



**Shrewsbury Public Schools  
Reopening Plan for Our Schools  
2020-2021 School Year**



# Key Messages

- 1) The health & well-being of students, families, & staff is priority #1.
- 2) Our focus for the coming year is to develop a safe school environment for our students and staff that prioritizes everyone's well-being and enables high levels of learning for all.
- 3) We are planning based on guidance from the MA Department of Elementary & Secondary Education while closely monitoring the latest information from medical experts and the evolving data regarding the pandemic both in Massachusetts and in Shrewsbury.

# **Thank you for your input!**

- Parent/Caretaker & Staff Written Feedback  
(2020reopen@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us & staff form)
- Reopening Task Force  
(Four subcommittees made up of 142 staff!)
- Employee Associations  
(Bargaining continuing regarding approach)

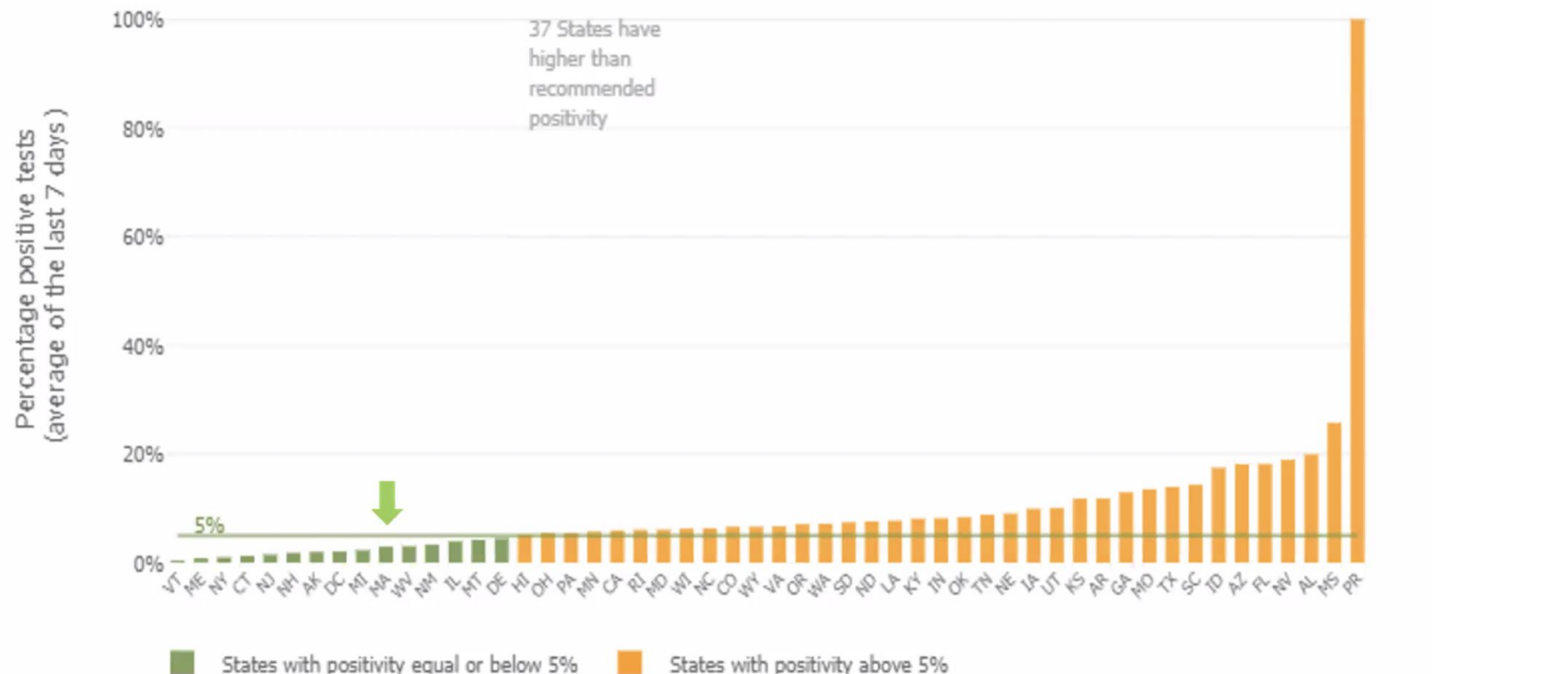
# Current Environment

- Fear & anxiety
  - COVID-19 risks
  - Unknowns of the coming school year
- Amplification by media & social media

