

School Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 8/4/2020
@ 6:30pm

Objective

- Explain the elements of the 3 “return-to-learning” options
- Present 20-21 academic calendar
- SC Questions

DESE Timeline

- 8/4: Explain the elements of the 3 “return-to-learning” options.
- 8/5: A google form will be sent to families to submit questions.
- 8/5 -10: Families will complete a survey on the hybrid options shown. The data will be used to inform our work as we finalize each option.
- 8/6: We will hold another School Committee meeting. It will be a “community forum” to answer questions from families.
- 8/11: Vote on “return-to-learning” option.

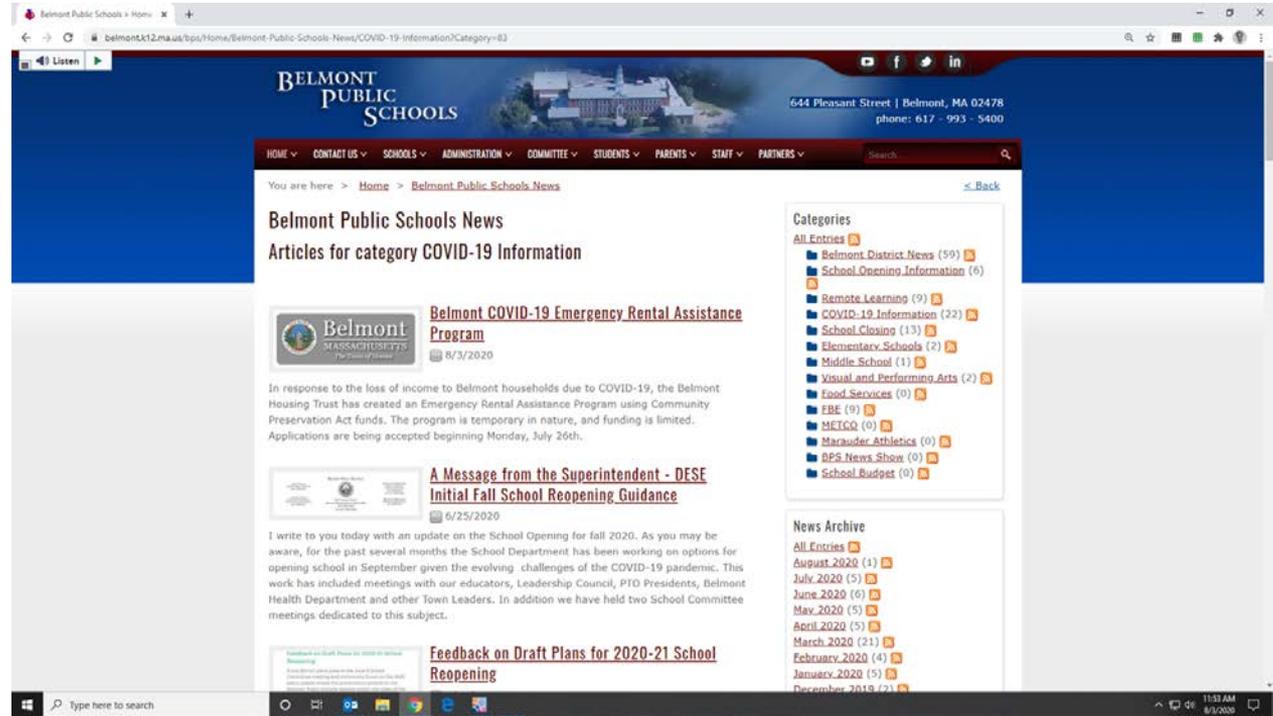
Introduction

Current Health Status

- This summer, we are all asked to:
 - Wear masks
 - Physically distance
 - Wash hands
 - Limit indoor social gatherings
 - Keep workplace capacity below 50%
- Governor Baker announced travel restrictions on 7/24 requiring “all visitors and residents returning home [to] quarantine for 14 days unless they are coming from a COVID-19 lower risk state or they can produce a negative COVID-19 test result...”

Resources

Our website has links to COVID-19 information, health recommendations, fall learning guidance, DESE mandates and timelines, etc.



