



RIGOR, RELEVANCE, RELATIONSHIPS, RESILIENCE

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Dear Colleagues and Families,

As you may be aware, Governor Baker’s office and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education have released several guidance documents about reopening schools this fall. We applaud the level of thought and care that went into the development of this guidance, and share its goal of the safe return of as many students as possible to in-person school settings in order to best meet students’ academic, social, and emotional needs. These documents can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/> Some of the most helpful documents are at the bottom of the page in various Commissioner’s Updates under “resources”.

Over the last three weeks, six teams of faculty, staff, parents, and students have used this guidance, along with that from the broader medical community, from our last Virtual Town Hall, and from our initial parent and staff surveys to develop our draft plans for reopening this fall. As I mentioned in my last letter, districts are required to develop three separate plans - one for return to full in-person instruction with safety requirements, one for full remote learning, and one for hybrid learning that combines in-person and remote learning.

The teams focused their work on the following:

Teaching and learning: including plans for in-person learning, hybrid learning, and remote learning, including technology needs and training.
Student supports: including addressing mental health and trauma
Personnel and staffing: including managing staff assignments, supporting staff with high risk medical conditions, addressing the need for possible additional staff to assist with instruction, possible additional needs for tutors, and ways to provide additional support including recruitment of volunteers as needed
Special education, English learners: and other special student populations
Facilities and operations: including cleaning and sanitation, classroom/building set-up and flow, and food services
Transportation: including bus transportation capacity and safety protocols, management of increased traffic flow from families who decide to drop off/pick up their children, promotion of alternatives such as walking and biking

Please join us for a Virtual Town Hall this Thursday beginning at 5:00 at this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84425266308?pwd=Z2VlenZpVzNaR25DYXJ0YTMwZVpDUT09>

Each team will present their draft decisions for roughly 10 minutes and then take any questions. The draft plan will also be posted for public comment from 7/30/20 – 8/4/20. Any feedback from the Virtual Town Hall or through public comment will be weighted by the teams for inclusion in our final plans which will be released on 8/10. Because teams will be working on the drafts right through the day on 7/29, you can anticipate an email with a link to the draft to arrive late that evening or early on Thursday 7/30. Please know that our main priority in all decision making will focus on the safety of our staff and students. We will only return to in person instruction either hybrid or fully if we can do so safely. Your input is critically important to us and we hope you will be able to lend your voice.

For up-to-date information regarding the 2019 novel Coronavirus, please visit the DPH COVID-19 web site at www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus Or the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov

Thank you for your patience and collaboration and be well,

Dianne K. Kelly