# Proactive & Measured Approach

- Evidence from expert sources
  - Public health institutions
  - Medical authorities
- Monitoring data carefully
- Flexibility and adaptability

# Which U.S. States Meet Recommended Positivity Levels?



Source: [Johns Hopkins University](https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/testing/testing-positivity) - <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/testing/testing-positivity>

# Shrewsbury Current Data

- 357 reported cases in total as of August 6
  - Just under 1% of total town population

# **Recommendation**

## **If Public Health Data Remains Strong**

- Hybrid of in-person & remote learning on an alternating schedule
- Four cohorts of students
  - Cohort A: Every day in person (high needs)
  - Cohort B: Mon/Tue in person; Wed-Fri remote
  - Cohort C: Th/Fri in person; Mon-Wed remote
  - Cohort D: Stand-alone full remote



# Key Information for Families

- Initial choice of hybrid vs. stand-alone full remote by Friday, August 14

Through PowerSchool Parent Portal – look for email early next week with instructions

- Informational webinars for families next week

Preschool - Grade 4: Tuesday, August 11 6:30pm

Grades 5-8: Wednesday, August 12 6:30pm

Grades 9-12: Thursday, August 13 6:30pm

Webinar links will be sent via email early next week

# School Calendar Changes

- Commissioner Riley state-wide agreement with teacher unions: 10 days for training, orientation, and planning for opening school in a new way; reduce school year from 180 days to 170 days
- Recommendation:
  - Staff begin on Monday, August 31 as planned
  - All students begin on Tuesday, September 15 (both in-person and remote)
- Early release for first four days (September 15 – 18)
  - Ensures time to teach protocols before beginning lunch

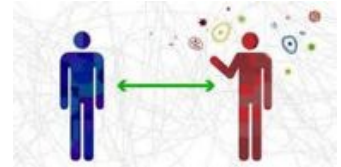
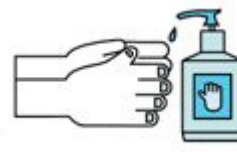
# School Calendar Changes

- Professional development day originally scheduled for September 1 moved to January 15 (MLK Day Weekend)
- Tuesday early release days eliminated
- Last day of school Wednesday, June 16 (subject to change)

# Health and Safety in Our Schools

## Combination of mitigation strategies

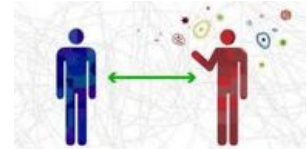
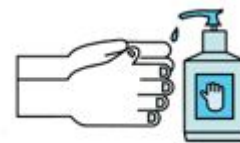
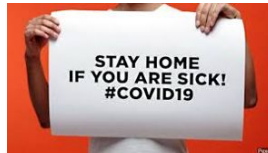
- Masks for all staff and all students preschool through grade 12
- Physical distancing with standard of 6 feet
- De-densifying spaces through hybrid programming
- Hand washing/hand sanitizing
- Visitors/volunteers not allowed in buildings



# Health and Safety in Our Schools

## Combination of mitigation strategies

- Daily at-home screening of students and staff
  - If you answer yes to any of the following, you should NOT go to school
    - Have you had any of the following in the last 3 days: fever  $\geq 100$ , cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, congestion or runny nose<sup>^</sup>, headache<sup>^</sup>, fatigue, unexplained body or muscle aches, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, new loss of taste or smell?
    - Have you or anyone in your household and/or close contacts\* been diagnosed with or suspected of having COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
    - Have you been told by Dept of Public Health to quarantine or isolate?
    - Have you traveled outside of Massachusetts within the last 14 days?



\* “close contact” is defined as being within 6 feet for a period of 15 minutes or more

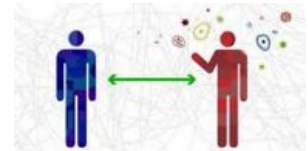
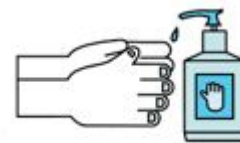
<sup>^</sup> in combination with other symptoms

# Health and Safety in Our Schools

## Protocols for COVID-19 Scenarios in School - Symptomatic individual

- If symptoms develop at home, stay home!
- If symptoms develop while at school, see school nurse for evaluation and determination of next steps (low threshold for dismissal)
  - Fever and/or chills
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath
  - Loss of taste and smell
  - Sore throat
  - Body aches
  - Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
  - Headache\*
  - Nasal congestion/runny nose\*

