Boston Public Schools

Return, Recover, Reimagine: Preparing for School Year 2021-2022

Superintendent Brenda Cassellius
8.24.2021
Agenda

Welcome and Introduction of Interpreters

Superintendent’s Opening Remarks

Presentation
- Health & Safety Protocols
- Facilities Readiness
- Academic Plans

Q&A

Closing Remarks
Welcome Back!

BPS is excited to bring the Joy back to Learning! Let’s Work Together to Keep Our Students, Staff, Families & Community Safe
What to expect for your student
Reviewing the Public Health Landscape

Dr. Djenny Lobo Lopes
Boston Public Schools
School Health Services

Boston Public Schools have full time school nurses to support your child.

BPS School Health Services, Central Office
443 Warren Street, Suite 2
Dorchester

(617) 635-6788, phone
(617) 635-7937, efax
healthservices@bostonpublicschools.org
COVID-19

COVID-19 is a new disease, caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus that has not previously been seen in humans.

COVID-19 Transmission

- Spread mainly through close contact from person to person
- Can be spread by droplet transmission
- Spreads less commonly through contact with contaminated surfaces
- Rarely spreads between people and animals

Delta Variant

What We Know About the Science

- Delta variant is currently the predominant strain of the COVID virus in the United States
- It has been recorded as a more contagious strand
- Those infected with the Delta variant were more likely to be hospitalized
  - Unvaccinated people remain the greatest concern
Covid-19 Symptoms

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

Have symptoms of concern? STAY HOME!

Find the Home Health Checklist at bostonpublicschools.org/healthchecklist
Returning Strong to Our School Buildings
CDC Core Mitigation Strategies

- Get Your Vaccine
- Wear Your Mask
- Continue Testing
- Hand Hygiene
- Monitor Your Health Daily - Stay Home When Showing Symptoms
- Physical Distancing When Possible
- Avoid Crowds
Mitigation Strategy: COVID-19 Vaccine

- Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - Vaccination can help schools safely return to in-person learning as well as extracurricular activities and sports.

- CDC recommends everyone 12 years and older should get a COVID-19 vaccination to help protect against COVID-19.

- COVID-19 vaccines are available to all who live, work, or study in Massachusetts, regardless of immigration status.

- COVID-19 vaccines can reduce the risk of people spreading COVID-19.

- Vaccines in the US are safe and highly effective, including against the Delta variant.

Find where to get your vaccine:
**FACT:** Studies found that the two initial vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna) are both about 95% effective and reported no serious life-threatening side effects.

**FACT:** None of the authorized and recommended COVID-19 vaccines causes you to test positive.

**FACT:** The vaccine for COVID-19 cannot and will not give you COVID-19. The COVID-19 vaccine does not contain the SARS-Co-2 virus and the protein that helps your immune system recognize and fight the virus does not cause infection of any sort.

FACT: The COVID-19 vaccine will not affect fertility. The COVID-19 vaccine encourages the body to create copies of the spike protein found on the coronavirus surface. This “teaches” the body’s immune system to fight the virus that has that specific spike protein on it.

FACT: Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that re-infection with COVID-19 is possible, people may be advised to get a COVID-19 vaccine even if they have been sick with COVID-19 before.
Mask Use

All BPS staff and students are expected to wear masks while indoors

● Regardless of vaccination status
● In all BPS buildings
● On the school bus

Removing your mask

● Outdoors during recess
● On a mask break
● While eating

DO choose masks that

Have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric

Completely cover your nose and mouth

Fit snugly against the sides of your face and don’t have gaps

Have a nose wire to prevent air from leaking out of the top of the mask

Image credit: CDC
COVID-19 Screen Testing

Three new updated options are available for students and school based-staff

All testing is free, confidential and managed by public health officials

**Pooled testing with follow-up testing:**

- Shallow nasal samples are collected and kept separate before being grouped at the lab.
- If a group tests positive, individual follow-up testing occurs at the lab, without a second sample collection.
- Individual test results are reported to the Health Services.
COVID-19 Screen Testing

Proposed Testing for students with symptoms

- Shallow nasal swab samples collected at school using the “BinaxNOW rapid antigen test”

"Test and Stay" (close contact testing)

