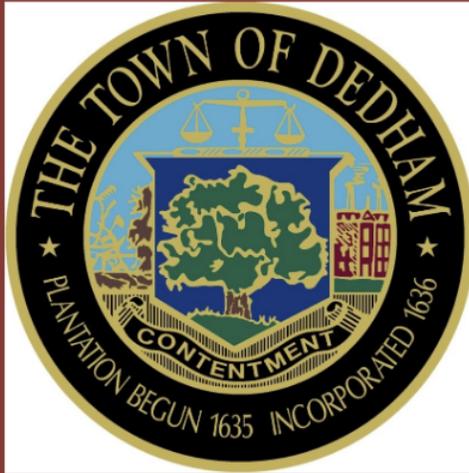


Dedham Public Schools

Home to America's first tax supported, free public school



District Fall Reopening Plan

Presented To The Dedham School Committee

August 4, 2020

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Letter from the Superintendent

Dedham Public Schools

Home of America's First Tax-Supported Free Public School

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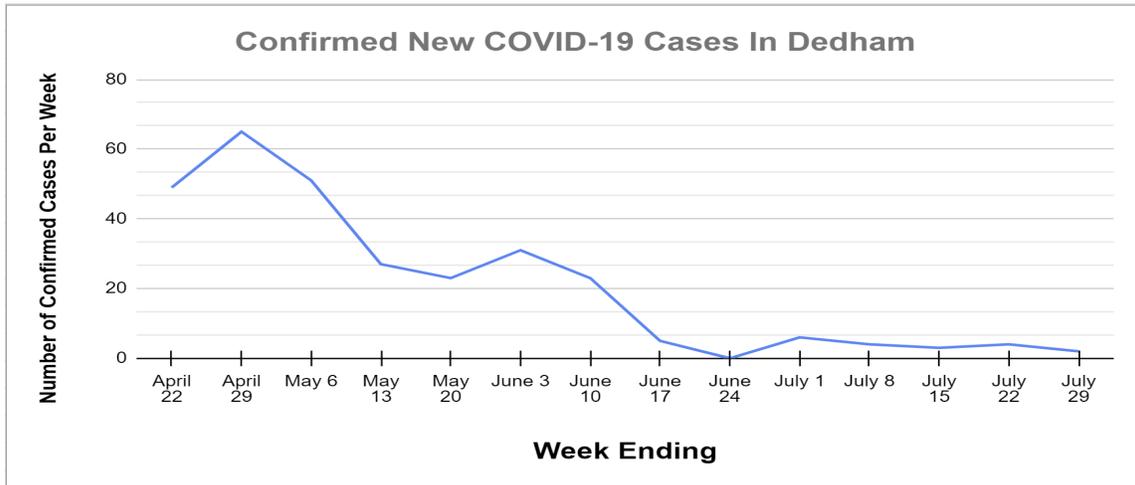
Dear Dedham Families and Community Members,

The past five months have been a very difficult stretch for all stakeholders in public schools across the country. Students, educators, and parents have struggled to cope with the anxiety and stress created by the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures. No one liked remote learning this past spring, and everyone wants schools to get back to “normal”. I know how hard this has been for all of you, and everyone has different circumstances that give rise to strong opinions about how schools should most safely serve their communities this fall.

It is abundantly clear that students need to be in front of teachers in person and form close relationships for effective learning to occur. Everyone agrees with this. However, it is critical that we make a **safe** return to our schools the number one priority as we plan to serve our students this fall. Our Reopening Task Force spent countless hours discussing the best way to accomplish this goal, and their thoughtful guidance complemented input from our community surveys as we developed our preliminary plan. The state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provided many guidance documents with recommendations for local districts to follow. I have had many discussions with other district superintendents to share ideas and learn from each other. Ultimately, most districts have begun to coalesce around some broad conclusions that represent the best thinking at this time.

Many of our high needs students (and others who are not high needs) have struggled and regressed dramatically during this absence from in-person schooling, and nothing short of close, in-person relationships with educators will work for them. These impacts to our students are very, very real. The community has also made it very clear that we must improve our remote learning experience for students, as this past spring's abrupt switch to this model left much to be desired. The challenges of remote learning and new skills needed by our educators require immense training and support, with lots of trial and error along the way. Through all of this, the evolving epidemiology and trajectory of the COVID-19 virus, both regionally and nationally, has made it extremely difficult to confidently predict what a safe return to school looks like. It is for these reasons that I believe a gradual, phased reopening of our schools is the safest path forward and provides much needed time for educators to plan and prepare for the many changes this new year will bring.

As Superintendent, I am recommending to the School Committee a full remote start for the school year, with faculty and staff returning to the buildings (without students) on August 31 to begin extensive protocol training, professional development, and classroom remote learning support. The [transition](#) to a hybrid learning model (beginning first with our highest needs students) at all levels will be gradually phased in as routines become familiar and circumstances around the trajectory of the virus permit. Current COVID-19 weekly infection rates in Dedham are extremely low and continue a downward trend, as illustrated by the graph below using [MA Department of Health Data](#). It is hoped that a hybrid experience for all students will be in place as soon as possible in the fall, provided current COVID-19 trends continue or remain low.