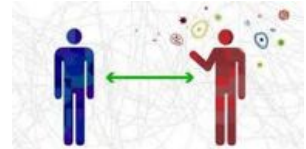
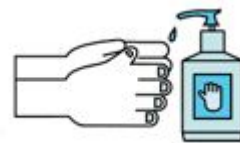
\*in combination with other symptoms



# Health and Safety in Our Schools

## Protocols for COVID-19 Scenarios in School - Symptomatic Individual

- If dismissed with COVID-19 symptoms, testing is required for return
  - ⊖ ○ if negative, may return when symptom free for 24 hours\*
  - ⊕ ○ if positive, must be out of school 10 days from beginning of symptoms **and** 24 hours fever free with improvement of symptoms
  - ⊘ ○ If NOT tested, quarantine for 14 days from onset of symptoms

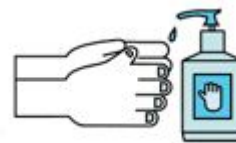


\*health care provider documentation of negative test or alternative diagnosis is required for

# Health and Safety in Our Schools

## Protocols for COVID-19 Scenarios in School - Positive case

- If positive case is identified in the school community
  - Case-by-case collaboration with Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA)
  - Notification of close contacts while maintaining confidentiality
  - Notification of community using de-identified data
- Any decision to close a building or the district due to positive cases will be made in collaboration with CMRPHA





# Navigating the “Next Normal”-TOGETHER

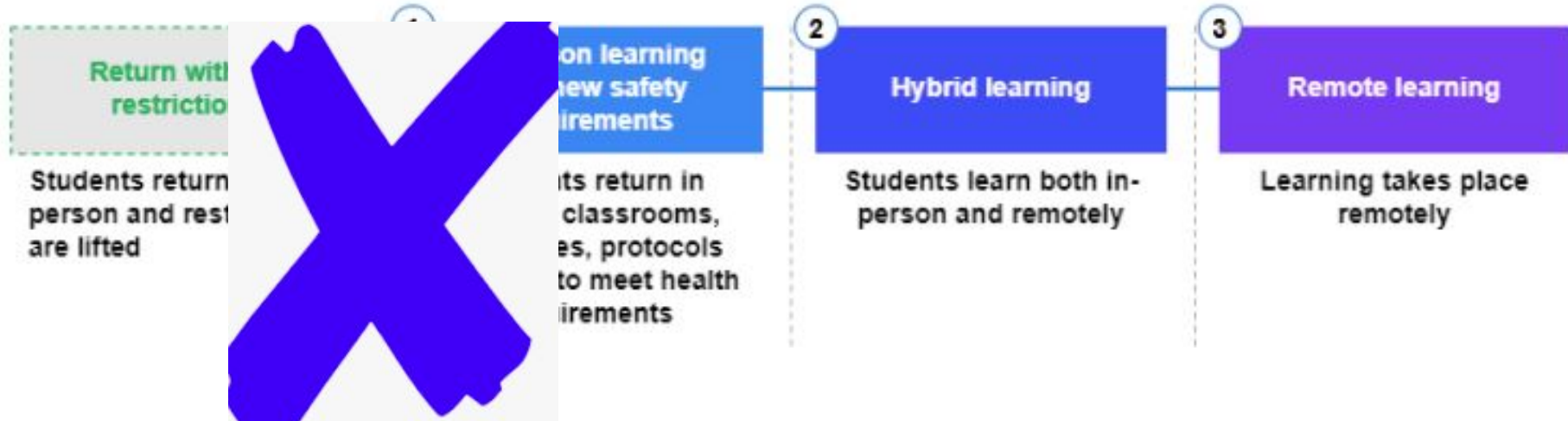
**We as an education community must commit to a growth mindset in order to effectively navigate these unprecedented times.** Everyone – leaders, educators, students, and families – is managing competing priorities, navigating new experiences, learning new skills, and dealing with the uncertainty of an ongoing health pandemic.



