



## HINGHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Good afternoon HPS Community,

As we approach the holiday weekend, I wanted to share an update of progress made this week with regard to plans for school reopening. I also want to stress our commitment as a district to maximizing our capacity for in-person instruction in a safe and responsible manner. To that end, our short term efforts are focused on optimizing instructional spaces and scheduling that will best support this guiding principle of school reopening.

This week, our RRAC subcommittees, under the guidance of the Steering Committee, made progress on the following key areas.

- The custodial and maintenance staff re-assessed instructional spaces in light of the new 3 foot minimum physical distancing recommendations made in the June 25th DESE guidance. The maintenance team also assessed non-traditional spaces for potential repurposing and retrofitting as instructional spaces. These efforts support our guiding principle of maximizing in-person instruction and are ongoing, so we thank you for your patience as we continue to gather this data.
- Technology is being procured in anticipation of all possible learning scenarios, including in-person, hybrid and remote. Laptops have been ordered to ensure that teachers have access to appropriate technology should we need to pivot to remote or hybrid learning at any point during the school year. We are also assessing the need and associated cost for additional student issued devices for hybrid or remote learning should either be required during the school year.
- The Instruction and Social Emotional Learning committee, under the direction of Asst. Superintendent Dr. LaBillois, is actively working on all aspects of elementary and secondary instruction, social-emotional supports, and schedules. As required by DESE, the team is simultaneously planning for in-person, hybrid and remote scenarios.

- This past Tuesday, I enjoyed interacting with over 100 parents and community members in the first in a series of summer coffee talks. (Click [here](#) for a full recording.) There were many thoughtful questions and suggestions from participating parents/community members and we will provide several future modes and opportunities for families to continue to provide feedback and input. Your input is vitally important and greatly valued as we consider how best to meet the needs of our students this fall.
- Our Communications subcommittee, in partnership with Harbour Media, is in the process of filming a series of videos to illustrate various aspects of school reopening. Our next episode will feature an “inside look” from our K-12 principals on how the recent DESE guidance plays out in our instructional spaces. We are also preparing an episode featuring our school nurses and related COVID health protocols.

I know that this holiday weekend will be very different from those previously celebrated in our Higham community. While we will miss the community traditions such as the parade, road race and pancake breakfast, our community spirit is very much alive and well in our active citizenry. Thank you for your continued support of Hingham Public Schools.

Until next time,

Paul Austin, Ph.D.  
Superintendent  
Hingham Public Schools