The screenshot shows the Belmont Public Schools website. The header includes the school's name, logo, and contact information: 644 Pleasant Street | Belmont, MA 02478, phone: 617 - 993 - 5400. A navigation menu is visible with options like HOME, CONTACT US, SCHOOLS, ADMINISTRATION, COMMITTEE, STUDENTS, PARENTS, STAFF, and PARTNERS. The main content area is titled "Belmont Public Schools News" and "Articles for category COVID-19 Information". Three articles are listed:

- Belmont COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program** (8/3/2020): In response to the loss of income to Belmont households due to COVID-19, the Belmont Housing Trust has created an Emergency Rental Assistance Program using Community Preservation Act funds. The program is temporary in nature, and funding is limited. Applications are being accepted beginning Monday, July 26th.
- A Message from the Superintendent - DESE Initial Fall School Reopening Guidance** (6/25/2020): I write to you today with an update on the School Opening for fall 2020. As you may be aware, for the past several months the School Department has been working on options for opening school in September given the evolving challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. This work has included meetings with our educators, Leadership Council, PTO Presidents, Belmont Health Department and other Town Leaders. In addition we have held two School Committee meetings dedicated to this subject.
- Feedback on Draft Plans for 2020-21 School Reopening**

On the right side, there are sections for "Categories" and "News Archive". The "Categories" section lists various topics with their respective article counts, such as Belmont District News (59), School Opening Information (6), Remote Learning (9), COVID-19 Information (22), School Closing (13), Elementary Schools (2), Middle School (1), Visual and Performing Arts (2), Food Services (0), FBE (9), METCO (0), Marauder Athletics (0), BPS News Show (0), and School Budget (0). The "News Archive" section lists months from August 2020 to December 2019 with their respective article counts.

Decision - making Process

- **May-June:** Research & define different models
- **June 25:** DESE publishes *initial* guidance
- **July 31:** Submit in-person feasibility study to DESE
- **August 4-11:** Present “return-to-learn” options to public
- **August 11:** Vote on model to begin the 20-21 school year
- **August 12:** Submit 3 plans to DESE with voted option for September

“Return -to-Learning”: 3 Options

- In-person with restrictions
- Hybrid return
- Full-remote

These three options provide the district the tools to respond to the health data (statewide and locally) in September.

Listening to and learning from “Stakeholders”

- 4 meetings with “20-21 Planning Group”
- 11 educator input opportunities (school-based)
- 7 Leadership Council (Curriculum Directors, APs, Principals) input opportunities
- 8 Principals’ meetings
- 19 Joint Labor-Management meetings with BEA
- 5 meetings with PTO/PTA Presidents
- 3 town departmental meetings (Police, Fire, Health Department)
- 5 meetings with aftercare providers (BASEC, BEDP, etc)
- 10 School Committee meetings / Public forums
- 9 DESE Commissioner’s calls
- M.A.S.S. virtual conference for Superintendents on 7/14 7/15.
- Daily Cabinet meetings

**In-person with
restrictions**

Introduction

- **July:** Full, in-person feasibility study was completed at every school, measuring classrooms using DESE's-foot spacing standard. "Pressure test" results included:
 - Belmont [High School](#)
 - W.L. [Chenery](#) Middle School
 - Mary Lee [Burbank](#) Elementary School
 - Daniel [Butler](#) Elementary School
 - [Winn Brook](#) Elementary School
 - Roger [Wellington](#) Elementary School.
- All "pressure test" data is available on the [district website](#).

Summary

- **Findings:** In most classrooms district-wide, enrollment exceeds student capacity. It is not possible to safely bring all students and staff back into the buildings and maintain the required distance.
- **Conclusion:** Full, in-person learning is not a safe return-to-learning option for Fall 2020



Hybrid

Introduction

- “Hybrid” models seek to reduce the number of students who attend in person by dividing up the student population into two cohorts (A & B)
- By reducing the number of students in the building, we can increase the physical distance between students
- In all “hybrid” models:
 - Students with “complex” needs attend every day (as designated by DESE: Students with disabilities, English learners, and economically disadvantaged)
 - In-person instruction alternates with synchronous/live remote instruction
- Schedules are still in the process of being finalized, but the “big ideas” are in place.

“Hybrid” big ideas

- Elementary Schools

- ELA, Math, Science, and SS on-person day
- Art, music, physical education on remote learning day
- “X” Block for additional support and/or reinforcement of content taught
- Teacher preparation and meeting blocks held before or after students arrive
- Cohorting of students

- Middle School

- ELA, Math, Science, and SS on-person day
- Art, music, physical education, world languages, health, engineering on remote learning day
- “X” Block for additional support and/or reinforcement of content taught
- Teacher preparation and meeting blocks held before or after students arrive
- Cohorting of students (wherever possible)

“Hybrid” big ideas (cont’d)

- High School
 - Keep Program of Studies unchanged
 - Our goal is to schedule all courses that students signed up for last Spring
 - Students will receive direct instruction with a teacher, independent & group work, and project based learning (PBL) opportunities
 - Schedule for high school is a combination of in person and remote; dividing students into Cohort A & B
 - “X” Block for additional support and/or reinforcement of content taught

