



The Public Schools of Northborough and Southborough

"Ten Schools, Three Districts, One Community of Learners"

NSBORO News - September 2020



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Superintendent's Update

Time and reflection change the sight little by little 'till we come to understand.

Paul Cezanne

I've been experiencing much more traffic commuting to work over the past couple of weeks than I have in six months. I even had the privilege of being behind a school bus with students. Over the past several weeks, staff, educators, principals, and directors have had an opportunity to operationalize the District's Reopening Plan. The hybrid learning model has brought life back to our middle and elementary schools and it was great to see students engage with their teachers. This Tuesday, October 6, 2020, Algonquin Regional High School will welcome students who are participating in the hybrid learning model. I know that the faculty and staff are excited to connect, in-person, with their students.

All ten of the District's schools have reinvented daily routines and procedures to keep students, faculty, and staff safe. From hallway travel to lunch, to classroom instruction, there are very few existing routines that have remained the same from last fall. The initial feedback from principals and educators is that the students are having no issues with adjusting and adapting. As the District gains more experience in the hybrid and remote learning models, it will continue to reflect, improve, and finetune routines, procedures, and student learning experiences.

Two frequently asked questions that I would like to address are 1) What would cause a school or District to move into a full remote learning model? and, 2) What is the path forward to increase the amount of in-person learning for students?

There is no one threshold or metric that indicates when a school or district should suspend in-person learning. District administration and school leaders will work closely with the local boards of health nurses, the Medical Advisory Team, and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) COVID Reporting Unit to determine the appropriate next steps.

These next steps can include implementing existing protocols to notify close contacts for testing and isolation, conferring with local public health officials, the District Medical Advisory Team (MAT) and/or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) to determine if transmission is occurring in the class or school, or seeking advice on whether to suspend in-person learning for that class, grade, school or district.

It is important to note that these decisions will be made based on local context, in collaboration with DESE and the local boards of health, and may be based on the following factors:

- If there is a need for an extensive cleaning of the building or other facility mitigation.
- If the mobile testing unit results, or other test results, suggest widespread in school transmission is occurring.
- If there are widespread absences among students and staff due to illness.
- If the school is in a district reported as "red" on the DPH health metric for the past three weeks, and risk of transmission to students and/or staff is increased.

The school department, the local boards of health nurses, and the Medical Advisory Team will monitor the state public health data, the local data, and the district data, which are all important to consider when making this decision.

The District's Medical Advisory Team (MAT), school leaders, and educators will examine and study the feasibility of increasing the number of students who attend in-person. The goal is to return to 100% in-person learning, as safely as possible. The Medical Advisory Team (MAT) will be convening next week. As we look forward, it is essential that we all do our part to keep each other safe. BE SAFE ~ BE SMART ~ DO YOUR PART

Respectfully,
Gregory L. Martineau
Superintendent of Schools

District Launches Covid-19 Weekly Dashboard