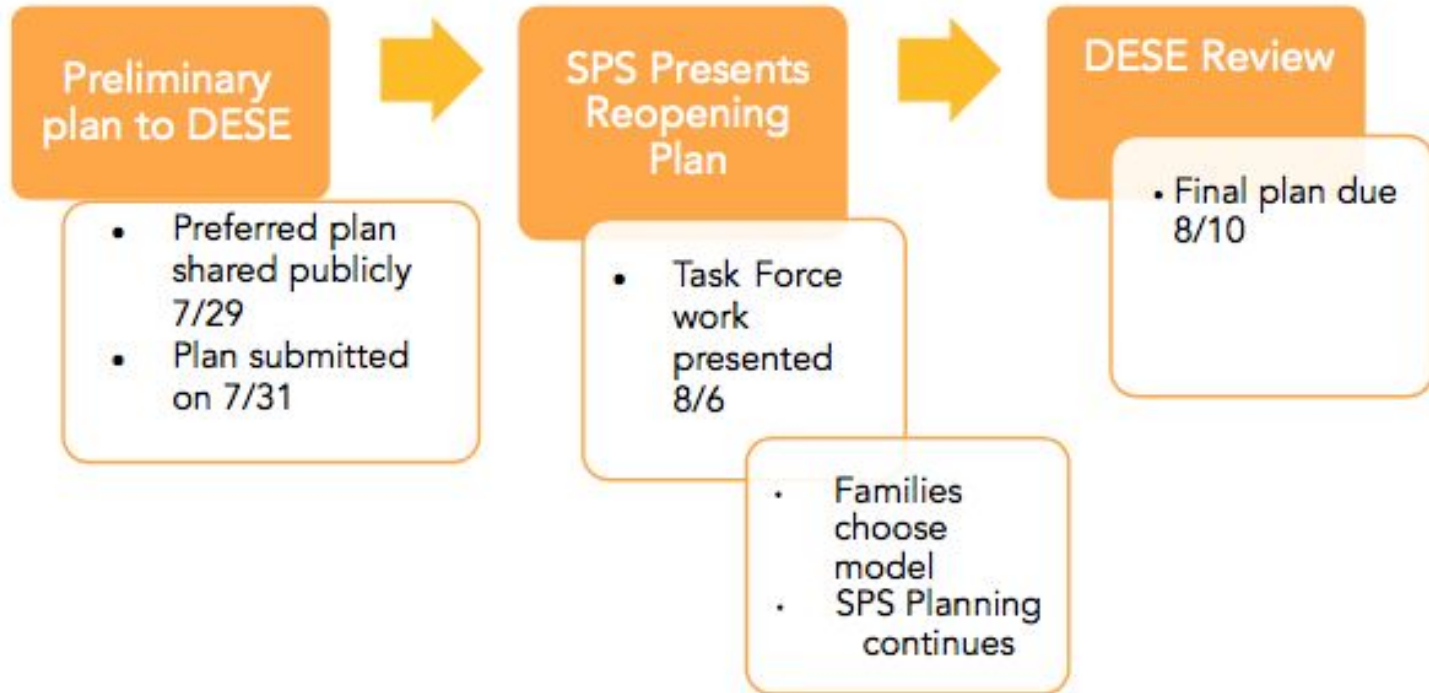
# Return to School Options for Students

*Exhibit 1*

## Continuum of fall reopening models

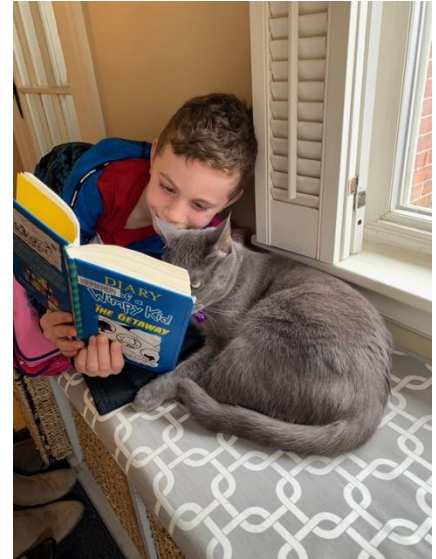


# Reopening Timeline



# Why consider a hybrid model?

- A SAFE return to in-person learning in any capacity is better educationally than a continuation of remote learning, assuming that a safe return is possible.
- An alternating in person / remote plan will allow educators to more consistently connect with and effectively engage ALL students.
- Skillful teaching is informed by assessment, and assessment is best done in person.



# What MIGHT this look like ?

- This will mean dividing students into cohorts:

Cohort A: High needs students attend every day

Cohorts B/C: These students will alternate days

Cohort D: Students opting for continuing to learn remotely will be taught by a separate group of educators.

