



Town of Bedford
97 McMahon Road

Bedfordps.org

Superintendent Update

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Friday, October 8, 2021

Hello Bedford School Community,

Indigenous People's Day

Monday, October 11, 2021, is for the first time Indigenous People's Day in Bedford. As you will recall, the citizens of Bedford voted to change the day from Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day at Town Meeting last spring. Here is an article reminder: [Voters Support Renaming October Holiday](#). Bedford is now one of about 20 Massachusetts communities to change the holiday. During the weekend, there will be many events throughout the community and the area to commemorate the new holiday including one supported by the [Bedford Parents Diversity Council](#).

Bedford is located on the traditional lands of the [Massachusetts Tribe](#). The holiday allows us to pay our respects to the Massachusetts tribe and to their Penacook and Nipmuc neighbors. Their stewardship of this land is still visible today. Many people who live and work in Bedford are of Indigenous descent. Indigenous People's Day is an opportunity for each of us to honor their many contributions to our community and our country. Celebrating Indigenous People's Day in our schools is an important opportunity for us to ensure that our curriculum provides both mirrors, where students can see themselves, and windows, where they can learn about people whose experiences are different than their own.

National Bullying Prevention Month

October is National Bullying Prevention Month. A time to focus on bullying prevention and to raise awareness about the effects of bullying. During this month, many groups across the country will release new resources, campaigns, and efforts aimed at bringing awareness to the issue of bullying. For more information go to [National Bullying Prevention Month Information](#)

Streamlined COVID Communication

Please check the link below to review current and past cases of COVID-19 cases within our school community. Cases are immediately reported on the [Town of Bedford COVID-19 Statistics Page](#) which is continuously updated by the Bedford Department of Health and Human Services in conjunction with our School nurses and the Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiologic Network (MAVEN).

[Link to COVID-19 Cases in the Bedford Public Schools This Week](#)

Remember, this reporting change has not been a change to our COVID-19 protocols or processes.

COVID-19 Testing Programs

We completed our first round of COVID safety checks this week! School nurses and on-site testers from CIC did the testing for 2nd graders at Davis, 5th graders at Lane, 6th graders at JGMS, and 9th graders at BHS. This week we completed 121 tests at Davis, 108 tests at Lane, 72 tests at JGMS, and 60 tests at BHS. The results of the tests to date have all been negative. We expect more results to arrive by Monday.

The testing schedule for next week (all grades) is:

Davis: Wednesday morning

Lane: Tuesday morning

JGMS: No tests next week due to the holiday*

BHS: Wednesday morning upon arrival starting at 7:20 AM

*Due to the Monday holiday the CIC testers are not available nor are they available for an alternative time. We will plan to test 6th, 7th, and 8th graders who have signed up the following Monday (October 18th).

Please! Sign up for testing as another way to keep our community safe. We offer Test and Stay which allows non-symptomatic close contacts to come to school, get tested, and if negative go to class. If a child tests positive they are sent home. Symptomatic testing allows us to test a student who starts to have symptoms of COVID-19 at school; students should not come to school if they are feeling sick while at home. And Routine COVID-19 safety checks (previously called Pooled testing) allow students and staff to be tested on a regular basis. This year each of us will be providing two samples so that in the case of a positive pool each individual can be tested in the lab and the positive COVID-19 case easily identified. The samples will be taken via nasal swab at school.

[BPS COVID-19 Testing Sign Up Link](#)

Vaccination Rate Update

Our school nurses are working to update our vaccination rate information. The nurses at JGMS and BHS are using the [Massachusetts Immunization Information System](#) (MIIS) as well as direct outreach to have an accurate account of our student vaccination rates.

2021 Military Impact Aid Survey

As we do each October, we are asking for each parent/guardian's cooperation in filling out a survey form to meet the requirements of Public Law 874. Under the provisions of Public Law 874, Bedford Public Schools must conduct an annual Military Impact Aid Survey. The Town of Bedford receives a substantial sum of money under this provision, which lowers the cost of education for all taxpayers.

This year the survey is fully electronic with an e-signature! Parents/Guardians will receive an email with a survey link for each student. It is very important that all surveys are completed and electronically signed for each student, as reimbursement is made for all eligible students on a per-pupil basis. This survey is repeated annually. We thank you very much for your assistance with this important annual survey. For further information please navigate to [Annual Federal Impact Aid Survey](#)

MCAS

DESE has released the Spring 2021 MCAS results to school districts throughout the state. State-wide results show that many more students had gaps in their knowledge of math and, to a lesser extent, English language arts, compared to students in the same grades before the COVID-19 pandemic, and that fewer students met or exceeded grade-level expectations.

Our Bedford MCAS data is being analyzed currently, by district-wide and school-based teams. We are examining the results carefully, and are using this information in our grade level, and department level data meetings, along with our internal student assessment data to continue to inform our instruction, our RtI (Response to Intervention) planning, and our differentiation work with students. Families will receive individual MCAS student reports as they have in the past. We will also be presenting an overview of our Bedford MCAS results to the school committee this fall.

Positions available

The Bedford Public Schools are seeking substitute teachers and Special Education Teaching Assistants. If you are interested please apply at [BPS Substitutes](#) or to [BPS Special Education Teaching Assistants](#).

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

Sincerely,

Philip Conrad
Superintendent