohibits the idling of a car engine for 5 minutes or longer whether occupied or not. The goal of the law is to prevent occupants of stationary vehicles from suffering carbon monoxide poisoning and also protects the environment by prohibiting excessive engine idling.

### 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!

### Town and School Staff Support Webinar Offered

On Wednesday, December 16<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:tech_support@bedfordps.org)

### New Community COVID-19 Dashboard

Congratulations to the Bedford Board of Health for creating a new Bedford COVID-19 Dashboard. The Bedford COVID-19 Task Force, with active support from the Information Technology Department and Board of Health Staff, has developed a dashboard of Bedford’s COVID-19. The 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.

The COVID-19 data presented in the dashboard is derived from the MA DPH’s Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiologic Network (MAVEN) and utilized for case investigation and surveillance purposes. While the Board of Health staff extract data from MAVEN at a point in time, data is constantly being entered, transferred, updated and corrected by MA DPH. As such the data presented in the dashboard may vary from the online data tables provided by the MA DPH on their COVID-19 response reporting webpage. We invite you to view the new dashboard here: [www.bedfordma.gov/covid-stats](http://www.bedfordma.gov/covid-stats)

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

Wishing you continued health,

Sincerely,

Philip Conrad  
Superintendent