



WESTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Honoring Tradition, Inspiring Excellence, Shaping the Future

EMILY J. PARKS
Superintendent of Schools

DISTRICT UPDATE FOR FAMILIES

June 25, 2020

Dear Members of the Westwood Public Schools Community:

Today, Governor Baker's office and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released their initial guidance about reopening schools this fall. We applaud the level of thought and care that went into the development of this guidance. As articulated in the guidance, we share the goal of safely returning as many students as possible to in-person learning in order to best meet students' academic, social, and emotional needs.

Over the coming days, we will be reviewing the guidance to begin to understand how it impacts what we can do in Westwood. We also acknowledge that these initial guidelines do not address every topic and that there will be additional guidance coming throughout the summer. The full document can be found [here](#), but here are some key components:

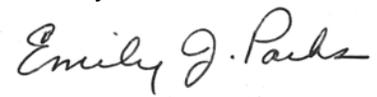
- Current medical research supports a safe in-person return to school - with preventive measures in place - as infection and transmission rates are lower for children than adults.
- Preventive measures include masks/face coverings, physical distancing, handwashing, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces.
- Masks/face coverings will be required for all students in Grade 2 and above and for all adults; they are strongly recommended for students in Grade 1 and below.
- Based on current medical research, and in conjunction with other preventive measures, a minimum physical distance of three feet has been established.

Districts will be required to develop three separate plans ranging from students returning to full in-person instruction with safety requirements, one for hybrid learning model that combines in-person and remote learning, and one for fully remote learning. Based upon the current medical situation, the expectation today is that students will return to full in-person instruction in the fall with preventative measures in place; however, that is subject to change based upon how the medical situation develops.

As you know from a prior communication, we have established working groups who will spend the month of July developing Westwood's plan for reopening based on the guidance published today. We acknowledge that there are likely to be more questions than answers at this time and will continue to update you as we proceed with our planning process. We also encourage you to [read the full document](#). We appreciate your patience as we work through the myriad of issues that will need to be considered.

I hope you are enjoying the start of summer!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily J. Parks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "E".

Emily J. Parks
Superintendent