- This will also mean adjusting the academic day (during in-person days to allow for safety measures and on remote days to raise expectations for student work)
- This will mean building time for planning as well as teaching.

## District-wide Daily Schedule by Cohort

	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
<b>Cohort A High Needs Students</b>	In-Person	In-Person	AM: In-Person ½ Day Early Release PM: Asynchronous Remote Learning	In-Person	In-Person
<b>Cohort B</b>	In-Person	In-Person	AM: “Live” Remote Learning PM: Asynchronous Remote Learning	Remote	Remote
<b>Cohort C</b>	Remote	Remote	AM: “Live” Remote Learning PM: Asynchronous Remote Learning	In-Person	In-Person
<b>Cohort D Fully Remote Students</b>	Remote	Remote	Remote	Remote	Remote

The gold blocks above denote days when students would experience in-person instruction at school during typical hours. For example, a second grader in Cohort B would attend school in person from 9:00-3:15 on Mondays and Tuesdays.

# SPS Remote Learning Days 2.0

- Both educators and families want instructional plans to include more “live” time with students, and remote learning guidelines will be adjusted to reflect much more time on learning.
- It’s expected that students will fully participate in Zoom sessions. Attendance will be taken and expectations for student responsibilities will be communicated proactively.
- Student work will be collected regularly, assignments will be graded, and educators will revert back to the same grading systems that were in place before school closure.
- We have software tools to help differentiate learning at all levels.



# What will a stand alone full remote model look like?

- Students in Cohort D will be supported by different educators than the teachers responsible for children in the hybrid program :

OPTION 1: Shrewsbury Virtual Academy

OPTION 2: State-contracted third party learning option

- Students will be accountable for attendance and will be graded. academic day  
(Cohort D students at SHS will receive credit for completed coursework)
- Students will be eligible to participate in SPS co-curricular activities to the extent possible or as allowed by DESE regulations





# Stand Alone Remote vs. Homeschooling

- A family that chooses to homeschool their child is un-enrolling their from the Shrewsbury Public Schools.
- Homeschooled children are NOT eligible for participation in any SPS programs or activities per School Committee Policy, with the exception of IEP services



# Planning for Reopening will continue

- Plans due to MA Department of Elementary & Secondary Education by August 10th
- Following this presentation, specific family preferences by student will be requested through PowerSchool Parent Portal
- **Task Force members and district leaders continue to meet to refine planning**

Email questions or feedback to

[2020reopen@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us](mailto:2020reopen@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us)



# Student Services and Special Education



## A: Determination of Hybrid Cohort Assignment

Students with complex and significant needs who meet the following criteria must be prioritized for in-person to the greatest extent possible based on Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Special Education Guidance, as is feasible within the health and safety parameters:

- “High needs” through the IEP process on the IEP form entitled “Primary Disability/Level of Need-PL3.” Students already identified as ***must meet at least two of these criteria:***
  - Services provided outside of the general education classroom
  - Service providers are special education teachers and related service providers
  - Special education services constitute more than 75% of the student’s school day
- Students who cannot engage in remote learning due to their disability-related needs
- Students who primarily use aided and augmentative communication
- Students dually identified as English Learners

# Student Services and Special Education

B: Provision of Individualized Education Program (IEP) Services

C: Provision of Section 504 Accommodation Plans

D: Individualized Education Program (IEP) and 504 Accommodation Plan Team Meetings



# Student Services and Special Education

## E: Early Childhood Special Education and Preschool Children

- Transition from Early Intervention
- Natural Environments and Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for Preschool Children
- Kindergarten Screening
- In-person Instructional Environments and Physical Distancing for Preschool Children
- Hybrid/Remote Learning Considerations for Preschool Children



