



November 25, 2020

Good afternoon,

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. This week we met Wednesday morning to accommodate the Thanksgiving holiday.

Please take a moment to review the Phase Determination protocols.

[MPS Phase Determination Protocols](#)

At our meeting today, we reviewed all school specific data spanning the past seven days and determined that we will **move to remote learning for all students PK-12 through 12/4. At this time, hybrid learning will resume on 12/7 for all students.**

The rationale behind this decision is that in the past seven days, we currently have twenty one in-person cases district-wide of COVID-19 involving students or staff. Our in-person cases are slowly rising. Several additional classrooms and staff at the grammar schools were required to quarantine in the last two days. In addition, as of November 30th, we will have over 60 staff members districtwide who are normally in person with students that will be unable to work in our schools due to (1) self-quarantine as a result of being an in-school or out-of-school close contact, (2) positive COVID test result, (3) self-quarantine following travel to a high-risk location in accordance with the Governor's Travel Order, or (4) childcare hardships caused by surrounding districts in both New Hampshire and Massachusetts moving to remote learning. This reality makes it extremely difficult to have consistent, safe, in-person learning days. We have updated the [COVID dashboard](#) to include more detailed data for each school.

SCHOOL BASED TESTING: The Mayor and Board of Health office have secured COVID testing (at no cost to families and staff) for all in-person students and staff to take place on 12/7, 12/8, 12/10, and 12/11. The testing will be conducted at the schools. We will send all information to staff and families including permission forms for students on 11/30. We will include a schedule of schools being tested each day. Testing will be conducted at each school

by cohort on the cohort's in-person days. This testing opportunity is part of our strong community commitment to continuing our in-person learning safely.

TRAVEL ORDER: It is important for everyone to know that all residents are subject to the Governor's Travel Order, which can be found [here](#). If residents travel out of state, with the exception of travel to designated lower-risk states, they must follow the order. Our staff is adhering to the requirement to provide a negative test result on day 4 or 5 upon return to Massachusetts and we are encouraging students to do the same in order to return to in-person learning prior to the end of the 14 day quarantine period. The district believes this is an extra layer of safety added to the Governor's order. Please contact your child's Supervising Principal to discuss travel plans.

We know that our students need to be in school for academic and social emotional reasons. To maximize the chance of returning to in-person learning, we need every member of the Methuen community to continue to do your part. Wear a mask, maintain social distance when you are outside of your home, and avoid large gatherings. Remember, that school-aged children can contract COVID-19 and spread it to others even if they never show symptoms themselves. Be vigilant and we can all remain hopeful that we will soon welcome all of our students back into their schools.

Again, our team meets 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.

I do hope everyone has a safe and peaceful Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,
Brandi Kwong
Superintendent