There are still many questions that will require answers after this plan is considered by the Dedham School Committee during the week of August 3. The final approved plan (as voted by the School Committee) will require any impacts on conditions of employment to be “impact bargained” (negotiated) with all relevant employee unions. All families will be asked to choose whether to send their children to school for a hybrid experience or to keep them home for remote learning only. A survey will be sent to all parents during the week of August 10. The results from this survey will dictate many next steps at the school and district level as we develop student cohorts and a revised school year calendar.

I know that these decisions have created tremendous stress and anxiety on students, faculty, staff, and families. The impact of these stressors on our students cannot be underestimated, and we know we will need to work very closely with students and their families to reverse regressions that have occurred over the past five months.

Please continue to visit our district [website](#) for additional timely reopening information, updates, and answers to frequently asked questions. I greatly appreciate your patience and support as we collectively do our best to meet the needs of all students during the 2020-21 school year in a safe and effective manner.

All my best,

Michael J. Welch
Superintendent

Executive Summary - Recommended Learning Model

Dedham Public Schools is recommending a full remote start for the school year, with faculty and staff returning to the buildings (without students) on August 31 for protocol training, professional development, and classroom remote learning support. A [six-phase transition](#) to a hybrid learning model (beginning with high needs students) at all levels will begin as soon as routines become familiar and circumstances regarding the trajectory of the COVID-19 virus permit. This will allow those students most critically in need of direct in-person instruction to receive these services as soon as possible. Additional student groups will be added to in-person learning in a gradual ramp up over time with a goal of in-person instruction for students well within MA DESE, CDC, and MA DPH established guidelines. Exact dates for transition to each phase will depend on virus circumstances and State guidance/recommendations. Remote learning for all students (PreK-12) will begin on Wednesday, September 16.

Phase	Student Group	Learning Model
1	All PreK-12	Remote learning for all students (starting Sept.16)
2	Cohort B “Highest Needs”	In-Person learning 4 days per week (Wed. Remote)
3	All Cohort B (High Needs)	In-Person learning 4 days per week (Wed. Remote)
4	Cohort C & D “Transition Grades”	Hybrid Model; 2 days In-Person + 3 Days Remote
5	All Other* Cohorts C & D	Hybrid Model; 2 days In-Person + 3 Days Remote
6	All PreK-12	Full In-Person Learning 5 days/week

* PreK tuition students at the ECEC who have registered for 2 days/week or 3 days/week of programming will alternate weeks (one week in person, one week remote) to allow for equivalent program consistency.

School Safety And Operations

School Safety Procedures, Routines, and Protocols

Each school has unique needs based on the age and grade level of students, size and layout of the school, and programs offered. To accommodate these situations, each school will create a building-specific plan to address the following, where applicable:

- Entry and dismissal procedures
- Early dismissal procedures
- Recess schedule and protocols, including appropriate activities and supervision of students
- Hallway passing schedule, expectations, and traffic flow patterns
- Student bathroom protocols
- Lunch routines
- Visits to the nurse's office
- After school routines, including increased supervision of students

Signage in multiple languages will be provided for each school to facilitate reinforcement of procedures and protocols.

The District will determine any special or unique needs for students with disabilities related to planned district or schoolwide procedures and protocols related to the following:

- While on school grounds
- While leaving school
- While on a school bus

Initial Screening of Students/Staff

Dedham Public Schools is working to create and reinforce a culture of health, safety, and shared responsibility. For this reason, it is critical that all families assess their child's state of wellness each day before leaving home for school. If the child has a temperature greater than 100°F and/or any symptoms of COVID-19, they should not go to school. The family should notify its school secretary to indicate that the child will be absent and the reason for the absence. The school nurse will follow up with the family regarding the child's symptoms, and check if the child was seen by a healthcare provider if necessary. The child can return to school once cleared by the school nurse and the student's health care provider.

Prior to entering school for the first time, all faculty, staff, and student caregivers will be required to complete an attestation that they or their child(ren) do not display any COVID-19 symptoms and have not travelled outside of Massachusetts except to or from a lower-risk state as designated by the MA [Department of Public Health](#). Please refer to the [MA COVID-19 Travel Order Website](#) for possible exemptions and additional details. This process will be achieved electronically through the SNAP electronic medical records system currently used by the Dedham Public Schools to maintain medical information on all students and staff.

It is important to know that the symptoms of COVID-19 mimic the symptoms of many other illnesses. To protect all students and staff, any symptoms of COVID-19 displayed by a member of the school community will be treated as a possible suspected case until determined otherwise. When a child becomes ill at school, families will be notified. To assure everyone's safety, the family will be required to pick up the child as soon as possible.

The single most important thing to do if any of the following symptoms are present is to STAY HOME. Our collective health relies, in part, on individual attention and responsibility. Note that some symptoms of COVID-19 are the same as the flu or a bad cold; please do not assume it is another condition. When in doubt, stay home.

