



Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Meeting

July 1, 2020

7:00 p.m.

Via zoom webinar:

<https://abschools.zoom.us/j/95248771505>

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)
MEETING AGENDA

Virtual Public Zoom Webinar Meeting
To attend: <https://abschools.zoom.us/j/95248771505>
To call in: 312 626 6799
Live streaming:

July 1, 2020
7:00 p.m.

-
1. **Call to Order** (7:00)
 2. **OPEN MEETING**
 - 2.1. **Chairman's Welcome**
 - 2.1.1. Welcome to Kyra Cook and Yebin Wang, new Acton School Committee members
 - 2.1.2. Annual Town Meeting Updates
 - 2.2. **Public Participation** – Please use “Hand Raise” feature to participate (do not use the “Chat”)
 3. **ABRSC ANNUAL ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING** (7:10)
 - 3.1. **FYI:** School Committee Annual Organizational Meeting Policy, File: BDA and REVISED Procedures, File: BDA-R and School Committee Officers Policy, File: BDB
 - 3.2. **Election of Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Officers for FY21**
 - 3.2.1. Chairperson – **VOTE** – Peter Light
 - 3.2.2. Vice Chairperson(s) – **VOTE** – New Chair
 - 3.3. **Appointment of Margaret Dennehy as ABRSD Treasurer** – **VOTE** – New Chair
 - 3.4. **Appointment of Beth Petr as ABRSC Executive Secretary** – **VOTE** – New Chair
 4. **ONGOING BUSINESS** (7:40)
 - 4.1. **Approval of ABRSC Meeting Minutes of 6/18/2020** – **VOTE** – Tessa McKinley
 - 4.2. **School Opening Update** – Peter Light
 - 4.2.1. DESE Initial Fall School Reopening Guidance, 6/25/20
 - 4.3. **Budget Update**
 - 4.4. **Subcommittee and Member Reports**
 - 4.4.1. School Building Committee Update – Peter Light
 - 4.4.1.1. Minutes of meeting on 6/10/20
 - 4.5. **Recommendation to Accept \$600 Donation in Memory of Wilbert and Jayne Foertsch to the District for Ipad for Students in Need** – **VOTE** – Peter Light
 5. **Statement of Warrants and Recommendation to Approve** – **VOTE** – Tessa McKinley
 6. **FYI**
 7. **Adjourn** (8:00)

For Your Information

- FY21 Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Members & Meetings
- 2020 Annual Town Meeting Slides, Video, Budget Book
https://www.abschools.org/news/what_s_new/a_b_r_s_d_budget_presentation_-_town_meeting_2020
<https://www.abschools.org/district/finance>

NEXT MEETINGS:

- July 30 ABRSC Workshop
- August 13 and 27 – ABRSC Meetings at 7:00 p.m.
- September 3 – ABRSC Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Posted on 6/26/20 at 5:15 p.m.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ANNUAL ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee members are elected at each town's annual election. Newly elected School Committee members will begin to serve on the School Committee once they have been sworn in by their respective towns.

At the first regularly scheduled School Committee meeting after all new members have been sworn in, the School Committee shall organize by nominating and voting for officers. The committee shall elect one of its members to be the chairperson, one vice-chairperson from Acton, one vice-chairperson from Boxborough. They shall also vote to appoint a secretary and a Treasurer who do not need to be members of the Committee.

The newly-elected Chairperson and Vice-chairs shall begin their terms on August 1st, at which time the current Chairperson and Vice-chairs' terms shall officially end. The interim period between the annual organizational meeting and August 1st shall be designated as a transitional period.

REF: ABRSD Regional Agreement, effective July 1, 2014

Approved 5/21/15, 5/23/19, 6/4/2020

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ANNUAL ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

1. Nominations

At the first meeting after new members have been sworn in, the Superintendent will open the floor for nominations and invite members to nominate another member or themselves as candidates to serve as the next Chairperson. A second is not needed for a nomination. Once all candidates have been identified, the Superintendent will ask for a motion to declare that nominations are closed.

2. Discussion

At the Superintendent's discretion, each nominee will be given an opportunity to speak to (or decline) their nomination. Members may speak in support of a candidate. ~~When discussion is complete, the Superintendent will call for a vote.~~

3. Voting

~~If there is a single candidate, voting will be by voice and a candidate will be elected by a majority of the committee vote. If there are multiple candidates, each committee member will then complete a paper ballot, with their name on it, indicating their first choice for Chairperson. Members will not leave the room during the election. The Superintendent will ask if everyone has voted and if they have, the Superintendent will declare that the polls are closed. Ballots will be submitted to the Secretary for counting according to the Regional Agreement.~~

When discussion is complete, the Superintendent will call for a roll call vote. Each member will be polled, and they will vote for one candidate. A candidate must have a majority of weighted votes to be elected.

The Candidate with the most weighted votes will be declared the new Chairperson unless no candidate receives a majority vote*. If no one receives a majority vote for the position, ~~members additional roll call votes will be taken must keep voting~~ until someone is elected. Discussion is allowed between each vote. ~~Individual ballots will be recorded in the meeting minutes.~~

4. The new Chairperson will follow the same process to elect a Vice-Chairperson from Acton and a Vice-Chairperson from Boxborough.

5. The new Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons will take office on August 1 per the policy.

6. Per the Regional Agreement, a Secretary and a Treasurer will be appointed by a vote of the Committee.

*A majority vote means that more than half of the weighted votes of those voting approve a motion. More specifically, it means that more than half of the votes cast by persons legally entitled to vote at a properly called meeting with a quorum present approve a motion. Blank ballots or abstentions do not count. By this definition, the weighted votes of those voting - not necessarily those present - determine the majority.

REF: Acton-Boxborough Regional Agreement, effective July 1, 2014
 Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, <https://www.kidlink.org/docs/RobertRules/toc.html>
6/~~26~~¹⁸/2020

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6/26/2020

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Duties of the Chairperson

The chairperson of the School Committee has the same powers as any other member of the Committee to vote upon all measures coming before it, to offer resolutions and to discuss questions. He/She will perform those duties that are consistent with his/her office and those required by law, state regulations, and this Committee. In carrying out these responsibilities, the chairperson will:

1. Sign the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Committee.
2. Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Committee's agendas.
3. Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters that may occur between Committee meetings.
4. Appoint subcommittees, subject to Committee approval.
5. Call special meetings of the Committee as found necessary.
6. Be public spokesperson for the Committee at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others.
7. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Committee meetings.

As presiding officer at all meetings of the Committee, the chairperson will:

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time.
2. Announce the business to come before the Committee in its proper order.
3. Enforce the Committee's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of meetings.
4. Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference.
5. Explain what the effect of a motion would be if this is not clear to members.
6. Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the Committee.
7. Answer all parliamentary inquiries.
8. Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof.

Duties of the Vice-Chairperson

The vice-chairs of the Committee will act in the absence of the chairperson as presiding officers of the Committee and will perform such other duties as may be delegated or assigned to them. Each vice-chairperson will support the chairperson in the business of their town.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:36

Approved: 5/21/15

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)
MEETING Draft Minutes

Virtual Public Zoom Webinar Meeting

June 18, 2020

To attend: <https://abschools.zoom.us/j/95248771505>

6:00 p.m. Executive Session

To call in: 312 626 6799

7:00 p.m. (approximately) Business Meeting

Live streaming: <https://youtu.be/0rU3VDnOzUo>

Executive Session is not open to the public

Members Present: Evelyn Abayaah-Issah (arrived 6:10 p.m.), Diane Baum, Adam Klein, Ginny Kremer (absent 6:10 – 6:20 p.m., left at 7:00 p.m.), Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy, John Petersen (absent 7:08 – 7:50 p.m.), Nora Shine, Angie Tso

Members Absent: none

Others: Marie Altieri, Deborah Bookis, Dawn Bentley, Peter Light, Beth Petr, Dave Verdolino, Amy Bisiewicz,

1. **Call to Order** (6:00)

The ABRSC was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Chairperson Tessa McKinley.

Due to the schools being closed as a result of the coronavirus, the meeting was being conducted remotely via a Zoom webinar with all 11 of the School Committee members, per Remote Participation policy, BEDJA. Public participation was possible via the zoom link or call in phone number. The open meeting was also recorded and being live streamed on youtube. Meetings are posted on Acton TV's website at <http://actontv.org/on-demand/government>. Per the remote policy, all votes were done by roll call with each member stating their vote after the Chairperson called their name.

2. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Tessa stated the need for an Executive Session to be convened under MGL Ch 30A, sec. 21(a) purpose (3): to discuss strategy with respect to litigation because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Committee. She said that the Committee would return to open meeting at approximately 7:00.

Paul Murphy made the motion and Adam Klein seconded it. The Committee unanimously **VOTED by Roll Call**. (YES: Baum, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Minkin, Murphy, Petersen, Shine, Tso)

3. **RETURN to OPEN MEETING** at 7:10 p.m.

Tessa thanked the public for waiting while the Committee was in executive session.

3.1. Chairman's Welcome

3.1.1. Thank you to Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy and Michael Bo for serving on the Committee.

Members shared their deep appreciation and gratitude for the 17 total years of service that Maya, Paul and Michael have given to the District in so many ways. Mr. Light also thanked them saying "You have students at your core". They will be missed.

3.1.2. Annual Town Meetings for Buxborough and Acton will both be June 29th.

3.2. Public Participation – *none*

3.3. High School Student Representatives Update – *none*

3.4. School Closure Update – *Peter Light*

Mr. Light thanked the Committee for their support during the closure. He especially thanked the High School administration and staff and the parents for their efforts to make graduation so special for the

seniors and their families. The elementary principals were also thanked for all of their work as well sending off their students.

The Administration is still waiting for guidance from the state re what school might look like in the fall. It will take 2-3 weeks for the team to put together a plan once the guidance comes out. A transition website will be set up so there is one place for families to find all of the information. The state has been trending to the positive regarding the virus, so Mr. Light is hopeful that the buildings will be open, but no one knows.

A couple of weeks ago, the leadership team sent out a letter expressing support for the protests taking place. Much of the feedback thanked them for the words, but asked what their action will be to combat racism. A lot of the language in our strategy is about building inclusive schools and after much discussion, the leadership team has decided to take the next step and pivot from focusing only on being inclusive to becoming explicitly anti-racist in our approach to how we want to build a culture in our schools and community. The premise of being anti-racist is that you cannot choose to be neutral. Our team has chosen to be much more proactive about this, acknowledging that we are in the middle of a pandemic with many unknowns as planning starts to welcome students back. Work will be done over the summer and more will be shared in the fall. An anonymous reporting system will be created to ensure that we know what is taking place and have the right data. The Family Advisory Group for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion will be reconvened. They will meet over the summer to review our policies and some curriculum to be sure it is anti-racist and anti-biased. Professional learning will also be provided to our staff on the topics. The leadership team also intends to have a district-wide staff discussion of How to Be an Antiracist by Ibrahm X. Kendi. A memo has been sent out to all families explaining these new efforts.

Angie Tso was happy to learn about this new initiative. Noting that while the chaos of the virus is taking place and society is calling for changes, this is a great opportunity for education. She asked what perspective do we want our students to learn from this. Besides our core values of equity, inclusiveness, and wellness, how do we build the foundations of empathy, kindness, patience, and love? What kind of mindset do we want to build our students and react to any event? Do we encourage or allow different perspectives? Many students need stability in times of uncertainty. Angie asked that our students' wellness and safety remain our priorities. Tessa thanked her for centering what will be the work this summer and next year.

Several members thanked the administration for heading in the right direction as a community. Evelyn Abayaah-Issah suggested that we examine our recruitment process and how to attract staff of color. She advocated for finding a counselor of color so that kids of color can see people who understand them. She reported that some kids feel like they are being watched when they gather in groups. The kids all want to feel like they belong. Mr. Light agreed and said that he and Marie Altieri have been working on staff recruitment and plan to report more information in the fall. One new step is that we are now asking candidates to self identify if they wish, and then gather the data so we can have targeted solutions. We can watch who is applying and getting interviewed.

