



February 4, 2021

Good afternoon,

I hope this finds you all well. Consistent with our Methuen Public School COVID Protocols, I meet 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.

Please take a moment to review the [MPS Phase Determination Protocols](#).

At our meeting today, we reviewed all school specific data spanning the past two weeks and determined that:

- **We will continue all grades in the hybrid model.**

Our school based positive cases continue to stay low and have been below five district wide each day. The community numbers also continue to decrease. The COVID Dashboard has shown a decrease in the seven day case counts now for three and a half weeks. Please visit the [COVID dashboard](#) for detailed data for each school.

#### **Attendance Protocols and Procedures**

If you have not already done so, please take a moment to review the [Student Absences and Excuses COVID 19 Policy](#) for the 20-21 school year. MPS expects students to attend school according to their assigned learning model in Infinite Campus. If they are hybrid students assigned to either cohort A or B, students are expected to attend in person on the two days assigned and attend remotely on the remaining three days each week. If students are assigned as remote, they are expected to attend all classes remotely all five days each week. If students need to be home on a day they are scheduled to be in person for reasons relating to COVID (illness or quarantine) parents should notify the school nurse. If there are other extenuating circumstances that result in a student not being able to attend in person on a scheduled in person day, parents should notify the school and the students classroom teachers. If a student is sick and will miss school altogether, please call the Gabriel line for your school to notify school of absence. If staff see a pattern of hybrid students not attending in person on assigned in person days, parents may be contacted by a school administrator. As always, our staff are working diligently to provide the best instruction for all students and are following these procedures and protocols while also recognizing the need to adapt during this pandemic. Unnecessary day-to-day disruptions in attendance hinder the teaching and learning process. We appreciate your attention, cooperation, and timely communication regarding the attendance of your student(s).

### **Reevaluating Learning Models**

MPS will reevaluate our current learning models the first two weeks of March. If there are recommendations for changes to the current learning models, they will be presented to the School Committee on March 22, 2021 for approval. The evaluation may include reviewing operational procedures, determining the feasibility of more in-person time for students, and exploring the reintroduction of additional in-person after school programming/activities. The current COVID cases, vaccination roll out, and DESE guidelines will be reviewed in March as part of the reevaluation of our learning models.

**Please, for everyone's safety, do not send your child to school with any of the symptoms listed below. If anyone in the immediate household is positive for COVID the student should NOT attend school and the school nurse should be notified immediately. Please see this [reference chart for more details](#).**

- Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache, when in combination with other symptoms
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies), when in combination with other symptoms

We know that our students need to be in school for academic and social emotional reasons. To maximize the chance of remaining in our hybrid model, **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 for a positive end to this school year.

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.

Have a good night.

Sincerely,  
Brandi Kwong  
Superintendent