

Dear K-4 Families,

Thank you for taking the time to digest all of the information we have provided regarding our move to full in-person and full remote programs for our K-4 students. We are making this change in order to comply with DESE guidelines and to end the year with every student in a consistent, 5-day/week educational program.

As a reminder, surveys indicating your choice between in-person and remote schooling are due today at noon. You will have two opportunities to switch models: April 30 and May 21.

Over the weekend we received thoughtful emails and questions from parents on a range of topics. In an effort to respond to the most frequently noted concerns we would like to share the following:

- Parents of in-person students who have IEPs expressed concern about how their children's services would be impacted by a potential 14-day quarantine. We recognize that it will be important for students to maintain some educational continuity during their quarantine, and that this is especially critical for students who have IEPs. As we operationalize our plan, figure out how many in-person and remote students we have, form new classrooms, revise teacher placements, and create new schedules, we will also look at the best way to provide IEP services during any quarantines. We are hopeful that the scheduling will allow us to provide many IEP services to students during their quarantines. We will continue to update our community as we figure out the details of the plan.
- Thank you to the families who attended our session Monday morning for those considering the remote schooling option. Because of the feedback asking us to reconsider a live-streaming option, we took that question to our Return to In-Person Learning Working Group last night. That group (which includes parents of remote students) validated its earlier decision to recommend a remote classroom option rather than live-streaming. We recognize that this is not the preference of all families and that some of you will be disappointed. At the same time, we have also received favorable feedback on this decision, as well as an acknowledgement that no model will be perfect. We believe that the remote classroom model will provide the best educational option for remote students, and are confident that our teachers and principals will make this transition as smooth as possible.

As always, please feel free to contact me with questions or concerns. As I work with our principals to define the details of each educational model, we will be in touch with further updates. I am excited about the opportunity that both the remote and in-person models will offer our students and look forward to a strong end to the school year.

Respectfully,

John P. Phelan
Superintendent of Schools
Town of Belmont