4. PRESENTATION

4.1. **Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) Report** – *Amanda Bailey, Carrie Weaver*

Amanda Bailey presented on the SEPAC's mission and role. All of their 2019-2020 Priorities have been met, with the exception of "Monitor PowerSchool access and Extended School Year programming", which is ongoing. There were many opportunities for engagement and relationship building, as well as outreach and education. Feedback was solicited from families and 12 staff members were recognized for their efforts during the school closure. Important work was done to develop recommendations for the identification of dyslexia and corresponding interventions. This work has been shared around the country. SEPAC has also been very involved in helping their families and meeting with the administration during the pandemic. Families were urged to complete the recent surveys. Special thanks

were given to Bill Guthlein for over a decade of service to families, and to Paul Murphy for being the SEPAC liaison for many years. Tessa thanked Amanda and the SEPAC for all of their important efforts.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1. **Proposed ABRSC Resolution Regarding Covid-19 State Funding – VOTE** – *Tessa McKinley*

Tessa read the resolution as proposed by MASC noting that over 40 districts have accepted this already. John Petersen moved, Amy Krishnamurthy seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by Roll Call: to adopt the motion as read with deletion of the word “enormous”.

(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Klein, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Minkin, Murphy, Petersen, Shine, Tso)

5.2. **Proposed ABRSC Resolution Regarding The Response to Social, Economic and Racial Justice in our Communities – VOTE** – *Tessa McKinley*

Tessa read the resolution, also proposed by MASC. Angie Tso suggested that the following be added, “including those that reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of our towns;”.

Paul Murphy moved, Adam Klein seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by Roll Call: to approve the resolution as amended by Angie.

(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Klein, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Minkin, Murphy, Petersen, Shine, Tso)

5.3. **Acton-Boxborough Education Association (ABEA) Side Letter to Change the November 3, 2020 Professional Day to Friday August 28, 2020 – VOTE** – *Marie Altieri*

Paul Murphy moved, Diane Baum seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by Roll Call: that the ABRSC approve the ABEA side letter to change the Nov 3, 2020 professional day to August 28, 2020.

(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Klein, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Minkin, Murphy, Petersen, Shine, Tso)

6. ONGOING BUSINESS

6.1. **Superintendent’s Annual Summative Review – *Tessa McKinley***

6.1.1. *Motion:* Move to Accept the Annual Summative Review for Superintendent Peter Light dated 6/18/20 as presented/amended – **VOTE**

Tessa reported that members completed their evaluations and she compiled them into the summative review, which she read. The public was invited to comment prior to the deadline, but no one did.

Members’ comments included:

- It was quite a year and the true test of a leader.
- Members are so grateful that Peter was here and led us in the manner that he has.
- Of critical importance was Peter’s willingness to be personally vulnerable. A lot of discussion relates to people not being able to look at themselves. Peter is very straight up about that.
- Peter really cares about how things impact the students.
- He is not afraid of challenges and disagreements.
- He communicates with the community and all of the members very effectively.

Paul Murphy moved, Amy Krishnamurthy seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by Roll Call: that the ABRSC accept the annual summative review for Superintendent Peter Light dated 6/18/2020 as presented.

(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Klein, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Minkin, Murphy, Petersen, Shine, Tso)

Mr. Light thanked Tessa for her hard work this year. He noted that while it is often the superintendent who is talking, it is the team that does the work – the central office staff, principals, assistant principals, coaches, educators, and curriculum specialists. The last three months have been some of the most challenging of our leaders’ lives. The amount of change, and the volume of work

in an evershifting landscape has required so much of our leaders, coupled with everything else going on in the world. He wanted to thank everyone publicly, including the School Committee.

6.1.2. Discussion of Superintendent's FY21 Salary

As next year's budget was being finalized this spring and the potential of the financial issues became clear, Mr. Light requested no increase to his salary. Emphasizing that this would not at all be a reflection of his performance, a zero increase was built into the FY21 budget. As a follow up to the annual evaluation, members must vote the Superintendent's annual salary and record it on the addendum in his contract.

Given Mr. Light's skillful and caring leadership during this very difficult past year, members were torn about giving him no salary increase. Everyone was extremely grateful for Mr. Light's generous offer. Comments included:

- Three union contracts were settled at 1.5% just before the pandemic hit. Mr. Light should be given that amount as a minimum.
- It would be nice to give him the recognition of a salary increase.
- He deserves a raise and FY22 will be even harder financially than FY21. It would be terrible to offer no increase for 2 years in a row.
- As part of the budget process, a number of options were considered. In consultation, with Mr. Light, a decision was made that the Superintendent's salary would not increase. This was done as leadership, not as a measure of performance. It sets a tone that the district and its leadership are taking the financial situation very seriously.
- We should accept Peter's generous and thoughtful offer with gratitude understanding that it is not about his performance, but a reflection of the instability of the times. We should use it as a statement - that it is for the betterment of the district in uncertain times.
- A 1.5% increase would be approximately \$3,000 and while it is not trivial because we now have to duplicate supplies and purchase virus protection and have other expenses, at what point is it trivial. Although very torn, this member was leaning toward keeping the salary as is with a clear message that it was no reflection on performance.
- During the 2009 recession, the Committee and Superintendent agreed on no salary increase, for financial reasons. Over time, when the environment improves, the Committee could revisit the Superintendent's salary and address an equity issue. Several members appreciated this point.

6.1.3. *Motion:* Move to set the Superintendent's salary at \$XXXX for FY21 and record the FY21 salary in Addendum I of Mr. Light's contract – **VOTE**

John Petersen moved to make no change to the Superintendent's salary for FY21 as a reflection of the challenging financial times and the gracious offer of the Superintendent to accept no raise this year. Paul Murphy seconded the motion.

Adam Klein made a friendly amendment to add, "with recognition that it has no reflection on Peter's performance and strong dedication to the district" to the end of the motion. John and Paul both agreed to the amendment. The Committee unanimously,

VOTED by Roll Call and approved the amended motion.

(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Klein, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Minkin, Murphy, Petersen, Shine, Tso)

6.2. **Approval of ABRSC Meeting Minutes** of 6/4/2020

John Petersen moved, Adam Klein seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by Roll Call: to approve the minutes of 6/4/20.

(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Klein, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Minkin, Murphy, Petersen, Shine, Tso)

6.3. **Budget Update – Dave Verdolino**

6.3.1. FY21 Budget Update and Town Meeting Prep

6.3.1.1. FY21 Budget Book: <https://www.abschools.org/district/finance>

Dave reported that the FY20 General Fund is expected to be a \$500,000 net turnback. Utilities invoices have not been received yet. The biggest outstanding issue is settling the payments to private schools for out of district payments. Regarding the revolving funds, School Lunch is expected to show a loss of \$409,000 which is an improvement due to a waiver to pay for free meals that were distributed. Kristin Nelson also took a retail approach to selling of some of her surplus supplies that was very successful. The Community Education account has not changed since last meeting, showing a net loss of \$471,000. ADK shows a loss of \$300,000 due to switching the budget lines for special education tuition. The PreK/ODP/Athletics account has improved slightly since the last report. Regarding grants, we filed a MEMA grant to cover materials due to the shutdown. For FY21, we expect to apply again for a much larger request from MEMA. We are preparing an application for an ESSR grant of \$114,000. Because both Towns are doing their Town Meetings prior to July1, the 1/12th budget process will not be needed.

6.4. **Subcommittee and Member Reports**

6.4.1. School Building Committee Update –Peter Light

6.4.1.1. Minutes of meeting on May 27, 2020

Initial approval was received for the septic. A Groundbreaking event for the public was being discussed but it would be tough with the covid restrictions. Adam Klein suggested that people should start thinking about the process of naming the building.

6.4.2. Budget Subcommittee – Diane Baum (6/16)

Everyone is waiting for guidance from the state, including the costs of PPE and how everyone will stay safe from the virus in the fall. John and Tessa will present the budget at the Town Meetings.

6.4.3. Policy Subcommittee – Amy Krishnamurthy

6.4.3.1. Annual Organizational Meeting Procedures Revision, File: BDA-R

Because MGL dictates that the Superintendent oversees the voting for the new Chairperson and then the new Chair runs the election of the two Vice-Chairs, the procedures agreed on at the previous meeting have been revised. The annual organizational meeting is on July 1. The plan is that it will be in person with a zoom option to include the public. Members should tell Tessa and Beth if they are more comfortable participating via zoom.

6.4.4. Health Insurance Trust (HIT) Update – John Petersen

The Acton HIT met June 18th. Expenses through ten months were \$16 million against income of \$15 million for a loss of \$1 million not including expected reinsurance recoveries of \$0.2 million. May showed a favorable variance of \$201K related to reduction in services for members including elective procedures. This favorability is expected to continue in June with the revised expectation that the Trust will lose between \$0.6 million and \$0.8 million in FY20. The Trustees voted to accept the BCBS reinsurance (stop-loss) proposal with a limit of \$125K. The Trustees discussed a draft investment policy with the intent of adopting a policy in the fall. In the annual election, current officers were re-elected, John Petersen will continue as Chair, Steve Barrett as Secretary.

6.5. **Recommendation to Accept Donation from the Conant PTO of Lobby Furniture – VOTE – P.Light**

Paul Murphy moved with gratitude, Adam Klein seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by Roll Call with gratitude: to accept the donation from the Conant PTO of lobby furniture.

(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Klein, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Minkin, Murphy, Petersen, Shine, Tso)

7. **Statement of Warrants and Recommendation to Approve – VOTE – Tessa McKinley**

Tessa McKinley moved, Adam Klein seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by Roll Call: to approve

Payroll warrant(s) as follows –

Number P2025 dated 6/02/20 in the amount of \$2,616,114.86;

Payroll deduction warrant(s) as follows –

Number 20-025PR dated 6/04/20 in the amount of \$521,533.62;

Vendor warrant(s) as follows –

Number 20-025 dated 6/11/20 in the amount of \$429,760.20;

Student Activity Fund warrant(s) as follows –

Number 20-025SH dated 6/11/20 in the amount of \$20,579.23

(YES: Abayaah-Issah, Baum, Klein, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Minkin, Murphy, Petersen, Shine, Tso)

8. **FYI**

Mr. Light noted that several of the FYI items are important because there was not enough time in the past few months due to the closure to do all of the usual presentations. This includes the School Improvement Plan updates. He explained that there will be a new approach to the Plans this year because there is the tremendous amount of work to bringing students back. One School Improvement Plan will be done for all schools with perhaps one goal for each school. There will be one type of goals for Social/Emotional, Academic Recovery, Physical Recovery, Becoming an Anti-racist School. Because there will be so much of the same work being done, it makes sense to combine them into one Plan for consistency. When asked if the school councils will still be engaged in the process, Mr. Light replied that the principals might include them, but the focus this year is on handling the covid issues.

The Superintendent was asked if the effort to recruit more educators of color meant that there will be a quota for certain ethnic groups. Mr. Light stated that there would not be a quota, but we need our educator workforce to look like our students, to the extent that it's possible. We need to prioritize a more diverse workforce, with a long term goal of increasing it by 20%.

9. **Adjourn**

Amy Krishnamurthy moved, Paul Murphy seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by Roll Call to adjourn at 9:07 p.m.

(YES: Baum, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Minkin, Murphy, Petersen, Shine, Tso)

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda

Members of the ABRSD Community,

Today, Governor Baker's Office and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released their initial guidance about reopening schools this fall. We appreciate the thought and care that went into the development of this guidance. Our district shares the overarching goal for as many students as possible to return safely to in-person school settings in order to best meet their social, emotional, and academic needs.