Please STAY HOME if you have any of the symptoms listed:

- Fever (100.4° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache when in combination with other symptoms
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose when in combination with other symptoms

If staff or students have any of these symptoms, **they must get a test for active COVID-19 infection prior to returning to school.**

All staff should be aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 and should observe themselves and their students throughout the day. Staff members, including bus drivers, should immediately refer students who may be exhibiting symptoms to the school nurse. Faculty and staff also need to ensure strict adherence to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations which protect student privacy.

Personal Hygiene Protocols

Promoting good hygiene practices across the building is the responsibility of all faculty and staff, and appropriate modeling by adults is critical to create a culture of safety in all buildings. All students and staff are expected to practice frequent handwashing as detailed below. Washing hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is a simple but effective precaution that can prevent virus transmission. Wall-mounted hand sanitizer and/or soap dispenser units and hand sanitizer pump bottles will be provided by the district in bathrooms, building entrances, offices, all educator classroom spaces, and other common areas. Hand sanitizer should be used when handwashing with soap and water is not possible. Regular

opportunities for students to wash hands or hand sanitizer will be incorporated into the school day.

Student and staff should wash hands or use hand sanitizer immediately *before*:

- Leaving home
- Leaving the classroom
- Eating
- Touching shared objects
- Playing on the playground
- Leaving school

Students and staff should wash hands or use hand sanitizer immediately *after*:

- Arriving at school
- Entering the classroom
- Finishing lunch
- Touching shared objects
- Using the bathroom
- Playing on the playground
- Coughing, sneezing, blowing one's nose
- Arriving at home

Use of hand sanitizer is recommended only when washing hands with soap and water is not possible.

Students and staff will receive instruction on the correct way to wash hands and use of hand sanitizer. The school community will be reminded frequently of these routines and expectations; signage in multiple languages will be used to support and reinforce personal hygiene practices that help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases.

Meetings

It is essential that schools are able to conduct business as needed. This includes co-planning, collaboration, professional development, student support team meetings, faculty meetings, parent meetings, and other essential functions. Whenever feasible, such meetings should be held through virtual means. If a meeting must occur in person, clearly delineated protocols for screening, physical distancing, hand washing/hand sanitizer use, and use of masks/face coverings will be fully enforced.

Each school, in coordination with the Special Education Department, will determine how to conduct IEP meetings for their students and families. This may include a combination of virtual and in-person meetings and will depend on the size and configuration of available space. Any meetings conducted in-person can only occur provided protocols for screening, physical distancing, hand washing/hand sanitizer use, and use of masks/face coverings guidelines are followed.

Isolation Room

Each school will designate an isolation or “medical waiting room” that is separate from the nurse’s office for students/staff who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms during the school day. Schools will develop protocols for isolation and discharge of students/staff who become sick during the school day in collaboration with the Dedham Health Department. A student who shows COVID-19 symptoms should be moved to the medical waiting room until they can be picked up by a family member.

Student and Staff Bathroom Protocols

All student and staff bathrooms have been inspected and updated to provide sufficient and appropriate personal hygiene needs. Custodial staff will ensure each bathroom is properly stocked with paper towels and soap at all times, and that trash receptacles are emptied regularly to prevent overflowing. All air dryers have been disabled. To enforce physical and group distancing and to minimize crowding, bathrooms will be closed and off-limits to students during transition periods. Bathroom breaks for students should be taken during class time to minimize possible crowding.

Playground Use

Regular outside recess is an important component of supporting our students’ physical and mental health. Schools will implement infection prevention measures to protect children and staff health during recess, physical activity, and playground use in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Regular cleaning of playground structures and high touch surfaces like grab bars and railings will be facilitated by the building custodians.

Health promotion strategies for students will include:

- Mandatory student handwashing before and immediately after outdoor playground time
- Students will maintain 6-foot physical distancing when outside, no congregating
- Students can play mask-free as long as 6-foot physical distancing can be maintained
- Whenever practicable, playground use should be staggered to minimize crowding
- Cohorts of students should be kept together

Sharing

Appropriate steps will be taken to minimize the sharing of student and staff equipment and materials in all buildings. When equipment must be used by more than one person (copy machines, phones, computers, printers, refrigerator door handles, microwave buttons, etc.) proper sanitizing between uses is essential. All faculty and staff are expected to thoroughly clean any shared equipment *before and after* each use using district provided/approved cleaning and disinfecting solutions and materials. Student sharing of materials should be minimized to the extent possible. Any materials shared by students should be disinfected between uses.

Visitors/Volunteers

Visitors to the schools, including volunteers, will be minimized as much as possible. Visitors to schools must make an appointment in advance, and upon scheduled entry will be required to log their name, arrival time, and specific contact information (cell phone number). In addition, all visitors will be required to sign a form verifying their absence of COVID-19 symptoms and attest to no out-of-state travel during the past 14 days. Visitors will be held to the same standards as staff and will be required to wear masks/face coverings (which will be provided by DPS if needed) and follow hand sanitizing and physical distancing requirements. Visitors will be required to leave personal belongings in the car or to keep such items with them during their visit. Visitors will not share pens when logging their presence into a site.