Ms. Nichols



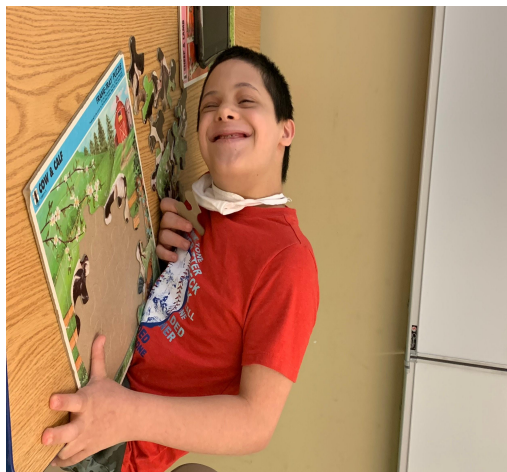
Ms. O'Donnell



# Student Services and Special Education

F: Developing Behavior Supports and Safe Learning Environments

G: Student Well-Being





# Technology Resources

## Student devices



- Continuing issuance of iPads to all Gr. 5-12 students
- Expanding issuance of iPads to all kindergarten and Gr. 1-4 students
  - Kindergarten: Reusing iPads in elementary carts & classrooms
  - Gr. 1-2: Reusing iPads turned in by Class of 2020 and Gr. 9 students
  - Gr. 3-4: Purchased new iPads using CARES Act funding
- Distribution windows throughout the summer
  - Vary by grade level, parents will be notified
- All reused items cleaned with disinfecting wipes before reissuing

# Technology Resources



## Home Internet access

- Will continue providing cellular-capable devices for students who lack home Internet access



# Technology Resources



## Learning platforms

- Seesaw
  - PK-4
- Schoology
  - 5-12
- Zoom
  - Educational version
  - Require participant sign-in for security
  - Additional privacy protections

# School Transportation



MA DESE guidance for limiting ridership to one student/bench will be adhered to.

We plan to hire more bus monitors for first few weeks of school to assist/monitor students. Windows will be opened weather permitting.

Buses will be sanitized daily at a minimum.

School Committee has waived the fee for first half of school year.

Bus registration is now a request process. **We have nearly 2,000 students now requesting service after three days of opening that process.**

Seating will be allocated on a priority basis---see reopening plan for details.

# Food Services



Meals for eligible students will be made available under all three modes of learning.

Meals will be primarily pre-packaged foods. No salad or condiment bars.

Minimum of six foot social distancing will be maintained as students will be unmasked, of course, while eating.

Gyms will be repurposed as secondary seating areas for distancing.

Cafe tables/desks will be cleaned between student uses.

# Facilities *[Per Public Facilities Division]*



Recommendations from MA DESE for HVAC systems management will be adhered to include running systems longer for turnover of fresh air. A third-party review of our systems is being pursued. Windows in classrooms will be opened, weather permitting.

Enhanced daytime cleaning will be performed at all schools with the addition of new staff positions and/or increasing services via contract cleaning companies.

All schools will be sanitized in the evenings between cohort changes.

Playground equipment/structures will not initially be accessible.

# Extended School Care, Athletics, After School Clubs/Activities



Extended School Care will remain closed at least through October 2nd so we can prioritize and refine our daytime educational programs/schedules.

Oak Middle School intramurals and interscholastic sports are cancelled for the fall season.

High school athletics will resume when permitted by both the MA DESE and MIAA. We will also respond to changes made by the Mid-Wach League. As of today, high school athletics cannot resume anytime before September 14th.

After-school clubs/activities will resume in-person as conditions permit and some will operate remotely.

# Staff Well-Being in the SPS and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

“When we are no longer able to change a situation,  
we are challenged to change ourselves.”

Viktor Frankl

## Recognizing and Responding to Extraordinary Stressors:

- Economic disruption
  - Isolation
- Sense of loss-family and friends
  - School closure
  - Uncertainty

Working  
Draft: Multi-  
Tiered (non-  
academic)  
Systems of  
Support  
(MTSS) Map  
During the  
COVID-19  
Crisis

## Tier III

### Intensive:

#### Core + More + More

Students/families may struggle with:

- Death of family member(s)
- Severe medical challenges
- Severe mental health challenges
- Severe resource shortages

## Tier II

### Supplemental: Core + More

Students/families may struggle with:

- Mild to moderate mental health challenges
- Non life-threatening medical challenges
- Access to transportation
- Food insecurity

## Tier I

### Universal:

#### Core

ALL Students,  
Families, and  
Staff



Staff Supports

Student Supports

Family Supports

Comprehensive  
Care  
Coordination

Tier 3 and  
Tier 2  
check-ins

Telehealth-  
style  
therapeutic  
supports

Parent  
support  
groups

Referrals to community supports

Provision of food and other  
basic needs materials

Consistent, caring  
two-way  
communication  
with all students  
(Student Tier 1  
check-ins)

Multi-mode,  
multi-language  
system for regular  
communication with  
all families about  
major occurrences  
and available  
resources

Employee  
Assistance  
Program  
Supports

Staff support  
groups (school/  
district may  
designate  
leaders)