The state's initial guidelines do not address every topic and note that there will be additional guidance coming throughout the summer on a variety of topics. The full document, titled *Initial Return to School Guidance*, can be found [HERE](#), but below are some key components from the initial guidance document:

- 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; they are recommended for students in Grade 1 and below
- Based upon current medical research, and in conjunction with other preventive measures, a minimum physical distance of three feet has been established

The District 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 on available medical and scientific information as of late June, we are currently planning for students to return to full in-person instruction in September. However, this is subject to change based on how the medical situation develops. We also recognize that there may be some families for whom this is not possible, and are in the process of making plans to support those students as well.

Over the next two weeks, we will review this guidance with our leadership and planning teams. We hope to provide you details of our own initial framework for a safe transition to school by July 10.

Next week, we will send a survey to families asking that you provide us with information about your *initial feelings* about your own children's return to school this fall. It is very important that all families complete this survey once for each child, so that our district can appropriately plan for staffing, transportation, school, and classroom needs. Completing this survey will not commit your child to a specific option, but will be used to help us plan for the various scenarios we may encounter.

We acknowledge that there are likely to be more questions than answers at this time, and we will continue to communicate with you in the coming weeks and months. We also encourage you to read the full DESE *Initial Return to School Guidance* document [HERE](#). We look forward to communicating with you more as we have an opportunity to review the guidance further.

Thank you for your patience and understanding,

The AB Leadership Team

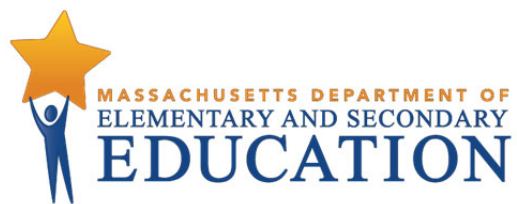
Peter Light



Initial Fall School Reopening Guidance

Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner

June 25, 2020



Opening Letter from Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley

June 25, 2020

Dear Fellow Educators, School Administrators, Parents, and Community Members,

After a spring unlike any before, I write to you about our plans for the fall with the wellbeing of our students, teachers, staff, and communities firmly in mind. It is sobering to think of the sickness and fatalities caused by COVID-19 in our state, in our nation, and around the world. It is also distressing to witness the murder of George Floyd and others and know that this is a reflection not of a single incident, but a long history of inequity. Through the lens of these two issues, we look at how to best open our schools this fall.

After weeks of discussion with many stakeholders, including our members of our Return-to-School Working Group, infectious disease physicians, pediatricians, and other public health experts; a thorough review of the medical literature; and evaluating what works best for our students, we want to start the school year with as many of our students as possible returning to in-person settings—safely. If the current positive public health metrics hold, we believe that when we follow critical health requirements, we can safely return to in-person school this fall with plans in place to protect all members of our educational community.

Part of our responsibility as educators, administrators, and parents is to do all that we can to help our children in this difficult time. As we all know, there is no substitute for the attention and engagement that is only possible with in-person learning. We can mitigate the risks associated with COVID-19 for in-person school programs and prevent the significant consequences of keeping students out of school and isolated. It will take all of us working together to make this successful.

In the memo that follows, DESE is providing initial guidance for school reopening this fall that prioritizes getting our students back to school in person—safely, following a comprehensive set of health and safety requirements. At the same time, DESE is requiring each district and school to also plan for remote learning and a hybrid school model, a combination of in-person and remote learning, should local conditions change this fall or winter.

The fall reopening guidance comes from a place of deep care and concern, with a focus on translating the public health data and evidence into practical application for school settings. We also acknowledge that it will likely elicit many new questions. We intend to address the most common questions in a running series of FAQs, along with additional specific topical guidance throughout the summer.

I look forward to hearing from you and working together to plan for our children's individual and collective success in the school year ahead.

Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

MEMORANDUM

To: Superintendents, Charter School Leaders, Assistant Superintendents, Leaders of Special Education Schools, and Collaborative Leaders
Fr: Jeffrey C. Riley, Commissioner
Date: June 25, 2020
Re: **DESE Initial Fall School Reopening Memo**

With this memo, we are providing districts and schools with initial guidance on reopening for the fall. In this guidance, we:

- **Clearly state our goal for this fall: the safe return of as many students as possible to in-person school settings, to maximize learning and address our students' holistic needs.** If the current positive public health metrics hold, we believe that by following critical health requirements, we can safely return to in-person school.
- **Provide a clear set of health and safety requirements for in-person learning this fall, grounded in the most up-to-date scientific literature and discussions with expert medical advisors.** While subject to revision as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves and more scientific evidence becomes available, these requirements will serve as an initial planning blueprint for the in-person return of students and staff this fall.
- **Require districts and schools to prepare a reopening plan that addresses three possible learning models for this fall:** in-person learning with new safety requirements, a hybrid of in-person and remote learning, and the continuation of remote learning (to ensure continuity of learning throughout the school year, even if circumstances change). Schools will also need a focused plan for special student populations. Districts and schools will be required to submit a comprehensive reopening plan to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) in August that addresses these three models. More information will follow shortly.
- **Outline the future guidance and other supports that DESE will provide in the coming weeks.**

This initial fall memo is one of several updates you will receive from us about fall reopening, with more information to come in July. Districts and schools have already received [initial supplies guidance](#) and also two documents for summer school planning – [initial summer school guidance](#) and [guidance on summer 2020 special education services](#). Earlier this spring, we also provided [initial](#) and then [more comprehensive guidance](#) on remote learning.

Developing this initial fall memo required us to draw on the perspectives of both the educational *and* medical communities. To that end, this guidance reflects weeks of intensive conversations with education stakeholders, including our Return-to-School Working Group, and collaboration with infectious disease physicians, pediatricians and public health experts from the Massachusetts General Brigham Health System and the Massachusetts chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics. Our process has included a close review of guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO), as well as available medical literature on COVID-19 related to children and school settings. Finally, we consulted with the MA COVID-19 Command Center's [Medical Advisory Board](#), comprised of physicians and other

health experts, which carefully reviewed the health and safety requirements for in-person learning outlined in this document.

Background and context

On March 17, 2020, all elementary and secondary public and private schools in the Commonwealth were ordered to cease in-person instruction, as part of the statewide plan to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and rapidly reduce the transmission of the novel coronavirus. This closure was later extended to last through the end of the 2019-20 school year.

We are currently in Phase 2 of [Reopening Massachusetts](#), and more businesses are able to resume operations with restrictions and capacity limitations. We are optimistic that with our collective continued vigilance (wearing masks, hand washing/sanitizing, staying home when sick), Massachusetts will continue to progress through subsequent reopening phases.

The virus has had different impacts on communities across the state; several cities and towns were impacted significantly, while others have had few infections and no reported fatalities. Over the past several weeks, Massachusetts has seen rates of infections, hospitalizations and fatalities fall steadily, even as the virus remains a significant concern in several communities. As we all know, the COVID-19 context in Massachusetts is not static, and we will continue to monitor the situation closely.

At the same time, other countries have taken steps to reopen schools, which has provided the medical community with an opportunity to study the impacts of the virus in school settings and on children, providing valuable data and strategies that have been effective in reducing the risk of infection and transmission.

In our discussions with infectious disease physicians and other health experts, we have used both local and international data, trends, and case studies to inform our initial guidance for the fall.

Our goal for this fall

Our goal for the fall is to safely bring back as many students as possible to in-person school settings, to maximize learning and address our students' holistic needs. With the information provided in this memo, districts and schools should begin planning for a fall return that includes multiple possibilities, with a focus first and foremost on getting our students back into school buildings.

There is a clear consensus from both education and medical groups: we must keep in mind not only the risks associated with COVID-19 for in-person school programs, but also the known challenges and consequences of keeping students out of school. While remote learning has improved over the course of the school closures, there is no substitute for in-person instruction when it comes to the quality of students' academic learning. In-person school plays an equally important role in our ability to support students' social-emotional needs, including their mental and physical health, and in mitigating the impacts of trauma. We also recognize how disruptive

school closures have been to families trying to maintain regular work schedules and manage household needs, including childcare, while also facilitating remote learning.

Moreover, in light of recent events and a national movement to fight for racial justice, it is even more critical that our students are able to quickly return to robust learning opportunities and a supportive school environment, through which we can engage in meaningful discussions on anti-racism, provide mental health supports, and help to prepare our young people to bring about the changes our world desperately needs.

In discussions with infectious disease physicians, other medical advisers, and the COVID-19 Command Center’s Medical Advisory Board, we were heartened to learn that – based on current data and research – the medical community supports the return of our students to in-person learning, with appropriate health and safety guardrails in place. **With adherence to a comprehensive set of critical health and safety requirements, we can bring our students, staff, and families safely back to school.**

Most of us are now quite familiar with the critical health and safety practices that reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. These include rigorous hygiene and handwashing, use of masks/face coverings, physical distancing, reducing interaction between groups, staying home when sick, protecting those most vulnerable to the disease, and expanding testing and tracing capabilities, among others.

However, what can often get lost in long lists of practices is that it is not one mitigation strategy, but a combination of all these strategies taken together that will substantially reduce the risk of transmission. **In other words, establishing a culture of health and safety in our schools that focuses on regularly enforcing these important practices is more important than any one measure.**

Contextual factors

We recognize that several critical factors affect our ability to bring students back to in-person school settings this fall.

Financial resources. For planning purposes, districts and schools should assume a “level service plus” budget in order to bring students back in person; in other words, additional funds on top of their projected budgets to manage additional costs associated with health and safety preparations. We also recognize that “level service plus” must include additional resources targeted to our historically under-resourced communities. While schools and districts, through the city or town in which they are located, have already received federal CARES Act funds to support COVID-19 related purchases such as health and safety supplies/PPE, technology, and facilities upgrades, **the Commonwealth is making additional funding sources available directly to schools and districts to support reopening.**

To date, the following federal grants have been available to cities and towns for educational expenses related to COVID-19:

- \$193.8 million from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund to districts, largely based on the Title I formula.
- A portion of the \$502 million from the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CvRF) already allocated to cities and towns, of which a meaningful amount of submitted costs are related to education.
- Up to \$15 million in competitive federal funds for which the Executive Office of Education (EOE) and DESE have applied.

In addition to the above funds, the Commonwealth is making available:

- **An additional \$202 million from the CvRF for a new grant round to support school reopening.** Of the \$202 million, \$182 million will be formula grants (\$225 per pupil) and \$20 million will be available at the Commissioner's discretion for distribution to districts with unmet needs. In accordance with federal rules, these funds must be spent by December 30, 2020 for COVID-19 related expenses. Funding for the City of Boston and Plymouth County are separate and in addition to these funds.
- **\$25 million available for remote learning technology grants** through which the Commonwealth will provide a 100% state match to districts for their remote learning needs.

While school and district budgets remain uncertain, these additional resources will support schools and districts to provide a healthy and safe environment for in-person learning in the fall.

Cold/flu season. Flu season is another critical factor that could pose significant challenges for schools and students. Not only do flu symptoms closely mirror COVID-19 symptoms, but managing both a bad flu season and ongoing presence of COVID-19 could be highly disruptive for our educational institutions and healthcare system. It is essential that the educational and public health communities, as well as cities and towns, work closely together to ensure as many children and adults as possible receive flu vaccines this fall. Given the high priority of flu vaccinations, particularly this year, the administration will work with these key stakeholders and others on a strategy to enhance flu vaccination coverage in Massachusetts, particularly among school aged children. More guidance will be coming from the Department of Public Health.