“Hybrid” Proposal #1

Proposal	Brief Description	Pros	Cons
<p><i>Younger students full in-person; all other grades remote learning only</i></p>	<p>Younger grades return fully in-person, but are physically spread across different district schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PreK-2 in their current elementary schools ● 3-4 @ BHS ● 5-6 @ CMS <p>Older grades remain remote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 7-8: Remote ● 9-12: Remote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youngest students – who struggle the most with remote learning – do not have to go remote ● Younger children – who are most in need of childcare – are in school, freeing parents/guardians from worry and allowing them to work full-time ● Greater percentage of “Complex Need” students are in PK-6 would not need a special model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Does not meet the needs of those older students who might also struggle with remote learning ● Not enough educators to adequately address class sizes/ratios ● School leadership spread across multiple schools ● Bus transportation concerns ● If secondary teachers & administrators are used to support elementary classes, professionals are working well outside their area of certification and expertise

“Hybrid” Proposal #2

Proposal	Brief Description	Pros	Cons
<p><i>Morning or afternoon, but eat at home</i></p>	<p>½ of the students attend in the morning, leaving before lunch</p> <p>½ of the students attend in the afternoon, arriving after lunch</p> <p>Students receive synchronous remote instruction when they are not in school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More opportunity for “deep cleaning” between cohorts• Fewer transitions for younger students• Complex logistics around lunch and recess not present• Opens the cafeteria to other uses• “Grab n’ Go” meals could be available for exiting students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concerns about transportation issues and costs (for all students)• Transportation challenges for METCO students, especially• Increasing interruptions on families; no days are fully covered• “Grab n’ Go” meals not available for entering students• Parent/Guardian surveys showed this as the least popular option

“Hybrid” Proposal #3

Proposal	Brief Description	Pros	Cons
<i>Day-by-day, but Wednesday at home</i>	<p>½ of the students attend each day on alternating days</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cohort A: Monday & Thursday• Cohort B: Tuesday & Friday• Wednesdays all remote with prepared work (asynchronous) while teachers are in planning meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students receive direct instruction more consistently, with a clear beginning day and ending day each week• The remote day could consist of independent work related to the in-person days• Teacher lunch coverage is easier to address• Built-in time for staff meetings, collaboration, planning, PD (which will be desperately needed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less frequent student-to-teacher engagement.• Lack of momentum; too much start and stop for students• Routines would be very difficult to establish• More difficult for families• Concerns about transportation issues and costs (for all students)

“Hybrid” Proposal #4

Proposal	Brief Description	Pros	Cons
<i>Day-by-day in couplets, but Wednesdays at home</i>	<p>½ of the students attend in two-day couplets, with one day remote for all to allow teachers to prepare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cohort A: Monday & Tuesday• Wednesdays all remote with prepared work (asynchronous) while teachers are in planning meetings• Cohort B: Thursday & Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Same as above (Model 3)• Somewhat more momentum by experiencing consecutive days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Same as above (Model 3)

“Hybrid” Proposal #5

Proposal	Brief Description	Pros	Cons
<i>Week-by-week</i>	½ of the students attend each week on alternating weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students receive direct instruction more consistently, with a more familiar beginning day and ending day each week• The remote week could consist of independent work related to the in-person days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Having children out a whole week risks stunting momentum; 1 week gap between when students connect with their teachers• For youngest students it could be like coming back from February break each time in terms of re-learning routines• For older students remote week may feel like the week before vacations

“Hybrid” Proposal #6

Proposal	Brief Description	Pros	Cons
<i>Every two weeks</i>	½ of the students attend for two week stretches on alternating “fortnights”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive health aspect: 2 weeks encompasses COVID-19 symptom timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Having children out a whole week risks stunting momentum; 2 week gap between when students connect with their teachers• May be especially challenging for students to make consistent progress with 2 weeks out of the building

“Hybrid” Proposal #7

Proposal	Brief Description	Pros	Cons
<i>More pros than cons</i>	<p>All days shortened by 60 minutes to accommodate contractual requirements for teacher preparation & meetings (all others could be accommodated during the day)</p> <p>In-person days: ELA, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, and Remote days: Specials (World Languages, PE, Engineering, Art, Music, Library, Health)</p> <p>Maintains traditional start and end times for teachers for each school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Longer academic blocks maximize instructional time• Opportunity for “deep cleaning” between cohorts• “Grab n’ Go” meals available for all students• The remote ½ day could consist of independent work related to the in-person days• Built-in time for staff meetings, collaboration, planning, PD• Fewer bus transportation concerns, especially for METCO students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some professionals are working outside their area of certification and expertise• Complex logistics around lunch and recess still present• Less frequent student-to-teacher engagement than we may like

