



HINGHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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June 25, 2020

Good afternoon HPS Community,

Earlier today, Governor Baker and DESE Commissioner Jeff Riley released the highly anticipated guidance with regard to school reopening in the fall. Immediately following the release of that document, the HPS Leadership Team met to unpack and discuss the guidance. RRAC subcommittees, under the guidance of the Steering Committee, are also actively studying the guidance and have numerous meetings scheduled to explore focus areas including Instruction and Social Emotional Learning; Special Education and Student Services; Facilities, Operations and Finance; and Communications.

More comprehensive communication, including a Superintendent's video message, will be forthcoming but in the short term I would like to provide some high level points from the guidance:

- The goal for fall reopening will be to safely reopen schools "in-person" for as many students and staff as possible. However, the district will also need to be prepared to implement hybrid and/or remote learning plans if conditions warrant.
- Masks will be required for all staff and students in grades 2-12, but at this time, there are no requirements for COVID-19 testing or daily temperature checks upon entry. Mask "breaks" will be built into the school day.
- Student desks will face forward and be faced 3-6 feet apart, and students will likely eat lunch in the classroom.
- Guidance with regard to transportation and athletics is forthcoming.

Many specific details with regard to reopening will be determined by the district, so do expect frequent communications from district leadership in the weeks to come. One of our first orders of business will be to survey families and educators so we have a full picture of how fall reopening scenarios impact members of our community.

While the news of the potential full reopening comes as welcome news for many families, we know that a full reopening scenario creates challenges for staff and students who are in high risk groups or have family members in high risk groups. Know that we are committed to the safety and wellness of all staff and students and we will work to develop a plan that provides flexibility for those who require special consideration. We will also provide frequent opportunities for families to provide input and ask questions, through formats such as live coffee talks and other similar forums.

Thank you for your continued support of Hingham Public Schools.

Until next time,

Paul Austin, Ph.D.
Superintendent
Hingham Public Schools