Personal Protective Equipment

Face Coverings/Masks are the single most important risk management measure to contain the spread of COVID-19. The following requirements will be in effect throughout all schools:

- All students (PreK - Grade 12) and all staff will wear masks as much as possible throughout the day. Masks are REQUIRED when in hallways or bathrooms or in proximity to students from other classes and in circumstances when physical distancing cannot be maintained. The only exceptions are for those students or staff for whom it is not safe to do so due to age, medical conditions, or other considerations. A doctor's note documenting a medical condition or disability reason will be required.
- Masks can be disposable or reusable and will need to: fully cover the nose and mouth and secure under the chin, be made with at least 2 layers of breathable material, fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face, and be secured with ties or earloops. Due to variabilities in materials and snugness, neck gaiters or bandanas will not be allowed. Face shields may be worn in combination with a mask, but not in lieu of one. If a staff member or student does not have an appropriate face mask they will be provided with a face mask by the school district.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to provide their children with masks. DPS will provide disposable masks available for students who need them. Staff may choose to wear their own mask or one provided by the school. The District will provide masks for families who may be unable to afford masks for their children on a regular basis. Students and staff will be provided training on how to wear and care for masks.
- Time will be provided throughout the day for "mask breaks" where students and staff do not have to wear masks. Ideally, these breaks will occur outside or in a classroom with the windows open where 6 foot physical distancing can be maintained.
- When necessary and appropriate, DPS will provide students and staff with clear face covering masks that facilitate lip reading. There may be circumstances when the use of additional clear face shields or other adaptive PPE are indicated. Those circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Additional safety precautions are required for school nurses and any staff supporting students with disabilities when physical distancing protocols cannot be maintained. These precautions may include eye protection (face shield or goggles) and a face covering. Additional precautions may be deemed necessary by the District, based on the type of

tasks being performed. The PPE needs of these individuals will be determined on a case by case basis and any and all appropriate supplies will be provided by the District.

- Students and staff will receive direct instruction on the correct way to properly use masks. The school community will be reminded frequently of these routines and expectations; signage in multiple languages will be used to support and reinforce practices that help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases.
- Masks are to be worn at all times unless otherwise directed by faculty or staff. In the event that a student removes their mask or does not wear their mask without permission, we will follow a philosophy of restorative justice and supporting positive behavior. The process to be implemented will be as follows:
 - Educator gives verbal redirection in classroom setting
 - Educator conferences with student in hallway and reviews the expectations and how refusing to comply causes harm to members of the community
 - Counselor/nurse conferences with student
 - Principal conferences with student
 - Parent called and given option to have their child learn remotely in lieu of suspension

Cleaning/Disinfecting Procedures

Frequent hand washing is the best defense against transmission of COVID-19 from contaminated surfaces. Maintaining a safe environment is a shared responsibility for all faculty, staff, and students. That said, frequent cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces will take place following predictable schedules and using consistent techniques and procedures. Adequate training and personal protective equipment will be provided to protect custodial staff. In addition to cleaning and disinfecting carried out by custodial staff, teachers and classroom staff will be provided with safe cleaning products ([Bioesque Disinfectant](#)) in spray bottles as well as training to disinfect items in their classrooms between uses.

Custodial staff will be using appropriate cleaning and disinfecting products proven effective against viruses, including COVID-19. Standard custodial cleaners and disinfectants include [Re-juv-nal](#) and [QT-Plus](#) from Hillyard Products - a leading manufacturer of cleaning and hygiene solutions. These products will be enhanced by the regular school wide use of [Victory Electro-Static Sprayers](#). The district has purchased 24 of these sprayers and they will be used to efficiently disinfect all surfaces in the entire school using [Bioesque Disinfectant](#). Each building custodian will have their own sprayer and an ample supply of disinfectant to effectively maintain a safe environment.

The regular cleaning and disinfecting of “high touch” surfaces is a critical aspect of minimizing surface transmission. “High touch” surfaces include:

- Door surfaces, door knobs, push bars, and handles
- Stair rails, handrails, and push plates for automatic openers
- Countertops
- Light switches
- Push buttons in shared spaces (copy machines, elevators, etc.)
- Faucets, toilets, sinks, and handles
- Paper towel, toilet paper, soap, and hand sanitizer dispensers
- Water coolers and fountains

DPS custodians will clean and disinfect all “high touch” surfaces in all school common areas on a regular daily schedule that at a minimum includes two comprehensive cleaning sessions during the school day (beginning at 9:00 AM and 12:00 noon), and another session again after the end of the school day (after 3:00 PM). In addition, all bathroom floors will be wet-mopped at these times, and bathrooms will have cleaning logs updated daily with custodial initials and cleaning times to monitor this schedule.

Every Wednesday and Saturday, DPS custodians will conduct a “deep cleaning” of every building. This “deep cleaning” will include a “high touch” surface cleaning as described above, and will also include cleaning of all student desks. After these surfaces are all cleaned, all surfaces will be thoroughly disinfected using Victory Electro-Static sprayers and Bioesque disinfectant. This process will also be used on a daily basis for tables and chairs in those schools that have cafeterias and use them for student lunches.

In addition to “high touch” surface cleaning and “deep cleaning” on Wednesdays and Saturdays, faculty and staff will be provided with appropriate disinfecting solutions (Bioesque Disinfectant) to clean and disinfect individual classroom materials. Faculty and staff will be responsible for the regular cleaning and disinfecting of computer keyboards and equipment, telephones, remote controls, and any shared student materials.