- Shallow nasal swab samples collected at school using the “BinaxNOW rapid antigen test”
  - Tests are administered daily from the first day of exposure for at least five (5) days by CIC Health staff
How to prepare your child for school

Vaccine Clinics
- Get vaccinated before school starts
- Look for a vaccine clinic at your student’s school this fall
- All BPS vaccine clinics are run by trained healthcare professionals. Boston Medical Center is our largest clinical partner

COVID Testing
- Look for an email in the coming days with a link to sign your student’s testing consent form
- Complete your student’s consent form for testing

Masks
- Ensure your student has a mask that fits tightly to their face
- If your child forgets to bring their mask, one will be available at your student’s school
- All students and staff regardless of vaccination status are required to wear a mask in all BPS buildings
Positive Case Reporting

Students
If a student’s illness is determined to be COVID-related the student must:

- Report the confirmed positive case to your school
- Remain at home and isolate (If identified as having a positive result in school- the student will be placed in a medical waiting room or an identified space- 6 feet apart until parent pick-up)
- Monitor symptoms

The school will notify BPS Health Services who will begin contact tracing and making calls
A letter will be sent to the community

Employees

If a staff member’s illness is determined to be COVID-related, they will:

- Report this information to their supervisor - and - email covidreporting@bostonpublicschools.org - and -
- The BPS Office of Human Capital at ohcleaves@bostonpublicschools.org to receive information about COVID-related leave policies. Information about the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, including whether you qualify, can be found here.
- Staff will follow the Protocols for Employees Impacted by Coronavirus and communicate with their supervisor and OHC as defined.
BPS Dashboard for Positive Cases

COVID-19 Cases

Boston Public Schools is committed to reporting to the public a weekly update on confirmed positive COVID-19 cases in our schools. This information reports the combined number of confirmed positive cases for students and staff who have accessed schools for in-person teaching and learning.

Positive Cases Year to Date

<table>
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<th>Students</th>
<th>Staff</th>
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| 10/1 - 10/7 | 10/15 - 10/21 | 10/29 - 11/4 | 11/12 - 11/18 | 11/26 - 12/2 | 12/10 - 12/16 | 12/24 - 12/30 | 1/7 - 1/13 |
Returning Strong to Our School Buildings
Facilities Updates
Facilities

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Sensors

- Indoor Air quality sensors are in process of being installed across the district. Work began July 12th. These sensors will provide real time reporting on the quality of the air in rooms.

Air Purifiers Filter Replacement

- Filters are being replaced per the specifications of being changed every six months. To date 3,242 purifiers have had filters replaced in 98 schools. The project is on track to be completed prior to students return.

MERV-13 Filter Replacement

- Filters will be replaced as part of the regular maintenance of the systems.
Facilities

Summer Cleaning

- BPS custodial crews are completing sanitation of buildings and are on track to be complete for students return.

Sanitation Stations

- Schools have sanitation stations in hallways and classrooms with ample supplies in stock for replacement.

PPE

- PPE will be delivered to schools in August.
Transportation

Routing and Bus Assignments:

● Buses are routed and assigned. Bus assignments have been sent via email and will be sent via mail by Wed, Aug 25
● Drivers will complete practice runs before school starts

MBTA Passes:

MBTA passes for eligible students in grades 7-12 will be available for pick up by students at their school on the first day.

Bus Monitors:

● Bus monitors will be provided to all students who require them, in accordance with student IEPs.
● We continue to actively hire bus monitors. However, we are currently short of our goal of 150 new hires this fall.
● Due to this shortage, we predict some fall staffing issues.

Transdev: Summer bus maintenance is ongoing and on-track for reopening. With support from City Hall, we are in negotiations with Drivers’ Union on fall school reopening and for a new CBA.