Trajectory of COVID-19. All guidance in this document is based on the best information we have as of mid-June. We will carefully monitor the data in the coming weeks and months. Districts and schools must be prepared to be flexible and ready to pivot if circumstances change significantly. For this reason, districts and schools must plan not only for in-person learning, but also hybrid learning models (in which students learn in-person for some of the time and remotely for some of the time), and also full remote learning. Remote learning may be a necessary option in the fall for some students who are unable to return to school due to underlying medical conditions and potentially for all students if COVID-19 forces widespread school closures in the future.

Supporting educators and staff

Our educators and staff are essential to our success as a Commonwealth in preparing for a safe and successful fall reopening. We recognize that educators have been concerned about the challenges of remote learning and student learning loss during school closures this spring, and many educators have been balancing their teaching duties with their own family and personal needs. Some have felt the devastating impact of the virus personally.

We also know educators are eager to teach their students in person again, and that staff members are concerned about the health and safety of their students as well as their own health and safety. We are committed to supporting you with guidance and training as we prepare for fall reopening.

Based on the combination of health and safety requirements and rigorous protocols that we are putting in place for the fall, we believe the risk of transmission in schools is likely lower than the risk of transmission in many other settings. Furthermore, based on available data and effective implementation of critical health and safety practices, the rate of in-school transmissions has been low.^{1 2 3 4}

We recognize that planning for reopening in this “new normal” will not be easy; we also know that planning is not nearly as important – nor as difficult – as execution. To have a successful school year, we will all have to be problem-solvers, flexible and responsive to data, and willing to course-correct as necessary. It is also important to acknowledge that there will be COVID-19 positive cases in schools, and we will have protocols to help you determine the appropriate next steps when this happens to keep the school community safe.

Educators and other staff who are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 will want to consult with their health care providers about whether and under what circumstances a return to in-person school settings would be medically inadvisable. We will provide guidance to support districts in working with their educators and staff on critical reopening issues, including those who are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

Recognizing the special role of families

Families, in consultation with their medical providers, will ultimately make the decision as to whether their children will attend in-person instruction, or whether their children will continue with remote learning. Districts should engage regularly and substantively with families in their primary language to ensure that they have accurate and up-to-date information to make informed decisions about whether an in-person return is best for their children. This also means that all districts will need to have a remote learning program in place for students who are unable to return to in-person school.

Families also play a critical role in supporting the new culture of health and safety that each school must establish. Most importantly, families can help mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 in their school communities by checking their children daily for any COVID-19 symptoms and keeping them home from school if they are sick or have had close contact with a person

diagnosed with COVID-19. Families can also contribute by supporting the use of masks in school and on the bus, arranging alternate transportation whenever possible, communicating with teachers, school leaders and local authorities, and continuing to follow state guidance on health and safety outside of school. DESE will provide further guidance and resources for families.

Emerging implications from the medical literature

This section summarizes some of the emerging themes and implications from the medical literature on childhood susceptibility to and transmission of COVID-19 as of mid-June 2020. Because COVID-19 is a novel disease, this literature is growing rapidly, and new information is emerging almost every day. Our guidance will continue to evolve as the science develops.

At this time, the evidence suggests schools have not played a significant role in COVID-19 transmission and that children, particularly younger children, are less likely than adults to be infected with COVID-19. Furthermore, if they become infected, it appears children may be less likely to transmit COVID-19 to others. Based on these initial findings, the health and safety requirements throughout this guidance, as well as considering the key features of school programming at different grade spans, the current evidence supports a safe in-person return to school with implementation details varying for elementary schools (including pre-kindergarten programs), middle schools, and high schools.

- **Schools do not appear to have played a major role in COVID-19 transmission.** In a review of COVID clusters, only 4% (8 of 210) involved school transmission.⁵ In a case study from New South Wales Australia, after 18 cases were found in schools (12 in high schools and 6 in primary schools), only 0.3% of student contacts were infected (1 in 695 individuals in 10 high schools and 1 in 168 individuals in primary schools). No teachers or staff were infected.⁶ Additional studies are included in Appendix A.
- **In general, rates of COVID-19 infection are lower for children than for adults.** Based on an analysis of data from six countries, children under 20 are half as susceptible to COVID-19 infection than adults.⁷ Furthermore, although children under the age of 18 make up 22% of the U.S. population, they account for less than 2% of all cases of COVID-19.⁸ In Massachusetts, children under the age of 19 were about four times less likely than the population at large to be diagnosed with COVID-19.⁹ Children are more likely to be asymptomatic, however, which underscores the importance of health behaviors for everyone (masks/face coverings, distancing, handwashing, surface cleaning).¹⁰ Additional studies are included in Appendix A.
- **If exposed, children may be less likely to become infected with COVID-19.** A meta-analysis of studies from several countries found that children were only 44% as likely as adults to become infected after exposure (note: pre-print study).¹¹ In China, in households with COVID-19 exposure, children under the age of 18 were infected at a rate of 4% compared with 17% for adults.¹² Additional studies are included in Appendix A.
- **If infected, it appears children may be less likely to infect others with COVID-19.** Most transmissions are from adults to children, rather than vice versa; this is different from some other respiratory viruses (note: pre-print study).¹³ In a U.S. study of 15 households, 73% of transmissions were from adult to child (the remaining were child-to-child or child-to adult).¹⁴ Additional studies are included in Appendix A.

Health and safety requirements and related guidance for in-person learning

The health and safety of students and staff are our top priority when making the decision to reopen schools for in-person learning in the fall. The following health and safety requirements have been developed in collaboration with infectious disease physicians, pediatricians and public health experts from the Massachusetts General Brigham Health System and the Massachusetts chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics. Our process has included a thorough review of guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO), as well as available medical literature on COVID-19 related to children and school settings. Finally, the MA COVID-19 Command Center [Medical Advisory Board](#), made up of physicians and other health experts, has carefully reviewed the health and safety requirements for in-person learning outlined in this section.

At this time, these are the health and safety practices that will enable the safe reopening of schools for in-person learning this fall. These requirements will be modified as needed during the summer and into the fall. In addition to required practices, we have also included guidance on best practices where applicable.

As general background, COVID-19 spreads when people are in relatively close proximity, through respiratory droplets generated through coughing, sneezing, or talking to an infected person. Among the most effective preventive measures – when used consistently and in combination – are masks/face coverings, physical distancing, handwashing, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces.¹⁵

Masks/face coverings: As the primary route of transmission for COVID-19 is respiratory,^{16 17 18} masks or face coverings are among the most critical components of risk reduction.^{19 20 21} Masks/face coverings protect the general public against COVID-19 infection,²² with a recent retrospective study estimating near 80% effectiveness in reducing COVID-19 transmission, especially when worn prior to symptom onset.²³ In the United States, states advising face masks/face coverings be worn in public saw a decline in their COVID-19 growth rates,²⁴ and community-wide mask/face covering usage contributed to control of COVID-19 in Hong Kong.²⁵ **At this time, our initial requirements and related guidance are as follows:**

- **Students in grade 2 and above are required to wear a mask/face covering that covers their nose and mouth.** Students in kindergarten and grade 1 should be encouraged to wear a mask/face covering.²⁶ Face shields may be an option for those students with medical, behavioral, or other challenges who are unable to wear masks/face coverings. Transparent masks may be the best option for both teachers and students in classes for deaf and hard of hearing students. They may also be useful for teachers and younger students who rely on visual / facial cues.
- **Adults, including educators and staff, are required to wear masks/face coverings.**
- **Exceptions to mask/face covering requirements** must be made for those for whom it is not possible due to medical conditions, disability impact, or other health or safety factors.
- **Mask breaks should occur** throughout the day.²⁷ Breaks should occur when students can be six feet apart and ideally outside or at least with the windows open. Further guidance on mask breaks including duration and frequency will be forthcoming, as well as more information about properly removing and putting on masks.

- **Masks/face coverings should be provided by the student/family**, but extra disposable face masks should be made available by the school for students who need them. Reusable masks/face coverings provided by families should be washed by families daily. Districts and schools with families experiencing financial hardship and unable to afford masks/face coverings should endeavor to provide masks for students through grant funds described earlier in this document.
- **Masks/face coverings are required to be worn by everyone on the bus during school bus transportation.**
- **Transparent face coverings provide the opportunity for more visual cues** and should be especially considered as an alternative for younger students, students who are deaf and hard of hearing, and their teachers.

Physical distancing: Physical distancing is another important practice that helps mitigate transmission of the virus. While the U.S. federal CDC has recommended maintaining a physical distance of six feet between individuals,²⁸ the World Health Organization’s guidance states approximately three feet.²⁹ There is no precise threshold for safety; indeed, studies suggest that physical distancing of three feet or more leads to reduced transmission, with additional distance providing additional protection.^{30 31} For instance, in a study of household transmission in China, keeping at least three feet of distance was associated with one-fourth the number of transmissions.³² It is important to note that six feet distancing is emphasized in public health advisories especially when no mask/face covering is worn.

We encourage districts and schools to aim for six feet of distance between individuals where feasible. **At the same time, a minimum physical distance of three feet has been established when combined with the other measures outlined in this list of safety requirements.** Because of the reduced susceptibility in children and lower apparent rates of transmission, establishing a minimum physical distance of three feet is informed by evidence and balances the lower risk of COVID-19 transmission and the overarching benefits of in-person school.

In preparing this document, we have reviewed the physical distance guidance for many other states and countries. In addition to the WHO, several other countries including Denmark, France, China, and Hong Kong recommend one meter (approximately three feet) distance in schools.^{33 34} The United Kingdom is also changing its guidance to one meter of distance beginning July 4, replacing previous guidance of two meters.³⁷

Finally, this guidance is for fall reopening and is predicated on the Commonwealth continuing to progress through the phases of reopening with low COVID-19 public health metrics.³⁸ It will be critical to continue to take into account the community context of COVID-19 prevalence into the fall and winter. Where the community prevalence of COVID-19 is of concern, increased distancing will need to be considered.

Our initial requirements and related guidance are as follows:

- **Distancing requirements:** As reviewed and advised by the Massachusetts COVID-19 Command Center Medical Advisory Group, schools should aim for a physical distance of six feet when feasible, and three feet is the minimum distance allowed.³⁹ Schools should

seek to maximize physical distance among individuals within their physical and operational constraints.

- **Classroom and facility configuration:** To the extent possible, aim for desks to be spaced six feet apart (but no fewer than three feet apart) and facing the same direction.⁴⁰ Again, schools should seek to maximize physical distance between desks within their physical and operational constraints.
- Alternative spaces in the school (e.g., cafeteria, library, and auditorium) should be repurposed to increase the amount of available space to accommodate the maximum distance possible.
 - In these larger spaces, establishing consistent cohorts/classes with separation between the cohorts/classes provides another option to maximize these spaces safely.
- **Additional safety precautions are required for school nurses and/or any staff supporting students with disabilities in close proximity, when distance is not possible:** These precautions must include eye protection (e.g., face shield or goggles) and a mask/face covering. Precautions may also include gloves and disposable gowns or washable outer layer of clothing depending on duration of contact and especially if the individual may come into close contact with bodily fluids.

Student groups: To minimize the number of students who would potentially be exposed in the event of a COVID-19 event, to the extent feasible, elementary schools should aim to keep students in the same group throughout the day and middle and high schools are encouraged to minimize mixing student groups to the extent feasible. **Our initial requirements and related guidance are as follows:**

- **Cohorts:** Schools should divide students into small groups that remain with each other throughout the day, with smaller cohort sizes preferred. Schools should look for ways to isolate cohorts of students and prevent inter-group contact to the extent feasible.
- **Capacity:** There are no required maximums on cohort or group sizes, so long as schools adhere to the physical distancing requirements above. (This guidance for the fall will replace previous summer guidance at the start of the school year, assuming positive health metrics hold.)

