

Draft Plans for 2020-21

School Committee Presentation
June 9, 2020

Why are these DRAFT plans?

- The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) will be setting statewide expectations for how schools will reopen in all districts in Massachusetts.
 - Initial state plans will be released mid-June
- The final decision on which plan to implement will depend on the status of the pandemic and rate of COVID-19 cases at the time of opening (much closer to September).

What have we done so far?

- Read available research and articles about opening schools
- Developed draft plans in collaboration with a group of 43 teachers and administrators who met May 8, 15, and 29
- Shared plans and took feedback from:
 - Principals, Curriculum Directors, Curriculum Specialists
 - PTO and PTA Presidents
 - Town Departments: police, fire, health, facilities
- After tonight's presentation we will send survey requesting feedback from all families
- Each round of feedback helps us make the plans better → **this is an iterative process**

How do we plan with so much that is uncertain?

We will develop **multiple plans** so we are ready for any contingency.

1. Traditional opening - all students and staff in person
2. Hybrid opening - half* of the students attend in person while the other half learn remotely; groups alternate (by week, by day, morning/afternoon)
3. Remote opening - all students learn remotely

**Depending on the number of students allowed in a classroom.*

Draft Guiding Principles

1. The top priority is the **health and safety** of all students and staff; we will follow all state and local requirements, including protocols for face coverings and physical distancing.
2. We will start school focusing exclusively on the **social and emotional well-being** of all students (building relationships, community, routines, and rituals) and then maintain this focus as we transition to teaching academic content and skills.
3. Each of these plans will be fully developed and we will be ready to pivot to a different plan as circumstances dictate.

Draft Plan 1: Traditional Opening

If all students and staff are able to safely return to school as we have in the past, we will:

- Have protocols for monitoring student and staff health and responding to a suspected COVID-19 case
- Support students' social and emotional well-being as they transition to the new school year
- Teach curriculum standards from the previous year that are integral to the continuity of learning
- Monitor + support students in need of social emotional or academic support

Draft Plan 2: Hybrid Opening

If students and staff must maintain physical distancing and only half* of the students can be in school at a time, we will:

- Utilize increased device and technology capacity to improve remote learning (explained on slides 12 + 13)
- Design schedules to alternate students between in-person learning and remote learning (by week, by day, or AM/PM)
- Try to schedule all siblings to attend in person at the same time
- Designate staff to in-person or remote learning instruction

**Depending on the number of students allowed in a classroom.*

Draft Plan 2: Hybrid Opening

- Develop schedules to run two concurrent schools (in-person & remote) with current staffing. Possible ideas include:
 - Teaching some subjects in-person and others remotely
 - Teaching some subjects and not others, and all teachers support the taught subjects (in-person or remotely)
- Provide a *remote learning only* option for students whose circumstances preclude in-person learning

Draft Plan 2: Hybrid Opening

And, as in Draft Plan 1, we will also:

- Have protocols for monitoring student and staff health and responding to a suspected COVID-19 case
- Support students' social and emotional well-being as they transition to the new school year
- Teach curriculum standards from the previous year that are integral to the continuity of learning
- Monitor + support students in need of social emotional or academic support

Draft Plan 3: Remote Opening

If it is not safe for in-person schooling, we will

- Utilize increased device and technology capacity to improve remote learning (explained on slides 12 + 13)
- Develop schedules for students with online learning sessions and asynchronous learning not on a device
- If health conditions permit,
 - Create opportunities for students to meet teachers in person, outside and in small groups in September
 - Distribute materials for offline instruction

Draft Plan 3: Remote Opening

And, as in Draft Plans 1 and 2, we will also:

- Support students' social and emotional well-being as they transition to the new school year
- Teach curriculum standards from the previous year that are integral to the continuity of learning
- Monitor + support students in need of social emotional or academic support

Technology for Hybrid and Remote Opening Plans

To improve remote learning, we will:

- Provide devices so that all students in the district have a device to use at home
 - Grades PreK-2 → iPad
 - Grades 3-12 → Chromebook
- Design remote learning for all students that includes
 - Daily required online sessions with teachers
 - Synchronous instruction
 - A central district “hub” to access online learning classes and materials

Technology for Hybrid and Remote Opening Plans

- Provide all students with Belmont Google accounts to improve instruction by using Google Classroom as the platform for students to submit work
- Provide training for all educators to increase our technology skills and capacity to enhance/improve the remote learning experience
- Provide Google Classroom and other app training for students and families (especially younger learners) to improve the remote learning experience

Next Steps

1. We will send all parents and guardians a survey to collect feedback on initial draft plans.
2. The District Leadership Council will develop guiding principles for remote learning.
3. Teams of district leaders will develop schedules for all three plans as well as operational procedures for in-person schooling.
4. Teams of district leaders and educators will develop adjusted curriculum guides (taking into account curriculum not taught last year and reduced curriculum for 2020-21 for hybrid and remote learning plans).

Next Steps

5. We will provide professional learning to all educators and staff on
 - a. Technology for remote learning
 - b. Social emotional learning so we can closely monitor and support students who may have experienced increased stress or anxiety as a result of the school closure, stay-at-home requirements, and/or returning to school in a hybrid model
6. We will continue meeting with stakeholder groups for feedback.
7. We will share progress and updates with School Committee and community at meetings in July and August.