

WESTON

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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Dear Weston School Community,

As I said in a communication last week, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has provided us with initial return-to-school guidance which we will need to follow going forward. I would like to share my early thoughts about how schooling might look like in the fall. Please know that as we receive more information or as conditions change, we will keep you updated. As of now, we are anticipating what is listed below; however, we all must remain flexible and nimble as we plan for September.

- DESE placed a strong emphasis on getting as many students back in school buildings as safely possible.
- We are charged with creating three plans. The first, preferred plan is for all students to have the opportunity to return full-time to school with safety measures. This is the plan we will be following if COVID cases remain steady or decrease over the summer.
- The second plan we must create is a hybrid model, where students would alternate attending school and learning remotely. This model is an option if there is an increase in COVID cases.
- The third plan is a remote learning model. This model would need to be more robust than the Spring School from Home remote learning model. We would have full school days, teachers would help students meet all grade-level content standards and practices, and teachers would assess and grade students on their progress. This model is an option if there is an increase in COVID cases.
- Families will have the option to have their children attend school remotely.
- Students at the elementary and middle levels will remain in the same classrooms for most of the day. They will have opportunities for mask breaks, recess, and outdoor learning space when weather permits.
- We will do our best to cluster students and reduce travel between classes at the High School. We will provide opportunities for mask breaks and outdoor learning space when weather permits.
- All students in grades two through twelve are required to wear masks unless there are extenuating circumstances. Mask wearing is recommended for kindergarten and first graders.
- Students will be eating in their classrooms and we will be asking everyone to bring lunches and snacks from home. There will be grab-and-go lunches available for those students participating in the school lunch program.
- There will be training for faculty, staff, students, and families on school safety measures, including social distancing, proper mask wearing, and hand washing.
- Band, chorus and theater teachers will need to modify their instruction significantly in order to follow safety guidelines.
- Students on Individual Educational Programs (IEP) will receive Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment

(LRE) whenever appropriate, safe and possible. Additional safety precautions will need to be taken for some 1:1 in person services.

- Many meetings between educators and families will be held online using video conferencing.
- There will be no open campus for high school students. Freshman, sophomores and juniors will be assigned to classroom study halls when they are not in classes. We will work with seniors to locate a space in the school where they will be able to safely come together when they do not have a class.
- For the first week we will only have parking for seniors. Once we know for sure how many spaces we will have on a given day, we will open spaces up for juniors and assign spaces at that time. Since we will not be having many visitors to the school when we reopen, we will be reallocating some of those visitor spaces for students. We will be encouraging safe carpooling. Our aim is to provide parking for as many students as possible.

Our five implementation teams are beginning their work applying DESE guidance to the Weston Public Schools, developing structures, systems, and practices that both will ensure the safety of students and maximize their learning and social-emotional development. Additionally, we will be holding community forums next week where we encourage you to share your thoughts and ideas.

- Tuesday July 7, 4:00-5:00: Elementary School Community Forum
- Wednesday July 8, 4:00-5:00: Middle School Community Forum
- Thursday July 9, 4:00-5:00: High School Community Forum
- Tuesday July 14, 4:00-5:00: Student Services Community Forum

With all the significant changes we will need to make for the fall, attending school will feel very different for students and teachers than when we were last together in March. We will be making every effort to make your child's experience in school as positive and familiar as we are able.

As noted before, circumstances can change quickly and we must remain as adaptable as possible. Although the information is subject to change, we wanted to inform you of our initial ideas as soon as possible so that we can all begin preparing for our return in the fall. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding and I hope this finds you and your loved ones healthy and safe.

Best,
Dr. Midge Connolly