Bus Health and Safety Protocols: Students and staff will be required to wear masks on buses this fall. Buses will be disinfected once per day. Per DESE guidelines, every other window will be opened 2-inches.
Technology

- Emergency Connectivity Fund - federal funding to help close the digital divide
  - BPS is applying for additional Chromebooks for take-home as well as teacher laptops
- Continued support for hotspots & Comcast vouchers
- Emergency Broadband Benefit Program provides $50 per month for home Broadband to all BPS families
- Continue support for many of the tools adopted during COVID and as part of our ESSER investments: Lexia, TalkingPoints, Nearpod, and SeeSaw
Back to School Food and Nutrition Services

- **Continuity in service for our students and families**
  - Return to cooking at all cafeterias (80 sites)
  - Rollout of My Way Cafes (34 sites)
  - NEW - menu items feature vegan recipes, homemade muffins, specialty sauces and more
  - Partnerships with local businesses and farms to provide fresh produce, local pizza, grains and fish to our sites
  - Continued recipe development and testing to incorporate student preferences and cultures
  - NEW - Chef in School program
  - Staff Training on safety protocols, menus and policies and procedures

- **Challenges**
  - Staffing
    - Focus on recruiting / retention
    - High vacancy rates impacting operations
  - Procurement and access to grocery items
Athletics

Return to Normal Calendar Year

- Interscholastic Athletics (9-12)
  - Fall (Aug 20 - Nov 25)
  - Winter (Nov 29 - March 19)
  - Spring (March 21 - June 19)
- Middle Level Athletics (6-8)
- Special Olympics/Unified Sports (K-12)

Summer Engagement/ Physical Activity

- Girls Volleyball Clinics (5 Sites/190 students)
- Outdoor Strength & Conditioning

Fall Athletics/ Health & Safety Guidance

- Masks required for all indoor activities
- Additional athletic guidance developing
- We will follow the most up-to-date State MIAA guidelines
Recover: Leading Academic Success and Wellness to meet the moment
Academics

Recover:

Immediate investments to best support students and families:

- Provide robust intervention supports for English Learners with explicit focus on English Learners with disabilities
- Ensure high-quality compensatory services for our Students with Disabilities
- Expand UPK opportunities and options
- Utilize digital literacy platforms most especially for ELs and SWDs
- Assess EL students for ELD levels and create individual plans to support acceleration
- Launch robust district-wide priority focused on PreK-12 equitable literacy
- Leverage 74 new family liaisons and 100 new social workers
- Offer high-quality professional learning for educators focused on academic priorities and student recovery

Ongoing work to catapult our future Reimagine investments and create conditions for a stronger, better BPS:

- Develop BPS Academic Framework
- Ensure Academic Framework drives facilities decisions
- Lead H.S. redesign efforts and implement MassCore
## Academic Priorities

**Priority 1:** Implement equitable literacy across the Pre-K-12 most especially for ELs and SWDs

**Priority 2:** Team structures to support implementation of equitable literacy w/ sharp focus on ELs and SWDs support and services

**Priority 3:** Use CRIOP* (an equity-based observation and feedback tool) to ensure equitable implementation of literacy practices especially for ELs and SWDs

### How will central office support schools to implement priorities?

- Plan and execute the Return, Recover, Reimagine Summer Conference with focus on instructional priorities
- Offer and support central office learning sessions on equitable literacy instruction
- Launch equitable literacy pathway modules
- Deliver professional learning sessions on equitable literacy for paraprofessionals
- Develop and hold professional learning for transformation coaches
- Design equitable literacy sessions with families

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*Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol*
Our Partners: What to Expect

Partners

- Partners who work directly with students full-time are allowed in buildings
  - Includes before and after school programs, health clinics and more
- Each partner must have a designated space
- School Leaders will determine which partners are going to be in the school
- Partners must follow all health and safety requirements
  - Starting 10/18 partner staff will provide proof of vaccination or provide weekly COVID test results
  - Each day partner staff will sign in and out at the front office and keep their program attendance for contact tracing
  - Report any confirmed positive case of COVID-19 to the school and complete steps with public health officials
What to Expect

Classroom learning w/ teachers
Field Trips
Arts & Music
Physical Education
Access to technology for learning
Final reminders
Resources

Visit for updates

www.bostonpublicschools.org/backtoschool

Welcome Centers are Open:
www.bostonpublicschools.org/welcomecenters

Additional events:
www.bostonpublicschools.org/calendar
For more information
Contact your school
Call the Family Hotline: 617-635-8873
Email: reopening@bostonpublicschools.org
Visit: www.bostonpublicschools.org/backtoschool