



October 1, 2020

Good evening,

I hope this finds you all well. Consistent with our Methuen Public School COVID Protocols protocols, I am meeting every Thursday with the MPS Nurse Leader, the Methuen Board of Health, and the Mayor to determine any necessary changes to our learning model for the following week. We have been encouraged by the state and DESE to analyze data trends for a three week period before changing learning models if possible. The specific language from the protocol is excerpted below.

Protocols for Determination of Learning Phases and Short Term Closures for Methuen Public Schools- based on DESE and DPH guidance

Each Thursday morning the Chair of the School Committee, the Superintendent, the Methuen DPH Leader, and the Methuen Public Schools Nurse Leader will review the following to determine any large scale district or school phase changes (i.e. from hybrid to remote and remote to hybrid):

1. State metric for Methuen from previous Wednesday (NOTE: districts will not automatically move to remote learning if this metric goes to red - it will be determined based on this and the other factors listed below over the course of several weeks.)
2. Determine if there are any new municipal outbreaks.
3. COVID positive data for each school for previous week - Wednesday to Wednesday
4. Any school level changes to remote learning due to cases as described below.
5. An email notice sent to the district community and a notice on our webpage will be posted and will go out each Thursday evening to inform parents of either continued learning phase beginning on Monday the following week or a change in learning phase for the following week.

As a result of our meeting today, we determined that we will **proceed with our in-person learning beginning on 10/5 for grades K-4, grade 9 and all special populations.** Although our state metric designation is red this week, the Methuen Public Health Director analyzed the latest dataset, which we reviewed in great detail as a team. There are currently 8 confirmed COVID positive Methuen Public School students districtwide. These cases are not school related

as we have been remote since 9/14. The positive cases are represented in the community and were not dominant in one school or area in the city. These students and any students currently quarantined for any reason, will not begin hybrid in-person learning until they are fully cleared by the Methuen Board of Health office. We know that our students need to be in school for academic and social emotional reasons. Our school teams have worked tirelessly to prepare to welcome students back in person.

Methuen High School athletic parents, please see this [joint letter](#) by the Merrimack Valley Conference superintendents regarding high school athletics.

Again, our team will meet every Thursday and I will send out communication each Thursday evening to staff and families to confirm the learning model for the following week.

Thank you for your patience, support, and cooperation through all of this change. We will continue to provide the highest quality instruction regardless of model.

Sincerely,
Brandi Kwong
Superintendent