Screening upon entry: Checking for symptoms each morning by families and caregivers is critical and will serve as the primary screening mechanism for COVID-19 symptoms.⁴¹ Schools should provide information to families in their primary language to support them in conducting this symptom check and families should not send their children to school if they exhibit COVID-19 symptoms. We will be providing a checklist of symptoms and other guides to districts and schools to help families and students.

- **Screening procedures are not required at the point of entry to the school.** However, school staff (as well as bus drivers) should observe students throughout the day and refer students who may be symptomatic to the school healthcare point of contact.
- **As noted in previous guidance, temperature checks are not recommended** as screening for all students due to the high likelihood of potential false positive and false negative results.⁴²

Hand hygiene: Handwashing and hand sanitizing: Handwashing removes pathogens from the surface of the hands. While handwashing with soap and water is the best option, alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60 percent ethanol or at least 70 percent isopropanol) may be utilized when handwashing is not available.^{43 44} As has always been the case, handwashing should be used whenever hands are visibly soiled and after using the bathroom.⁴⁵ **Our initial requirements and related guidance are as follows:**

- Students and staff are required to exercise hand hygiene (handwashing or sanitizing) upon arrival to school, before eating, before putting on and taking off masks, and before dismissal.
- **Handwashing:** When handwashing, individuals should use soap and water to wash all surfaces of their hands for at least 20 seconds, wait for visible lather, rinse thoroughly, and dry with an individual disposable towel.⁴⁶
- **Hand sanitizing:** If handwashing is not feasible, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent ethanol or at least 70 percent isopropanol content can be used.⁴⁷ Hand sanitizer should be applied to all surfaces of the hands and in sufficient quantity that it takes 20 seconds of rubbing hands together for the sanitizer to dry. Hand sanitizer should be placed at key locations (e.g., building entrances, cafeteria, classrooms).

COVID-19 related isolation space: In order to minimize transmission of COVID-19, schools must ensure they have an isolated space available for students displaying COVID-19 symptoms.

Our initial requirements and related guidance are as follows:

- **Schools are required to designate a COVID-19 related isolation space that is separate from the nurse's office or other space where routine medical care is provided.** A student who shows COVID-19 symptoms during the school day should be moved to the specific room pre-designated for medical-related isolation until they can be picked up by a family member.⁴⁸ More information about steps to safely discharge students will be provided in future guidance.

COVID-19 testing in schools: At this time, in-school testing is not recommended. Students' families should discuss testing with their health care provider. As the accuracy of point-of-care testing develops, this guidance may change.

Vaccines: Districts and schools should work with parents to ensure that students are current on all standard vaccinations before they return to in-person school. In addition, health providers strongly recommend all students and staff get their regular flu vaccine.⁴⁹ Whereas for COVID-19 it appears children are less likely to be infected with and to transmit COVID-19, this is not the case for influenza, where children are frequent transmitters.^{50 51 52 53} Therefore, ensuring all students, teachers, and staff receive the seasonal flu vaccine is an extremely high priority. The Department of Public Health will be issuing updated guidance regarding vaccines for schools and parents.

Health and safety/PPE supplies: Per the initial supply guidance issued by DESE, schools should have an inventory of standard healthcare supplies (e.g., masks and gloves). Use of additional supplies may be optional based on type of tasks performed (e.g., teachers do not need to wear gloves while teaching but may need to during necessary contact with students, such as

when providing physical support to students with disabilities). All districts are eligible for federal CARES Act funds to support these purchases.

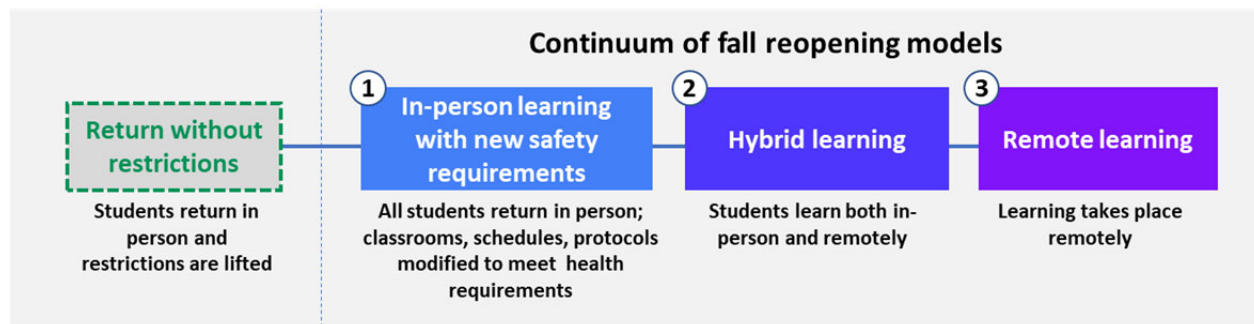
Additional health and safety protocols: Other protocols, such as facilities cleaning, are described later in this document.

District and school fall reopening plans

In this section, we describe the plans we are requiring all districts and schools to create to effectively prepare for fall reopening. This section also offers recommendations on reopening models to support districts and schools in preparing these plans.

Components of district/school fall reopening plans

Each district and school will need to plan for three possibilities on the continuum of reopening: 1) in-person learning with new safety requirements; 2) a hybrid of in-person and remote learning; and 3) remote learning. In addition, all districts/schools will also need a focused plan for serving special student populations across each of these models.



1. In-person learning with new safety requirements: For the fall, the box in light blue represents our goal to get as many students as possible back into schools for in-person learning—safely. In this model, all students return in person to school settings that are appropriately modified to accommodate the health and safety requirements outlined above. Examples of modifications could include altered classroom configurations, setting up additional learning spaces, and schedule changes.

2. Hybrid learning: In addition, all districts/schools must create a plan for a hybrid model in the event they are unable to bring all students back to school under the health and safety requirements despite their best efforts, or in case of COVID-19 related circumstances. A hybrid model means that students would alternate between in-person and remote learning. For instance, students could switch between in-person and remote learning on alternating weeks or days of the week.

3. Remote learning: All districts and schools are required to have a plan for operating a remote learning program. This model must be available for individual students who cannot yet return in-person, and for all students in the event of future classroom or school closures due to

COVID-19. Additional guidance on statewide support and resources for remote learning will be provided in the coming weeks.

Plan for special populations: Finally, across each of these models, all districts and schools need a plan for how special populations, including students with disabilities and English learners, will receive necessary services and accommodations.

Plan development and submission

Districts and schools will be required to submit their comprehensive fall reopening plans (all three models) to DESE in August. In addition, districts and schools will need to post their plans on their websites and complete an attestation to affirm that their fall reopening plans meet the health and safety guidelines established in this and updated guidance documents. We will issue further guidance, including whether any portions of the plans will require approval by DESE (for instance, plans for students with disabilities or others).

In creating their plans, districts and schools should first prioritize developing an in-person learning model with new safety requirements. DESE staff will establish multiple communications channels with superintendents and other school stakeholders to monitor how planning for an in-person return to school is progressing. We recognize the importance of equity in this process and will be available to support districts and schools in troubleshooting challenges that may arise.

Recommendations from DESE on reopening models

The model recommendations below assume key contextual factors that are not within our collective control. This includes an assumption of “level service plus” district and school budgets based on current projections, which include additional costs that may come with modifying class sizes, staffing, transportation, facilities, etc. We also recognize that “level service plus” must include additional resources targeted to historically under-resourced communities. The trajectory of the virus and availability of testing and treatments are other critical contextual factors. We will continue to monitor these and other factors and issue updated guidance as needed.

In-person learning with new safety requirements:

Learning time: Districts and schools should plan for an in-person return to school five days per week if feasible.

Utilizing alternative school spaces: Districts and schools should consider using their libraries, cafeterias, auditoriums, and other appropriate available spaces to set up additional classrooms to accommodate more students, reduce class size, and/or enable additional distancing while adhering to the health and safety guidelines. Teachers may also hold classes outdoors when feasible.

Utilizing external facility spaces: Schools should consider engaging community partners to find spaces outside the school⁵⁴ (e.g., libraries, community centers) to set up additional classrooms⁵⁵

to accommodate more students, reduce class size, and/or enable additional distancing while adhering to the health and safety guidelines.

Staffing alternatives to consider for reducing class sizes: Specialist teachers and other educators such as instructional coaches, reading specialists, and others who have appropriate certifications may be enlisted to serve as additional core teachers to reduce class sizes in schools.

Reducing the mixing of student groups: When in classrooms, all students should have assigned seating. At the elementary school level, students should be restricted to their grade level class to the greatest extent possible. At the middle school level, students should remain with their cohort throughout the day to the extent feasible.

High schools could also consider ways to cohort or cluster students, though we recognize this is more challenging at the high school level:

- **Placing students in cohorts.** When grouping students into cohorts, a school should consider ways to keep families/siblings together (e.g., grouping students alphabetically, while recognizing that some siblings may have different last names).
- **Limiting travel within a school.** High schools may try to group students into clusters in the school (a “school within a school”) to try to reduce interactions with other groups when students move to their next class.

Hybrid learning models:

When planning for a hybrid learning model, we recommend that districts and schools use an A/B cohort model that isolates two distinct cohorts of students who attend school in-person on either different weeks, different days of the week, or half days each day. For instance, Cohort A would attend school in-person from Monday – Friday of Week 1, while Cohort B learns at home remotely. In Week 2, Cohort B would attend in-person school and Cohort A would engage in remote learning at home.

Additional recommendations for hybrid models include:

High-needs students should be prioritized for full-time in-person learning when feasible.

That is, even if most students are not in school each day, schools should consider setting up small programs that would run daily for one or more cohorts of high-needs students, including students with disabilities and English learners who are most in need of in-person services.

Students who do not have internet and/or computer access at home should come into the school and/or to a local partner or community organization, with appropriate supervision, to complete their remote learning school days.

Initial fall reopening planning steps

This section provides a checklist of key actions districts and schools should take in the coming weeks to plan for all three fall reopening models. This list focuses on establishing processes and

communication structures; future guidance will have more details about concrete operational planning.⁵⁶ Please see Appendix B and C of this document for initial operational guidance for the fall in a few areas (facilities, operations, and special education).

Point person and teams:

- ✓ **Name a COVID-19 response leader.** If you have not done so already, name a COVID-19 Response Leader for each school and for the district. The COVID-19 response leaders should coordinate with key district and school personnel on planning efforts over the summer and be a key part of the implementation as schools open.
- ✓ **Establish planning and implementation teams at the district and school levels** to work intensively over the summer on all issues related to school reopening in the fall. Planning and implementation teams should include COVID-19 response leaders, district leaders, school administrators, general and special education teaching staff, school nurses, custodial staff, as well as parents and other local officials and organizations as appropriate. These teams should cover the following essential domains:
 - **Teaching and learning**, including plans for in-person learning, hybrid learning, and remote learning, including technology needs and training.
 - **Student supports**, including addressing mental health and trauma.
 - **Special education, English learners**, and other special student populations.
 - **Personnel and staffing**, including managing staff assignments, supporting staff with high risk medical conditions, addressing the need for possible additional staff to assist with instruction, possible additional needs for tutors, and ways to provide additional support including recruitment of volunteers as needed.
 - **Facilities and operations**, including cleaning and sanitation, classroom and building set-up and flow, and food services.
 - **Transportation**, including bus transportation capacity and safety protocols, management of increased traffic flow from families who decide to drop off/pick up their children, promotion of alternatives such as walking and biking.
 - **Additional topics** should be addressed as appropriate to the school and the district.

Communication plans and structures:

- ✓ **Develop and begin implementing this summer a plan for communicating more intensively with students, families, staff, and the community.** This plan should include both two-way proactive communication (e.g., providing information and receiving feedback) and emergency communication. Consider creating and practicing communication systems with parents, students, all staff, facility and/or grounds management, and emergency medical services. Ensure translation of any information published by the school into the primary language spoken by the parent/guardian and make interpretation services available for two-way communication.
- ✓ **Establish connections and a process to work with local boards of health** so that all parties are up to date on various statewide and local guidance and plans (e.g., health and safety updates, COVID-19 testing availability, availability of flu vaccines, etc.).

