



June 25, 2020

Dear BPS Families,

Today, the Commissioner of Education released initial guidance for school reopening this fall that prioritizes getting Massachusetts students back to school in person—safely, following a comprehensive set of health and safety requirements. The guidance attempts to balance the health and safety risks of COVID-19 with the health, safety, socioeconomic, and achievement risks of keeping students out of school.

Over the coming days, our BPS reopening steering committee and subcommittees, which launched a number of weeks ago, will be reviewing the guidance to begin to understand how it impacts what we can do in Barnstable. We appreciate the initial feedback that families provided in our most recent survey. We plan to conduct additional surveys in the coming weeks; your feedback will continue to guide us as we develop plans for reopening. We also acknowledge that the Commissioner's initial guidelines do not address every topic, and that there will be additional guidance coming throughout the summer.

Here are some key components addressed in the Commissioner's reopening guidance:

- Current medical research supports a safe in-person return to school - with preventive measures in place - as infection and transmission rates are lower for children than adults.
- Preventive measures include masks/face coverings, physical distancing, handwashing, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces.
- Masks/face coverings will be required for all students in Grade 2 and above and for all adults.
- Based upon current medical research, and in conjunction with other preventive measures, a minimum physical distance of three feet has been established.

All districts in Massachusetts will need 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. *Based upon the current medical situation, the expectation today, as established by the state, is that students will return to full in-person instruction in September; however, that is subject to change based upon how the medical situation develops.*

The guidance may be read in its entirety on our [website](#)

Please feel free to contact me or your building principal with questions, concerns, or feedback. You have our commitment to continue to communicate over the coming days and weeks as more information becomes available. We are grateful for the strong school-family partnerships that have developed as a result of school closure. Thank you for your continued partnership, patience, and understanding as we work to reopen schools for the safe return of students to classrooms and school families.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Meg Mayo-Brown