Finally, when age-appropriate, students will also have a responsibility to assist in maintaining a clean and safe environment. Students will be expected to adhere to hand washing and sanitizing procedures identified above (with support and direction from faculty and staff), and will also be expected to clean their desk/table tops at the start of each school day and immediately after lunch if classrooms are used for this purpose. Each classroom will be provided with 75% alcohol multi-purpose disinfecting wipes to perform this task each day. These wipes are essentially hand sanitizer in a wipe, thus allowing for students to sanitize their hands and desktop simultaneously.

Ventilation Considerations

It is clear that the airborne nature of the COVID-19 virus is a critical consideration in the safety of all members of the community in any indoor setting. It is for this reason that wearing a mask and practicing social distancing (DPS is recommending 6-feet of distance between individuals at all times) are the most important factors in limiting the transmission of the COVID-19 virus. In addition, increasing ventilation and outdoor air exchange is another method for minimizing possible concentrations of airborne particulates indoors.

The Dedham Public Schools Facilities Department has been conducting a comprehensive review of every teaching and office space in every school building with the intent of increasing ventilation to the maximum extent possible within the structure and possibilities of the mechanical systems in place. Working closely with our HVAC consultant, all ventilation equipment is being carefully inspected, cleaned and adjusted to increase air exchange within the available capabilities and limitations of the systems in place. During the summer months all ventilation filters have been changed and upgraded to improve air quality.

Despite all of these efforts, we know that some of our older buildings do not have the systems in place to allow for significant improvements in this area. To address ventilation concerns in these spaces, the District has arranged to purchase portable, medical-grade air purifiers that will effectively filter COVID-19 sized aerosol particles. After discussions with the Dedham Health Department, the District has decided upon two models that are equally high quality. These are the [Austin Air Healthmate 450](#) and the [Medify MA-112](#). Allocation and distribution of these air purification systems will be initially based upon rooms and offices most in need of improvement. We anticipate initial delivery of these devices in late August. Subsequent deliveries will allow for allocations to additional rooms as needed.

The use of plexiglass barriers, when appropriate, will also be installed in offices and smaller rooms as needed on a case-by-case basis.

Storage of students' personal belongings will be evaluated at each school. Students will not be permitted to share storage space. Students are encouraged to take their personal belongings home with them every day so they can be properly cleaned.

Response Plan for Possible Cases of COVID-19

The Dedham Public Schools will respond to any possible cases of COVID-19 according to the [Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's July 17, 2020 Advisory](#). This advisory provides detailed instructions for how to respond to possible COVID-19 cases involving students, faculty, and staff. It also provides instructions for close contacts of possibly infected students or staff, as well as protocols for suspected symptomatic cases for faculty, staff or students at school, at home, or on school buses. DPS will rigidly adhere to these guidelines.

Transportation - Bus Procedures

The District recognizes the important role bus transportation plays in providing students with access to their learning and will work to provide this service to as many students as possible. DPS will follow all physical distancing requirements on school buses in accordance with [DESE Transportation Guidelines](#) which call for 1/3 capacity on student buses. Based on this guidance, Dedham's typical 71-passenger buses at 1/3 capacity will allow for 23 students on each bus.

The District Transportation Office will work with Connolly Bus Company and each school to create an assigned student bus seating plan to maximize seating capacity while maintaining social distancing requirements. Per DESE requirements, masks/face coverings must be worn by everyone on the bus during school bus transportation. Bus drivers will receive training regarding policies and protocols related to COVID-19 as well as behavioral expectations for students who ride the bus.

Every DPS bus will be staffed by a trained bus monitor each day both on the way to school each morning and on the way home from school at the end of each school day. The bus monitor will supervise daily bus run attendance and entry/exit protocols, reinforce student mask usage, ensure appropriate seating (according to the seating plan), open windows, and reinforce appropriate student behavior at all times.

Steps will be taken to minimize contact and potential spread of COVID-19 while students are boarding, riding, or disembarking the school bus. Bus monitors will be a critical link in the prevention of the spread of COVID-19. Drivers and monitors will receive direct instruction in the proper use of masks/face coverings, hand sanitizer, physical distancing, cleaning products, as well as COVID-19-related policies and procedures (such as a student showing symptoms on a bus) and student behavioral expectations.

Drivers and monitors are required to wear masks/face coverings while students are on the bus. In addition, monitors will be provided with hand sanitizer and extra masks for students who may meet the bus without a mask/face covering. Students are required to wear face coverings and practice physical distancing and to use hand sanitizer when entering and exiting the bus each day.

School buses will be disinfected twice per day (once after the AM route and again after the PM route). Cleaning and disinfecting supplies will be provided to drivers and monitors to enable them to spot-clean any surface as needed. To increase ventilation, windows will remain open whenever possible while buses are in use.