Family survey:

- ✓ **Develop a family survey to support school reopening planning and scheduling.** Districts should consider surveying families multiple times throughout the summer and potentially into the school year. Districts and schools can use the survey to help determine:
 - Children who will return to school in the fall in-person
 - Children who will continue remote learning and for what reasons
 - Children who need internet/technology access, and/or other technical support or one-on-one guidance
 - Children who will need bus transportation
 - Families who are planning to use alternate transportation (e.g., drop off and pick up their children, have their children walk or bike)
 - Families who will need food assistance and other essential services

Planning for training:

- ✓ **Build in time in the fall calendar for training sessions** for staff, students, and families. Training should include health and safety topics (such as the use of safety supplies/PPE, visual screening for symptoms, and health and hygiene practices) and educational topics (such as strengthening remote learning). More guidance will be forthcoming.
- ✓ **Special education:** Ensure additional training time for educators who will provide direct physical support to students with disabilities on the use of the additional protective supplies they will need, including disposable gowns, face shields, etc.

Timing and topics for additional guidance

As districts and schools begin planning in earnest for fall reopening, DESE is committed to supporting you. In the coming weeks, we will issue more guidance on a variety of topics for the fall. We will also continue to update our guidance based on evolving medical information and contextual factors.

Below is list of additional topics on which DESE intends to issue guidance:

- **Fall reopening checklist**, including operations, teaching and learning, student supports, training, and communications needs.
- **Process for handling a COVID-19 positive case in the school community**, including when a school or classroom would need to shut down.
- **Remote learning resources.** We are actively exploring how best to support districts and schools with improving remote learning.
- **Facilities and operations**, including entry and exit procedures, cleaning and ventilation, procurement, food distribution, and signage.
- **Transportation**, including bus scheduling options, addressing bus capacity, and alternative modes of transportation, and operational considerations.
- **Guidance for special programs and student supports**, including special education, English learner education, and other programs and supports.

- **Athletics, extracurriculars, and electives.**
- **Key policies**, including academic calendar considerations.

Supplemental guidance for vocational high schools and programs will also be forthcoming.

Appendix A: Details on medical literature review and emerging implications

This section summarizes some of the emerging themes and implications from the medical literature on childhood susceptibility to and transmission of COVID-19 to date. This is a point-in-time summary as of mid-June 2020.

The evidence suggests that children, particularly younger children, are less likely than adults to be infected with COVID-19. Furthermore, if infected, children may be less likely to transmit COVID-19 to others.

Based on these themes, the health and safety recommendations throughout this guidance, as well as considering the key features of school programming at different grade spans, we believe the evidence supports a safe in-person return to school with implementation varying for elementary, middle school, and high school.

Because COVID-19 is a novel disease, this literature is growing rapidly with new information emerging almost every day. Our guidance will continue to evolve as the science develops.

Schools do not appear to have played a major role in COVID-19 transmission.

- In a review of COVID-19 clusters, only 4% (8 of 210) involved school transmission.⁵⁷
- In a case study from Ireland, after six school cases involving three students ages 10-15 and three adults, there were no confirmed transmissions despite there being over 1,000 school contacts of these individuals (students and staff).⁵⁸
- In a case study from New South Wales Australia, after 18 cases were found in schools (12 in high schools and 6 in primary schools), only 0.3% of student contacts were infected (1 in 695 individuals in 10 high schools and 1 in 168 individuals in primary schools). No teachers or staff were infected.⁵⁹
- One infected student (9 years old) in the French Alps attended three schools while symptomatic; none of 112 contacts became infected.⁶⁰

In general, rates of COVID-19 infection are lower for children than for adults.

- Based on data from six countries, children under 20 are half as susceptible to COVID-19 infection than adults.⁶¹ However, this study also found infection in children to be more likely to be asymptomatic, which underscores the importance of health behaviors for everyone (masks/face coverings, distancing, handwashing, surface cleaning).
- Although children under the age of 18 make up 22% of the U.S. population, they account for less than 2% of all cases of COVID-19.⁶²
- In a South Korea study, children under 20 only accounted for 6.2% of all positive cases.⁶³
- After an outbreak in Italy, no children under 10 were infected and children 11-20 were infected at half the overall rate.⁶⁴ (Note: pre-print study; has not yet been peer-reviewed)
- In a Chicago study, only 1% of COVID-19 cases in Chicago were in children 0-17.⁶⁵
- In Massachusetts, children under the age of 19 were about four times less likely than the population at large to be diagnosed with COVID-19.⁶⁶

If exposed, children may be less likely to become infected with COVID-19.

- In China, in households with COVID-19 exposure, children under the age of 18 were infected at a rate of 4% compared with 17% for adults.⁶⁷

- In another study from China, exposed children less than 19 years of age became infected at a rate of 5.3%, vs. 13.7% for 20-59 and 17.7% for 60+. ⁶⁸ (Note: pre-print study; has not yet been peer-reviewed)
- In one study from Japan, 7.2% of exposed male children ages 0-19 and 3.8% of exposed female children tested positive for COVID-19, compared to 22.2% of exposed males ages 20-59 and 21.9% of exposed females ages 20-59. ⁶⁹ (Note: pre-print study; has not yet been peer-reviewed)
- In NYC, in households with at least one COVID-19 case, prevalence of infection for children 5-≤18 was 31.9% vs. overall prevalence 52.5%. ⁷⁰
- A meta-analysis of studies from several countries found that children were only 44% as likely as adults to become infected after exposure. ⁷¹ (Note: pre-print study; has not yet been peer-reviewed)
- A study in Israel found that children 5-17 were 61% less likely to have positive COVID-19 tests compared with adults in the same household. ⁷²

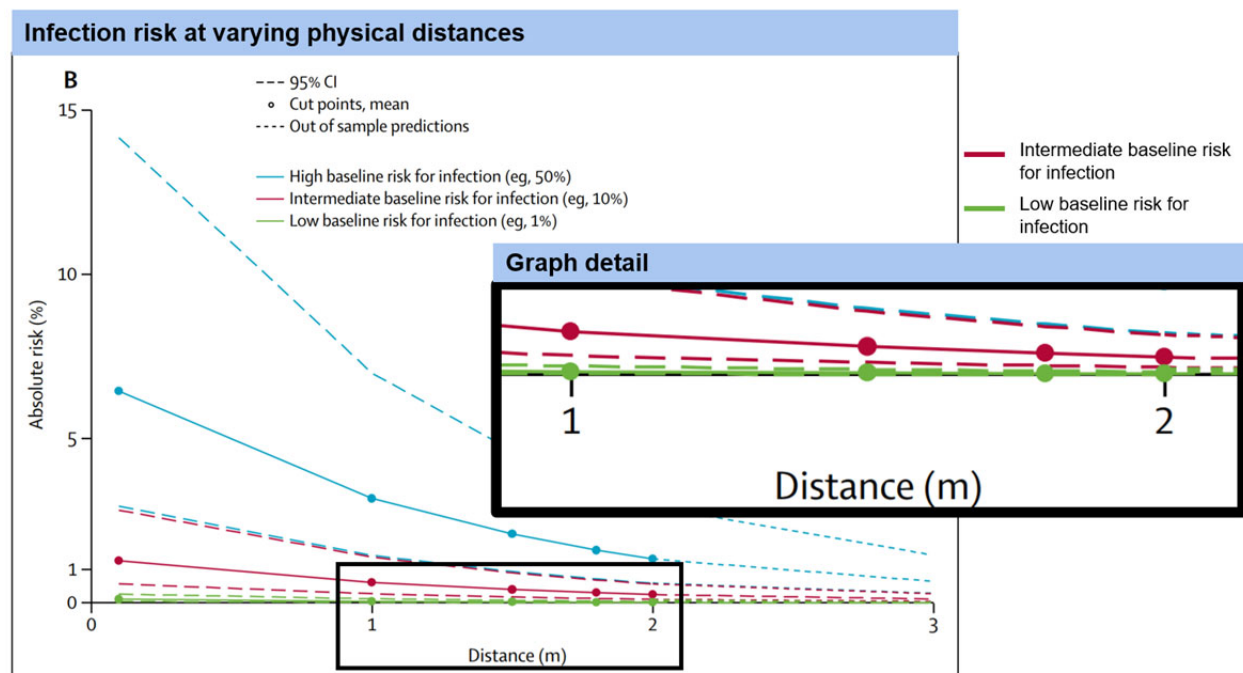
If infected, children may be less likely to infect others with COVID-19.

- Analysis of clusters of patients with COVID-19 indicates that most transmissions are from adults to children, rather than vice versa. This is different from some other respiratory viruses. ⁷³ (Note: pre-print study; has not yet been peer-reviewed)
- In a study from China, only 5% of household clusters were found to have a child <20 as the index patient. ⁷⁴ (Note: pre-print study; has not yet been peer-reviewed)
- In Switzerland, a study of household clusters found that only 8% had a child as the index case. In nearly 80% of the cases, the child got COVID-19 from an adult family member. ⁷⁵
- In a Chicago study, for 15 households where data was available, 73% of transmissions were from adult to child (the remaining 27% was due to two child-to-child and two child-to adult transmissions). ⁷⁶

Risk of infection at varying physical distances

Key finding: in intermediate- and low-risk settings, the risk of infection is similar at one meter (approximately three feet) and two meters (approximately six feet) distances. Experts suggest schools would be considered low to intermediate risk, especially with additional protections (e.g., masks), and that the risk of infection in these settings at both one meter and two meters is low.

Note: the risk of infection at various physical distances was modeled based on a meta-analysis of data from a group of coronaviruses (COVID-19, MERS, SARS). These are estimates of the risk by type of setting, not the risk to different types of individuals.



Source: Chu, D.K., Akl, E.A., Duda S., Solo K., Yaacoub S., Schunemann H.J. et al. (2020) Physical distancing, face masks, and eye protection to prevent person-to-person transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *The Lancet*.

Appendix B: Initial list of facilities and operations guidance

The considerations below are not exhaustive but can be used to support districts and schools with early operational planning in these areas.

Cleaning and supplies: Prepare for frequent cleaning and sanitization of facilities and surfaces, especially high-touch surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, hand rails).^{77 78} Please refer to the federal guidance related to cleaning of facilities for more information regarding appropriate cleaning supplies, protocols, and frequency (e.g., wear appropriate protection such as gloves, wash hands often, follow instructions on all cleaning products, handle waste properly).^{79 80} Provide hand sanitizing at key locations in the building (e.g., entryways, bathrooms, classrooms). Install signage and equipment to enable effective health and safety procedures, as defined in the Commonwealth's guidance on [required safety supplies](#) for reopening schools.

Facility management: Prepare an “medical isolation room” for students/staff who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms during the school day.⁸¹ Consider removing large furniture (e.g., refrigerator, couches) from classrooms to maximize space available for student desks, and ensure desks are spaced according to the physical distancing guidance and facing in same direction, to reduce the transmission of droplets. Where physical distancing is difficult to implement (e.g., office space, reception desks), consider installing barriers or changing the configuration to support student/staff health and safety.⁸² Repurpose communal spaces (e.g., cafeteria, library) to provide additional classroom spaces. If feasible, redesign hallways to be one-way to avoid crowding or restrict usage where distancing is not possible. Establish procedures for student entry and dismissal from the building.

Capacity: Evaluate classroom capacity on a case-by-case basis, based on the maximum capacity consistent with health and safety guidelines (e.g., distancing). Remember to include adequate space for the teachers. For the overall facility, plan for traffic, drop off, and pick up (e.g., staggered pickup/dismissal as needed).

