

January 22, 2021

Dear Boston Public Schools Community:

I hope you are all staying safe and healthy. This week we celebrated the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and watched the inauguration of our 46th President of the United States, Joe Biden. We also witnessed Kamala Harris become the first Black American, first South Asian American, and first first woman to serve as Vice President of the United States. I know many of our educators are discussing this important moment with students and I encourage you to speak with your children about this landmark event in history as well.

Return to In-Person Learning

Boston Public Schools (BPS) made an announcement last week about the schedule for welcoming additional students to in-person learning. That schedule is below. As a reminder, we sent direct communications to families about the learning model we have on record based on their responses from the summer (remote or hybrid). For students who prefer the hybrid model, we also included group assignments (Group A or Group B) and the days of the week that each student will report, according to this schedule:

- **Week of February 1:** All students who have qualified for high in-person priority
- **Monday, March 1 & Thursday, March 4:** Students in K0 - Grade 3 (Group A & B)
- **Monday, March 15 & Thursday, March 18:** Students in Grades 4 - 8 (Group A & B)
- **Monday, March 29 & Thursday, April 1:** Students in Grades 9 - 12 (Group A & B)

All families have the option to request a change to their learning model preference by contacting your child's school or by completing our [online form](#) available in 10 languages. Requests must be submitted by **Friday, January 29**. Families of students who are currently learning in-person may also request a change to their child's learning model. **Changes will be effective March 1**. Your school will contact you before March 1 to confirm that a change request has been granted, or to notify you in the rare event that a change request cannot be granted.

Two things to note:

1. If you are happy with your child's current learning model, your school has this information and no action is needed from you at this time.
2. Requests for learning models **are not guaranteed** and depend on transportation and school capacity.

Families with questions about the reopening timeline are encouraged to attend our virtual reopening information session next Thursday, January 28, at 5:30 p.m. Interpretation services will be available in multiple languages. Register for the information session and submit your questions [here](#).

Flu Vaccine



The Massachusetts Department of Public Health recently announced that they are removing the influenza immunization requirement for students this school year. While this requirement was lifted so that the Commonwealth can prioritize planning and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, getting a flu vaccine this year is more important than ever to protect our communities from the flu, and help reduce the burden on our local hospitals responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Every school has a full-time nurse available for support should you have questions or concerns about the flu vaccine or other health issues.

COVID-19 Vaccine

We are tracking the progress on the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines in Boston. We are in close contact with the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) as they finalize the plan. BPHC is hosting a COVID-19 Vaccine Information Session for Spanish-speaking residents on Thursday, January 28, from 5:00 -6:00 p.m. Register for the session [here](#).

COVID-19 Testing, Reporting, and Contact Tracing

All staff reporting to school buildings have access to free COVID-19 testing at or near their school. Staff receive an email every week with information about how to access testing. We are also piloting testing for students in grades 9 - 12. Families received a message from BPS about their student participating in this program, which is free, voluntary, and confidential.

We are reporting all confirmed positive COVID-19 cases of students and staff who are reporting to school buildings. You can find the updated report at bostonpublicschools.org/coronavirus. School leaders send a note to their school community when there is a confirmed case in their school. BPS Health Services coordinates all outreach with BPHC to contact anyone who was exposed to someone with a confirmed positive case with guidance on next steps and access to care.

We will continue to provide updates as we begin welcoming additional students back to our school buildings. Thank you for your continued partnership.

In unity,



Dr. Brenda Cassellius
Superintendent