School Meals

Providing breakfast and lunch for students is an essential role of the Dedham Public Schools. The District will develop a plan that aligns with guidelines as set forth by the Department of Public Health and MA DESE. Considerations include, but are not limited to:

- Where food is served, either in classrooms or in cafeterias depending upon the school
- How food is served, which may be boxed and/or delivered to the student
- Accommodating students with food allergies
- Social distancing and other considerations during meals, specifically maintaining 6 feet of distance between all individuals while face coverings are removed
- Student supervision during lunch
- Use of staff lunch rooms
- The banning of food delivery (e.g. pizza and other takeout meals) to schools from non-DPS food vendors
- Providing meals for students during remote learning
- Proper cleaning and trash removal

Students will be instructed on changes to the mealtime routines at their school as part of their training upon their return to school.

Teaching And Learning

The District has developed three instructional models to support student learning. In accordance with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's guidance and regulation, these models address the plans for implementation of in-person learning, hybrid (partial in-person and partial remote) learning and fully remote learning. The Dedham Public

Schools will implement one of these learning models for all students based on the district’s capacity to meet state safety requirements and current public health data regarding Covid cases.

Regardless of the learning model, the District’s primary goal is to support all students with high quality instruction for the equivalent of a full school day provided by DPS faculty and staff. Whether learning is taught in person or through virtual means, the expectation is that learning will occur in real time to the greatest extent possible. When learning is delivered remotely, educators will use live video conferencing to deliver their lessons, and students will be expected to participate at designated times, similar to how classes are scheduled at brick and mortar schools. Attendance for all virtual sessions will be taken and reported so schools have an accurate record of how well students are able to engage and access curriculum during remote learning. Just as teachers communicate with families, counselors, and administrators when they have concerns about a student’s performance, effort, attendance, participation, or social/emotional needs during in-person instruction, it is essential that teachers continue to communicate with appropriate stakeholders when learning is partially or fully remote. If a student is not performing to a satisfactory level, it is the expectation of the District that teachers will notify families as soon as concerns arise, and well in advance of the end of the grading period. This is particularly critical if the student is on a performance trajectory that would suggest the receipt of a failing grade.

Family Choice

The District will identify time periods during which a family may request to transition between remote and hybrid learning models. Families that choose to engage their students in a fully remote learning model are asked to commit to this decision for at least one-quarter (term) of the school year. Families will have the opportunity to submit a request to change their learning model no less than 10 school days prior to the designated quarter end times listed below. All requests to make changes to a child’s learning model (from fully remote to the District model currently in practice, or vice versa) must be submitted in writing to the school principal per the timeline below:

Initial Full Remote Family Choice Deadline	Friday, August 21, 2020
Term 1 Change Deadline	Friday, October 30, 2020
Term 2 Change Deadline	Friday, January 8, 2021
Term 3 Change Deadline	Friday, March 12, 2021

Family Engagement Teams

Maintaining student engagement and learning is always a top priority and, as the District considers some degree of remote learning for the coming year, these issues are more important now than ever before. As we move into the 2020 - 2021 school year, the District will create Family Engagement Teams at each building. These teams will be comprised of a wide range of educational professionals (e.g., mental health counselors, nurses, administrators, and EL educators) who will work closely with teachers, students and families to provide wraparound

services, when needed, and ensure that all students remain engaged and maximize learning as the year progresses.

The DPS Family Engagement Teams will be committed to connecting children and families to an array of resources available in our community such as translation services, mental health support, health/medical case management, and access to healthy food, for example. These school-based Family Engagement Teams will serve as a system of support for our Dedham children and families as we navigate this pandemic and continue to promote the health, safety, and educational needs of our entire school community.

In-Person Learning Model

While this model is most similar to what students, faculty and staff have experienced in the past, there are substantive changes, most significantly related to how teachers will need to adjust their instructional practices and how curriculum will need to be modified in order to promote safe physical distancing. What will feel the same is that in this model all students will be scheduled for full in-person learning every day according to established historical school schedules. The district's current plan is to maintain a minimum physical distancing of 6 feet at all times, with appropriate safety precautions in place, to accommodate approximately 50% of all students using a phased hybrid approach. An all-student, full in-person model is currently listed as "Phase 6" of reopening, and while we aspire to eventually return to this level of full in-person instruction, the timeline for implementation of this phase will depend upon trends the trajectory of the COVID-19 virus in the community, and recommendations from public health officials.

Hybrid Learning Model

Student Cohorts

The hybrid learning model in grades K-12 employs student cohort groupings to identify which groups of students will attend school on any given day of the week. Cohort A consists of all students who will participate in a remote only learning model. Cohort B represents Dedham's "high need" population and is composed of students with disabilities, English Learners, economically disadvantaged students, homeless students, and students in court ordered foster placements. Students in grades K, 1, 6, and 9 who will be transitioning into new school buildings for the first time ("transition grades") will be allowed unique access to a hybrid experience as a temporary cohort ahead of other students. The remaining students in grades K-12 will be distributed equally between Cohorts C&D. Distribution of students to cohorts C&D will be structured so that families with students attending different schools remain on the same schedule.