Ventilation: Consider ways to increase facility ventilation (e.g., open windows through fall, perform an HVAC inspection)⁸³. Ensure that proper maintenance protocols are followed in terms of changing filters, etc.

Food: Prepare to hold breakfast and/or lunch in classrooms, instead of the cafeteria or common areas.⁸⁴ As it is assumed that masks/face coverings will not be worn during meals, in order to achieve six feet of physical distance between individuals, consider ways to conduct breakfast and lunch (e.g., stagger time, build in other breaks, etc.). If serving food in the cafeteria, develop staggered schedules that minimize mixing of cohorts and enforce physical distancing protocols. Adjust food preparation and service procedures to minimize shared items (i.e. serving utensils), maintain physical distance, and support compliance with health and safety. For students continuing with remote learning, provide school meals as needed for days they are not in the school building.

Appendix C: Initial Fall Special Education Guidance

Due to the health and safety requirements that will be in place when school resumes, special education services may be provided differently during the 2020-21 school year as compared to previous years. As stated in the U.S. Department of Education's [March 21 Supplemental Fact sheet](#), "School districts must provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those individuals providing education, specialized instruction, and related services to these students." While further guidance is forthcoming, the topics listed below are meant to support school and district special education leaders in their initial plans for the new school year.

Promoting Inclusive Services and the Least Restrictive Environment

When determining classroom setups to accommodate physical distancing requirements, schools and districts should factor in the additional special educators and related service providers who will need to enter the classroom to provide services for students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment.

Staffing, Specialized Safety Supplies/PPE and Training

Schools and districts should follow the directions for staffing, specialized safety supplies/PPE and training described in DESE's [Guidance on Summer 2020 Special Education Services](#) as they prepare for this fall.

Considerations for Specific Populations of Students

Special considerations must be given for students with high risk medical conditions, students who are deaf or hard of hearing, and preschool-age students. Additional directions can be found in DESE's [Guidance on Summer 2020 Special Education Services](#).

Considerations for Preschool-Age Students

Preschool-age students with disabilities are particularly in need of in-person services so that they can develop the socialization, motor, and communication skills that are vitally important at this age. Schools and districts should prioritize in-person instruction for this age group but should also be prepared to adjust to remote services if necessary.

Delivery of IEP Services

Students must receive all services pursuant to their IEPs through in-person or remote instruction, with an emphasis on providing in-person instruction to this particularly vulnerable population of students whenever possible. In particular, DESE recommends that schools and districts make additional provisions to provide as much in-person instruction as possible for students with moderate to severe disabilities (e.g., maintaining full-time in-person instruction for students in substantially separate classrooms even if the rest of the school is in a hybrid model of instruction). When providing remote services, schools and districts should continue to follow the directions provided in DESE's [Coronavirus/COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions for Schools and Districts Regarding Special Education \(Updated May 15, 2020\)](#).

Monitoring Student Progress

Schools and districts must continue to issue Progress Reports at least as often as report cards or progress reports are provided for students without disabilities. Educators and service providers

must collect data, whether in-person or remotely, and use these data to monitor each student's progress and develop Progress Reports.

Transition Services

Although in-person participation in community-based programs and inclusive [concurrent enrollment programs at institutions of higher education](#) may be limited at this time, schools and districts should make efforts to develop plans collaboratively with community-based providers, colleges, parents/guardians, and students so that students can access as much programming as possible.

Initial Evaluations, Reevaluations, and IEP Team Meetings

Schools and districts should continue to follow the directions on meeting special education timelines as described in DESE's [Implementation of Special Education Timelines During the COVID-19 State of Emergency](#).

Communication with Families

Educators and service providers must communicate with parents and guardians to discuss the provision of IEP services during this challenging time. Ongoing communication will help educators, related service providers, and parents/guardians develop a comprehensive plan for students to receive high quality individualized instruction and related services.

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**ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Building Committee (SBC) Approved Minutes**

Virtual Public Webinar Meeting

June 10, 2020

To attend: <https://abschools.zoom.us/j/97676739190>

7:00 p.m

Members Present: Mary Brolin; Adam Klein; Amy Krishnamurthy; Maya Minkin; Peter Light; Marie Altieri; Peter Berry; Dennis Bruce; Jason Cole; Bob Evans; JD Head; Gary Kushner; Lynne Newman; Maria Neyland (*left 8:00pm*); Chris Whitbeck.

Members Absent: Becca Edson; Bill Hart; Katie Raymond Mac Reid.

Other: Karen Coll; Representatives from Skanska: Chuck Adam, Sovathya Sar, Vincent Vadeboncoeur; Representative from Arrowstreet: Emily Grandstaff-Rice, Larry Spang; Representatives from Consigli: Kristy Lyons, Jeremiah Driscoll; members of the public.

1. Mary Brolin called the meeting to order at 7:02pm. Kristy Lyons introduced Jeremiah Driscoll, Consigli Project Manager
2. **Review of Detailed Design** -- Chuck Adam/Emily Grandstaff-Rice/Jody Staruk
Emily Grandstaff-Rice reviewed the schedule of Construction Document (CD) milestones. The MSBA took longer than usual to respond to our DD submission, which extends the due date for our response. The 60% CD pricing set was issued to estimators today; we should have the estimates about July 1st and Value Management recommendations, if any, will be available for SBC review the first week of July. The 60% CD package will be submitted to the MSBA on July 9th. This cycle will repeat for the 90% completion documents.

Claes Andreasen showed revised renderings of the building exteriors, the Learning Commons and the cafeteria that incorporate all of the VM changes. In the exterior views, the exact colors of brick materials are not yet final, but the renderings are close to anticipated final selections. The metal shingles in several different colors don't show up well in these renderings. Maya Minkin had a concern that veering away from brick on the façade could compromise the connection with old Acton buildings.

The Learning Commons reflects an extension of the marsh outside, with blues and greens, and earth tones on the floor. The ceiling has acoustic panels as well as integrated lighting. Risers along the perimeter are made of wood with protective rubber panels on the vertical sections. A ramp is integrated into the floor design for accessibility, but Adam Klein asked where seating might be for a wheelchair-bound person. Claes identified some areas that could be designed specifically to accommodate a wheelchair.

The cafeteria has open views out to the marsh and outdoor playspaces. Like the Learning Commons, there are acoustical panels in the ceiling with lighting integrated into the design; these could be circular in shape to resemble clouds. The beam above the movable wall is decorated with flags from a variety of countries, incorporating a cultural element from Gates. The floor is linoleum with a circular design. The colors in the cafeteria are not yet finalized; there is still too much gray but pops of color will be added. Adam said that, despite its large overall dimensions, the space doesn't feel overwhelmingly big, especially when the movable wall is closed.

At ABRSD, our mission is to develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.
WELLNESS - EQUITY - ENGAGEMENT

3. Geothermal Update – Emily Grandstaff-Rice

Emily said that test well drilling had been delayed to the second week of June. The geotechnical engineer assured the team that the delay in drilling won't impact the overall schedule. As of June 10th, they had drilled down 80 feet and are hoping to get down to 600-foot depth. They will be drilling two test wells; we will have a better idea about how many wells are needed at the next SBC meeting. Emily noted that there is a lot of subsurface water, 300 feet underground, and they will need to store that additional water. Water will be reclaimed to the area when the work is complete.. The system is a closed loop, which is better for the environment, and will contain a glycol mix, not water. In response to a question from Gary Kushner, Emily will confirm the life cycle of the piping.

4. Permits/Meetings with Acton Town Depts – Mary Brolin/Emily Grandstaff-Rice

Emily is tracking two particularly important permits:

- The septic system permit. Additional test pits were drilled and some were found to be slower than expected so the system will need some redesign by the engineers. We are requesting the Acton Board of Health (BoH) to separate their approval for the septic holding tanks from the overall system permit because the tanks are not in question and they will take four to seven weeks to manufacture. Emily is hoping that the septic issue will be on the agenda for the June 17th BoH meeting. The question of whether we will be required to have a denitrification has not yet been resolved.
- The Notice of Intent to be filed with the Acton Conservation Commission and the Massachusetts DEP on June 17th. This permit will allow us to work in the wetlands boundary areas.

An Environmental Notification Form (ENF) has been filed with the Mass. Environmental Policy agency (MEPA); no problems are anticipated. The building permit was submitted in early June and we are waiting for an update. The permit for groundwater protection also has been submitted, and we have gotten approvals for hazardous material removal. Chuck Adam has been talking with town departments about fees generated by their consultants; we have agreed to pay those but want to discuss the fees, as well as how to manage the consultants and keep them in contact with Skanska, Arrowstreet and Consigli going forward. One of these outside consultants will be reviewing the septic system.

5. Updates on Early Release Packages – Chuck Adam

Drawings for early bid package #2 are being completed and reviewed by the working group; Chuck also thanked Maya Minkin for her review. The package will include a variety of trades such as concrete, steel and geothermal wells. Chuck is targeting the July 22nd SBC meeting for approval of bid package #2.

The prequalification subcommittee met to review credentials submitted by waterproofing trade vendors. All of the firms were qualified and will be invited to submit bids. These bids will be due along with early bid package #2.

6. Modular Update – Chuck Adam

The preconstruction team has been meeting weekly with Triumph. The smaller of the two modulares is in their yard for internal work; once that's complete, they'll invite us to inspect it. They will probably begin site prep work the week of June 21st. Installation of the modulares is scheduled to start July 15th and be

completed by August 15th. Peter Berry asked whether the modulars were still necessary since we may have a limited student population onsite in the fall; Gates will still need the space due to the loss of four classrooms during construction. Peter Light said that we are expecting some form of onsite education in the fall, although it is unclear what it will look like.

7. Construction Two-Week Look Ahead – Consigli

Jeremiah Driscoll reviewed the schedule of activities for the upcoming weeks. The site trailers may be relocated to the Douglas side of the site, which would eliminate the need to cut down trees near neighbors on the Gates side and to build a retaining wall; this would not only be a win for abutters but it would also lower the cost. The new location is adjacent to the Elm Street basketball courts, which were built with Community Preservation funds; the team is communicating with travel basketball because one court would be taken offline. The trailer area will be fenced in to keep the construction team separate from students.

8. Schedule Updates – Chuck Adam

Chuck said that the project is meeting all significant deadlines. Kristy Lyons found an additional savings of \$50K resulting from the VM decisions, which was incorporated into the budget submitted to the MSBA. All estimates are based on snapshot in time and costing is still subject to change. Chuck confirmed that the MSBA reimbursement rate has not changed; site costs increased but building costs went down. We should have the 60% estimates on July 1st, but Mary noted that we may need to go through another round of VM.

Contracts have been awarded for preconstruction surveys of abutters' properties as well as a peer review of engineering work. Independent testing labs have not yet been identified.

9. Minutes – Approve Minutes from Previous Meeting(s) – Mary Brolin

The time of adjournment in the May 27, 2020 SBC minutes was incorrect and will be corrected. Jason Cole moved, Maria Neyland seconded and, by a roll call vote, the minutes of the May 27, 2020 SBC meeting were unanimously approved as amended. (Yes: Altieri, Berry, Brolin, Bruce, Cole, Evans, Head, Klein, Krishnamurthy, Kushner, Light, Minkin, Newman, Neyland, Whitbeck; Absent: Edson, Hart, Raymond, Reid)

10. Invoice Approval/Budget Update – Arrowstreet, Skanska, Consigli and other Invoices – Mary Brolin/ Chuck Adam

Adam asked why the actual cash flow for May was almost double the projection; Chuck explained that the difference reflected delayed billing by Skanska for some feasibility/enabling work done previously.