### Enabling Structures and Processes

- Student Support Team (or similar) to establish protocols, review referrals, and assign responsibilities
- Assignment of every student to an adult's consistent communication cohort with tools for monitoring
  - Clinical supervision for staff providing therapeutic supports
  - Clear referral process of students/families that are struggling or can't be reached
  - Clear assignment of responsibility for Tier 2 & 3 supports
    - Continuous gathering of info on available resources and supports
    - Food provider systems
    - Employee Assistance Programs

# Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for All SPS Staff

## Tier I-*Universal*: Core

Tier I ensures consistent, caring two-way communication with and among all staff including, but not limited to the following:

- ❖ Wellness opportunities offered during and after the school day (faculty meetings, small group meetings, informal check-ins...)
- ❖ Invitations for staff to regroup and pause
- ❖ Building liaisons who serve as staff support for those who seek a listening ear or confidant
- ❖ District-wide opportunities through the Mindfulness Director Initiative (MDI)



# Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for All SPS Staff

## **Tier II-*Supplemental*: Core + More**

- ❖ Flexibly designed care groups that provide opportunities to all staff for frequent and check-ins with colleagues.

## **Tier III- *Intensive*: Core + More + More**

- ❖ Comprehensive Care Coordination with district supports, in addition to our Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services (SYFS), BRYT, etc...
- ❖ Staff will be consistently encouraged to check in with school/district care leaders; attend staff support groups; and/or engage with telehealth-style therapeutic supports as warranted.

**Goal: Identify and protect time, space and opportunities for all staff to promote and provide collective care.**

**Suggested Action Steps for the 2020-21 School Year:**

- ❖ Provide training and professional development in the following ways, as identified by staff feedback: Cultivating Emotional Resilience, Strengthening Adult Social Emotional Learning, Developing Trauma Informed Practice, and Equity Related Planning
- ❖ Establish Safety Care Groups for all SPS staff
- ❖ Identify building-based well-being liaisons to support staff on a daily basis
- ❖ Offer Well-Being Opportunities During and After the School Day (“Take a Break” areas, book clubs, fitness, cooking, and art classes)

# Workforce Planning: Anticipated Leaves of Absence



- In a hybrid model it is assumed that employees will be able to report to their assigned school in order to teach and provide services for students. However, for a variety of reasons, some staff may not be able to meet that assumption
- There are a variety of leave options available, including child care leave created at the federal level by the Family First Coronavirus Recovery Act

# Workforce Planning: Leaves of Absence



- Some leave options, including child care leave, expire after twelve weeks, or on December 31, 2020. Other leave options, such as leave for one's own medical condition, could potentially last longer.
- Personalized approach to working with employees who may need a leave or accommodation

# Workforce Planning: Critical Questions



- The purpose of workforce planning is to match human resources to the model of operation and to anticipate needs in various scenarios
- Critical Questions:
  - How will we ensure that we have enough resources to meet learning and health needs? This includes quickly replacing faculty and staff who are on leave or who may suddenly be placed on leave, an increased need for school nurses when employees and students are physically present in buildings, and handling incidental day-to-day substitution needs when some portion of day-to-day substitutes will not be able to return to a physical location to work.

# Workforce Planning: Critical Questions



- How will we ensure that staffing systems and individual staff members are able to flex through various learning models as circumstances dictate?
- How can we be appropriately positioned at the end of the 2020-2021 school year to staff the opening of the new Beal elementary school?

# Workforce Planning: Our Plan



- Assessing Current Staff Capacity
  - Asked all current day-to-day substitutes if they were able to return in person
  - List of current staff who have requested to teach remotely or take a leave of absence
    - Ability to accommodate requests to teach virtually is dependent on need based on parent preferences and further analysis of other instruction delivery models

# Workforce Planning: Our Plan



- Anticipatory hiring: Substitutes
  - Long-Term Substitute Educators at all levels, including Special Educators and Specialists, who can support all models of learning (will be included in back to school training)
  - ABA Technicians and Child Specific Aides to support Individualized Education Plans
  - New Day-to-Day Substitute Educators who are able to work in person (will received enhanced training relative to health protocols and safety)



# Workforce Planning: Our Plan



- Beal
  - The new Beal facility is still opening for the 2021-2022 school year
  - We want to retain valuable faculty and staff who will be needed beyond the challenges of the 2020-2021 school year
  - We will have tried and tested candidates for potential openings *next* year who will work as substitutes *this* year

# Key Information for Families

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