Structure and Schedule

The fundamental structure of Dedham's hybrid learning model will engage students in a blend of in-person and remote learning. The ratio of in-person to remote learning will be determined by the cohort to which a student is assigned. Students in Cohort A will engage in remote learning only. Students in Cohort B will engage in in-person learning four days per week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday) and remote learning one day per week (Wednesday). Students in Cohort C will engage in two

days of in-person learning (Monday and Tuesday) and three days of remote learning (Wednesday, Thursday and Friday). Students in Cohort D will engage in two days of in-person learning (Thursday and Friday) and three days of remote learning (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday). A visual representation of this arrangement follows.

	Monday/Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday/Friday
Cohort A: Remote Only <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Choice • Medical Quarantine 	Remote Learning at Home		
Cohort B: High Needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education • EL • Economically Disadvantaged 	In-person / At-School	Remote / At Home	In-person / At-School
Cohort C: ~½ of remaining *K-12 student population	In-person / At School	Remote / At Home	Remote / At Home
Cohort D: ~½ of remaining *K-12 student population	Remote / At Home	Remote / At Home	In-person / At-School

** PreK tuition students at the ECEC who have registered for 2 days/week or 3 days/week of programming will alternate weeks (one week in person, one week remote) to allow for equivalent program consistency. All 5-day per week PreK tuition students at ECEC will follow the Cohort C and D model shown above each week.

Learning Management

The hybrid learning model will utilize all existing staff to support students while they engage with in-person and remote teaching. All staff will utilize live teaching using the Google Meet or Zoom platforms (available to all faculty) for remote teaching to provide consistency and access for students. Teachers will take attendance for both in-person and remote student groups which will be reported in the district’s Student Information System (PowerSchool).

Remote Learning Model

Structure and Schedule

In the remote learning model, students receive their instruction at home via synchronous and asynchronous interaction with teachers and content. For families who elect to or for medical reasons must participate in a remote only model, students will interact with teachers and content via synchronous and asynchronous instruction 100% of the time. For the remainder of families who participate in the District’s hybrid learning model, students will interact with teachers and content via synchronous and asynchronous instruction approximately 60% of the time. Regardless of the learning model, the District will employ a wide range of instructional tools and technologies to support student

learning in remote settings. In order to clarify terms, the district will reference the following definitions:

Synchronous learning. Synchronous learning is an essential element of the remote and hybrid learning models. It provides students with opportunities to engage directly with their teacher(s) to build relationships, participate in direct instruction, and learning in small groups or individual settings.

Asynchronous learning. Asynchronous learning complements synchronous learning by providing opportunities for students to interact with teacher developed content and independently practice skills and concepts covered during direct synchronous instruction.

Schedule. The district's goal is to build remote learning schedules that mirror a typical school day. Doing so (a) provides clarity and predictability for students, families and teachers, (b) ensures that students are able to engage in teacher led direct instruction throughout the week regardless of setting and (c) supports smooth transitions between remote, hybrid, and in person learning models as conditions permit. Students will be expected to participate in live synchronous lessons at designated, regular class times throughout the school day.

The following pages provide sample schedules for elementary, middle and high school. These schedules mirror a typical school day at each level. It is important to note that student schedules will rotate as they always have in our traditional operation. At the elementary level special subjects (Art, Music, Physical Education, Library, etc.) will rotate days and time of day while at the middle and high school student schedules will follow the day and block rotations as they have in the past.

Elementary (K-5) Sample Remote Learning Schedule

	Monday - Wednesday - Friday	Tuesday - Thursday
Morning Meeting 9:00 - 9:30	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 10 - 30 min.	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 10 - 30 min.
Reading 9:30 - 10:30	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 10 - 20 min.	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 10 - 20 min.
	Synchronous - Small group ~ 10 - 20 min.	Synchronous - Small group ~ 10 - 20 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent Practice ~ 20 - 40 min.	Asynchronous - Independent Practice ~ 20 - 40 min.
Writing 10:30 - 11:30	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 10 - 20 min.	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 10 - 20 min.
	Synchronous - Small group ~ 10 - 20 min.	Synchronous - Small group ~ 10 - 20 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent Practice ~ 20 - 40 min.	Asynchronous - Independent Practice ~ 20 - 40 min.
Lunch/Recess 11:30 - 12:30		
Special 12:30 - 1:30	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 10 - 20 min.	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 10 - 20 min.
	Synchronous - Small group ~ 10 - 20 min.	Synchronous - Small group ~ 10 - 20 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent Practice ~ 20 - 40 min.	Asynchronous - Independent Practice ~ 20 - 40 min.
Math 1:30 - 2:30	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 10 - 20 min.	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 10 - 20 min.
	Synchronous - Small group ~ 10 - 20 min.	Synchronous - Small group ~ 10 - 20 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent Practice ~ 20 - 40 min.	Asynchronous - Independent Practice ~ 20 - 40 min.
Science/Social Studies 2:30 - 3:00	Synchronous - Whole group ~10 - 20 min.	Asynchronous - Independent practice ~ 30 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent Practice ~10 - 20 min.	

