



July 2020

Dear Lawrence Public Schools Community,

Today we are pleased to share Lawrence Public Schools' initial reopening proposals for the 2020-21 school year, featuring plans for both remote and in-person learning. While it is important to note this is a first draft, with plans to be finalized and a learning model selected soon, we hope it offers important insight into the ongoing planning process as the first day of school approaches on Sept. 16.

This is the product of many weeks of thoughtful, detail-oriented work by our Reopening Task Force, which includes more than 100 school leaders, teachers, administrators, health professionals, staff, parents and students. They are focused not just on safe, successful school operations, but the social-emotional well-being of all members of our community. In their planning they have relied on response data from surveys shared with every LPS family and staff member; the best available public health guidance; and school reopening guidelines from the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Proposed plans include:

- A robust remote learning model featuring many of the expectations and accountability measures of traditional school, including standard grading and detailed requirements for regular participation and engagement. If LPS does resume in-person learning, all LPS students will still have the option of full-time remote learning.
- A “hybrid” model, which combines an in-person return to school with remote learning. This approach provides every student with the invaluable opportunity to engage face to face with teachers and peers, while allowing us to enact necessary health and safety measures by dramatically reducing the number of people in our buildings every day.
- A plan for careful monitoring of public health data to determine when LPS could safely resume full in-person learning, with the acknowledgement that it is not feasible for the start of this school year.

We will provide updates, including final approval of a preferred model by the Lawrence Alliance for Education, as they occur over the next several weeks. We recognize this process is not a simple one, a great deal of information is being shared in a short amount of time, and there will be many questions.

Given that, we would like to highlight some important ways to get more information and stay up to date about our reopening:

- I will host [a series of virtual coffee hours](#) throughout the week of Aug. 10 for families of all grade levels, as well as our high school students.
- A new LPS Back-to-School Helpline, where you can ask any reopening questions by calling 978-722-8040 or emailing LPSHelp@Lawrence.k12.ma.us, will be live this Monday, Aug. 3.

We know the nature of the virus means we must be flexible in our planning and cautious in our expectations, and that there is still a great deal of work ahead. But as we reach out to you today, we can't help but be excited by the possibility of seeing students in just a few short weeks. We look forward to sharing information more soon.

Cynthia Paris
Superintendent of Schools