Maria Neyland moved, Adam Klein seconded, Jason Cole abstained and, by a roll call vote, the package of invoices totaling \$977,418.61. (Yes: Altieri, Berry, Brolin, Bruce, Evans, Head, Klein, Krishnamurthy, Kushner, Light, Minkin, Newman, Neyland, Whitbeck; Absent: Edson, Hart, Raymond, Reid; Abstain: Cole)

11. Adjourn

The SBC will continue to meet online through the summer; a decision will be made later about how to proceed in the fall.

Bob Evans moved, Adam Klein seconded and, by a roll call vote, the meeting was adjourned at 8:09pm. (Yes: Altieri, Berry, Brolin, Bruce, Cole, Evans, Head, Klein, Krishnamurthy, Kushner, Light, Minkin, Newman, Whitbeck; Absent: Edson, Hart, Neyland, Raymond, Reid)

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Coll

Documents Used:

Draft Minutes of the May 27, 2020 SBC Meeting
2020-06-10 Budget and Invoice Package

Next Building Committee Meetings (all via Zoom webinar at 7 pm unless noted):

June 24, 2020
July 8, 2020
July 22, 2020



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

15 Charter Road - Acton, MA 01720
www.abschools.org

Finance Department
David A. Verdolino, Director
(978) 264-4700
dverdolino@abschools.org

July 1, 2020

To: School Committee Chair
From: Dave Verdolino /dav/
Re: School Committee Agenda - Warrants

Members –

Below please find a summary of warrants for which I am respectfully requesting your consideration and approval at tonight's regular meeting.

The Warrant Subcommittee has previously reviewed these warrants, for the purpose of check distribution. A majority of the Subcommittee conveyed their approval electronically and the related disbursements have been made. The full School Committee should vote its authorization of these expenditures of budgeted and other funds in its custody. All members have received for each warrant the information provided as shown below, namely:

1. (for vendor warrants, including payroll withholding remittances)
 - Declining balance register of payments ("Declining Dollar report")
 - Warrant detail (payments by vendor)
2. (payroll)
 - Payroll Warrant summary

As you know, these Warrants are customarily provided to you in hard copy format for your review and manual signature. Obtaining your approval in this manner will eliminate the future need to produce what could be many paper reports, all requiring your signatures.

Thank you for your consideration and cooperation with this request.

<u>Warrant Type</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Warrant #</u>	<u>Amount</u>
PAYROLL	6/18/20	P2026/P2026B	\$9,394,830.96
VENDOR	6/18/20	20-026PR (deductions)	\$3,154,324.48
	6/25/20	20-026 (regular vendors)	\$1,070,415.90
STUDENT ACTIVITY FUND			
REIMBURSEMENTS	6/25/20	20-026SH (Senior High)	\$ 35,615.25
	6/25/20	20-026JH (Junior High)	\$ 4,247.15



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Finance Department
David A. Verdolino, Director
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Recommended Motion Wording

I move that the School Committee vote to approve:

Payroll warrant(s) as follows –

Number P2026/P2026B dated 6/18/20 in the amount of \$9,394,830.96;

Payroll deduction warrant(s) as follows –

Number 20-026PR dated 6/18/20 in the amount of \$3,154,324.48;

Vendor warrant(s) as follows –

Number 20-026 dated 6/25/20 in the amount of \$1,070,415.90;

Student Activity reimbursement warrant(s) as follows –

Number 20-026SH dated 6/25/20 in the amount of \$35,615.25

Number 20-026JH dated 6/25/20 in the amount of \$4,247.15.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

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<http://www.abschools.org/school-committee>



**ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS
2020-2021**

Evelyn Abayaah-Issah	Boxborough	eaissah@abschools.org	May 2023
***Diane Baum	Acton	dbaum@abschools.org	April 2021
*Kyra Cook	Acton	kcook@abschools.org	April 2023
***Adam Klein	Boxborough	aklein@abschools.org	May 2021
Ginny Kremer	Acton	gkremer@abschools.org	April 2022
Amy Krishnamurthy	Acton	akrishnamurthy@abschools.org	April 2023
**Tessa McKinley	Boxborough	tmckinley@abschools.org	May 2023
John Petersen	Acton	jpetersen@abschools.org	April 2022
Nora Shine	Boxborough	nshine@abschools.org	May 2022
Angie Tso	Acton	atso@abschools.org	April 2021
*Yebin Wang	Acton	ywang@abschools.org	April 2023

The Committee may be emailed at abrsc@abschools.org. These emails will also be received by the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent and the Committee's Executive Assistant, Beth Petr. Beth may be reached at 978-264-3306 or bpetr@abschools.org.

* Kyra Cook and Yebin Wang will join the Committee on July 1, when they are sworn in after Acton Town Meeting. Please do not use their abschools.org email address until after July 1.

** 2019-2020 Chairperson

*** 2019-2020 Vice-Chairperson

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
2020-2021

Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee meetings are usually held on the first and third Thursdays of the month, at 7:00 p.m. in the Administration Building Auditorium. Materials are posted at https://www.abschools.org/school_committee/meetings_agendas_packets_minutes usually on the Friday night prior to each meeting. Meeting agendas are posted at least 48 hours prior on the calendar at www.abschools.org per the Open Meeting Law.

Summer Business Meetings: July 1, August 13, August 27 (if needed)
Annual Workshop: July 30

September 3
September 17

October 1
October 15

October 29
November 19

December 3
December 17

January 7
January 23

School Committee Budget Saturday

(Preliminary Budget must be prepared at least 20 days prior to final Budget Adoption.)

February 4

Open Budget Hearing - required by law

(Final Budget must be adopted not later than 45 days prior to start of Acton Town Meeting, 4/ /2021 . 45 days =)

February 11

March 4
March 18

April 1
April 15

May 6
May 20

June 10
June 17

Note: Acton Town Meeting begins April , 2021. Boxborough Town Meeting begins May , 2021.
6/26/2020

School Committee Members FY21

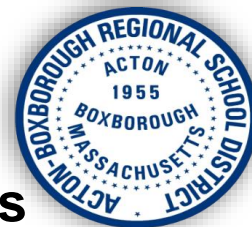


Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

- Evelyn Abayaah-Issah
- Diane Baum
- Kyra Wilson Cook
- Adam Klein
- Ginny Kremer
- Amy Krishnamurthy
- Tessa McKinley
- John Petersen
- Nora Shine
- Angie Tso
- Yebin Wang

Thank you,
Paul Murphy, Maya Minkin and Michael Bo
for your service

FY21 Budget Timeline



ABRSD core, level service budget followed standard process

Nov-Dec 2019

- Student Opportunity Act becomes Massachusetts Law
- Superintendent presents Preliminary Budget
- Special Town Meetings approve new school

Jan 2020

- Governor's budget process begins
- ABRSD budget Saturday
- Bonding strategy is finalized

Feb 2020 - ABRSD Budget Hearing – VOTE

Mar 2020 - School bonds are issued at historically low rates

Apr 2020 - *Commonwealth budget process is restarted*

Our Schools Respond to Current Events



We Are the World - High School Band

AB Class of 2020 getting ready for graduation.



Where are we now – Possible Scenarios

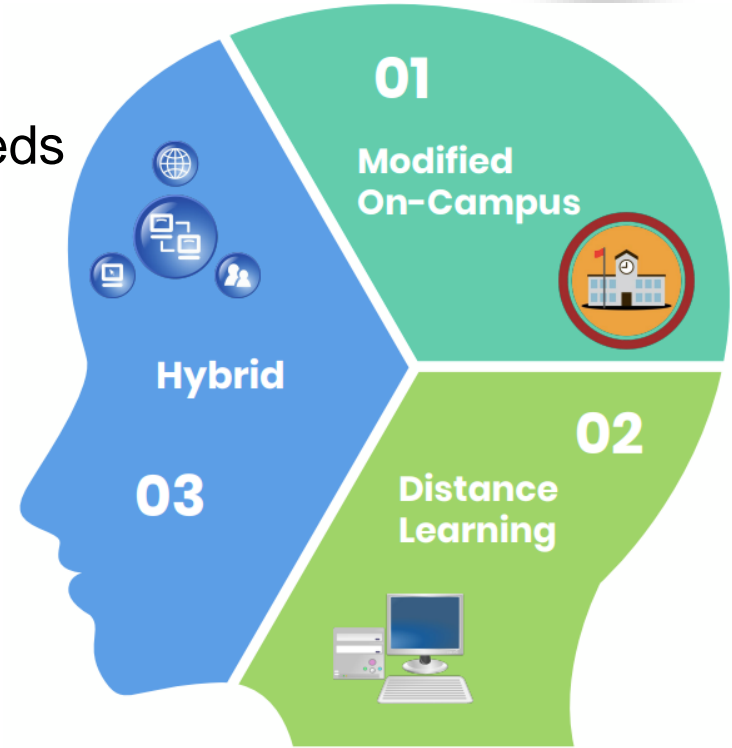


What we know now

- Planning for Fall re-opening
- Health crisis will be ongoing
- Students will have varying educational needs

What is still unclear

- Sources of additional guidance
- Future course of the pandemic
- Effectiveness of other opening practices
- Staffing needs
- Budget implications



COVID 19 – Budget Adjustments

\$1.01 Million



Reduce Capital <i>Prepayment in FY20, deferrals</i>	\$350K
Reduce Salaries <i>Admin Positions, no increase for Superintendent</i>	\$235K
Eliminate SC and SLT conferences	\$20K
CAREs funding via DESE	\$114K
Additional use of Reserves	\$300K
Total budget adjustment	\$1.01M
Add COVID Contingency Fund	\$500K
Net change to assessment	\$510K

Assessments Reduced by \$510K as a Result of Adjustments

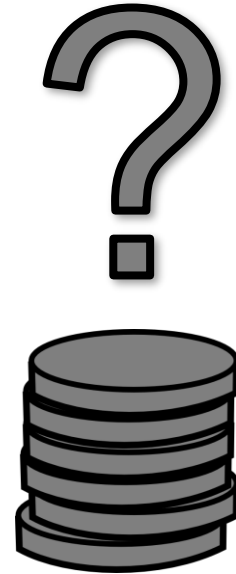
Revenue Assumptions



State Budget is not expected before August

Assumptions:

- If state funding is reduced, federal funds will compensate.
- In 2009, federal funds compensated the district for the loss of state revenue.
- Local revenues are expected to be sufficient to support the school assessment.



Funding Capital - Bonding



- Bonds sold March 3, 2020
- Proceeds are in district accounts
- Interest rates were historically low
- Debt service in our budget reflect the favorable outcome

BOND	Amount	Term years	Rate
New School	\$69.95 M	30	2.20%
Capital Improvement	\$6.22 M	10	1.03%
TOTAL	\$76.17 M	Mixed	2.16%

Avg single family tax bill impact: \$385 for Acton, \$279 Boxborough

FY21 Budget & Process



	Operating	Capital	TOTAL
TOTAL Budget	\$90.71	\$6.20	\$96.91
– Assessments –			
Acton	\$60.26	\$5.32	\$65.58
Boxborough	\$11.24	\$0.88	\$12.12

- Operating Budget reduced in June
- Capital increased after Bond Issuance

% -Change from Previous Year				
	March	June	First Year of School Bond	TOTAL
TOTAL Budget	3.29%	2.73%	3.79%	6.52%
– Assessments –				
Acton	3.26%	2.36%	4.74%	7.10%
Boxborough	1.42%	0.53%	4.68%	5.21%

Our Budget Expresses Our Values



- Maintains level educational services (As in level service budget)
- Adds special education and mental health supports (resource reallocation)
- Reduces kindergarten tuitions
- Supports new building project
- Implements the Capital Improvement Plan adopted in FY20 budget
- Promotes Equity Wellness and Engagement



Thank-you for
your continued
support of our
district



ABRSD web site: abschools.org

On demand video of SC meetings: ActonTV.org

School Committee email: abrsc@abschools.org

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