Middle (6-8) Sample Remote Learning Schedule

	Monday - Friday
Homeroom 8:05-8:35	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 15 - 30 min.
Period 1 8:35 - 9:20	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Synchronous - Small group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent practice ~ 10 - 30 min.
Period 2 9:20 - 10:05	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Synchronous - Small group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent practice ~ 10 - 30 min.
Period 3 10:05 - 10:50	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Synchronous - Small group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent practice ~ 10 - 30 min.
Period 4 10:50 - 11:35	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Synchronous - Small group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent practice ~ 10 - 30 min.
Lunch 11:35 - 12:20	
Period 5 12:20 - 1:05	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Synchronous - Small group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent practice ~ 10 - 30 min.
Period 6 1:05 - 1:50	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Synchronous - Small group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent practice ~ 10 - 30 min.
Period 7 1:50 - 2:35	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Synchronous - Small group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent practice ~ 10 - 30 min.

High (9-12) Sample Remote Learning Schedule

	Monday - Friday
A Block 7:35 - 8:45	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Synchronous - Small group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent practice ~ 20 - 40 min.
B Block 8:45 - 9:55	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Synchronous - Small group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent practice ~ 20 - 40 min.
C Block 9:55 - 11:05	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Synchronous - Small group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent practice ~ 20 - 40 min.
Lunch 11:05 - 12:00	
D Block 12:00 - 1:10	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Synchronous - Small group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent practice ~ 20 - 40 min.
E Block 1:10 - 2:20	Synchronous - Whole group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Synchronous - Small group ~ 15 - 25 min.
	Asynchronous - Independent practice ~ 20 - 40 min.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Student Mental Health

All members of the Dedham Community have experienced a high degree of uncertainty since the onset of quarantine last March. Shifts in routine, loss of family and friends, and social isolation are just a few of the issues that individuals have and will continue to face. As such, the need to address, monitor and support the social and emotional well-being of students will be a high priority in any learning model that is adopted. In addition to the Family Engagement Teams discussed previously, the District will dedicate time for social-emotional learning (SEL) skill-building activities and concepts (e.g., self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, social awareness, and maintaining relationships and connections) into the daily schedule.

SEL Assessments and Supports

As the District follows the proposed six-phase transition to teaching and learning, a universal social-emotional and behavioral screening will be considered for all students PreK-12. This social-emotional and behavioral screening will help identify students in need of more specialized and targeted social, emotional, and behavioral support utilizing a multi-tiered framework. The District will continue to provide universal SEL support through the Second Step curriculum (PreK-8), Sources of Strength (6-8), and advisory/X-Block's (9-12), for example. More targeted small group and individualized social-emotional support will be available and

provided for students in need by the Counseling Services Department. Examples of more targeted support may include, but are not limited to, developing healthy coping strategies, honing social skill sets, reducing anxious thoughts/behaviors, and improving problem solving and self-advocacy skills.

Extracurricular Activities and Before/After School Programming

Participation in extracurricular activities and athletics is an important part of the student experience. The District will make every effort to maintain as many programs as possible to provide opportunities for students to engage with each other and learn new skills through these activities. Careful consideration and planning will be required in order to provide programming that ensures the health and safety of all students and staff. Areas that need to be addressed before a program can be offered include staffing and supervision, transportation, attendance, any necessary accommodations (particularly in the case of athletics and the performing arts), and scheduling. All before and after school programming will follow the same physical distancing and personal hygiene protocols that exist during the school day.

The District is currently in active discussions with the Greater Boston YMCA regarding the availability of before/after school care for DPS students attending our district elementary schools. More information about the availability of these programs, and district run before/after care programs at the ECEC, will be communicated as soon as it becomes finalized and available.

School Faculty and Staff Rights and Responsibilities

The Dedham Public Schools is finalizing a Staff Plan for COVID-19 for Fall 2020 that outlines the rights and responsibilities of staff as it relates to maintaining the health and safety of our students and employees during this pandemic. All staff members will be required to participate in mandatory trainings and sign off on a checklist to ensure all staff members understand the steps they must take to do their part in minimizing the spread of COVID-19. Administrators and supervisors must follow these same requirements and have additional responsibilities to monitor compliance with social distancing, cleaning, and hygiene protocols as well as communication in the event of a confirmed positive case of COVID-19 in their school.

The District's Staff Plan for COVID-19 for Fall 2020 also addresses special considerations including individuals with a disability, vulnerable individuals, pregnant employees, lactating employees, mental illness and employee fears.

Links To Relevant DESE Guidance and Other Documents

[DESE Initial Fall Reopening Guidance 6-25-20](#)

[DESE Comprehensive Special Education Guidance 7-9-20](#)

[DESE Reopening FAQ's 7-10-20](#)

[DESE Protocols for responding to COVID-19 Scenarios 7-17-20](#)

DPS Community Reopening Survey Results - 7-21-20

[Graphical Summary](#) **[Raw Data](#) **[Parent Raw Data](#)****

[DESE Fall Facilities & Operations Guidance 7-22-20](#)

[DESE K-12 Reopening Transportation Guidance 7-22-20](#)

[DESE Fall Remote Learning Guidance 7-24-20](#)

[DESE Guidance for Courses Requiring Additional Safety Considerations 7-24-20](#)

[DESE Announcement Re: Additional Staff Training Days 7-27-20](#)

[DPS Reopening Task Force Members](#)