General “Hybrid” Schedule (sample)

	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
<i>*Before students</i>	Teacher Prep	Teacher Prep	Teacher Prep	Teacher Prep	Teacher Prep
	Classes	Classes	Classes	Classes	Classes
	Lunch	Lunch	Student dismissal Remote/Meetings	Lunch	Lunch
	Classes	Classes		Classes	Classes
<i>*After students</i>	Teacher Meetings	Teacher Meetings		Teacher Meetings	Teacher Meetings

- This “hybrid” format -- 2 days in, 2 days out, early release, etc is consistent with most neighboring districts:
 - [Lexington](#)
 - [Winchester](#)
 - [Weston](#)

“Hybrid” Student Schedule (sample)

“In” Days

Morning arrival

~2.5hrs

Core Academics
(60-75 minute blocks)

~30 mins

Lunch

~2.5hrs

Core Academics
(60-75 minute blocks)

Afternoon dismissal

+ _____
TOTAL: 5.5h

“Out” Days

Log on

~2.5hrs

Specials
(30-45 minute blocks)

~30 mins

Lunch

~2.5 hrs

Remote learning
- or -

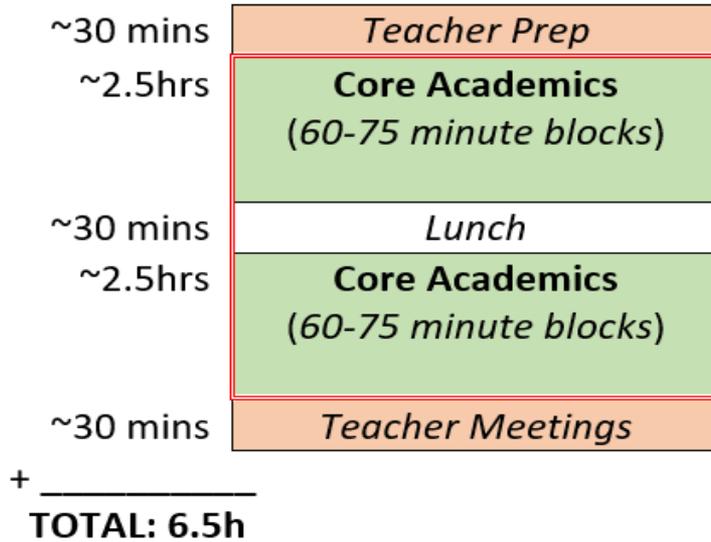
“X Block”

Log off

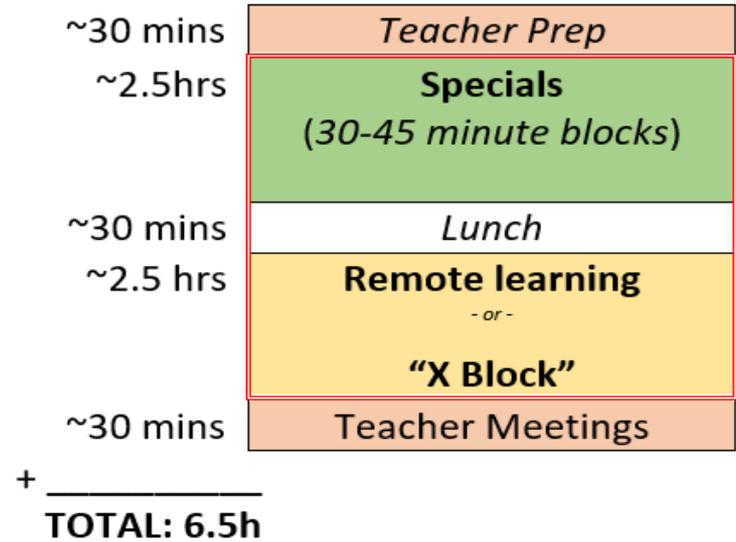
+ _____
TOTAL: 5.5h

“Hybrid” Teacher Schedule (sample)

Core Teachers



Specialist Teachers



Summary

- Full attendance is expected and will be taken
- Students will receive feedback and will be assessed in a way they were not last spring; traditional grades will be given



Full-remote

Introduction

- Family feedback: *“Any remote model that is implemented in Fall 2020 must be more robust than was implemented in Spring 2020.”*
- Teachers and staff have spent this summer participating in professional development on “virtual schooling.”
- Teachers will be supported by two new Technology Integration Specialists, hired this year via funding from the federal CARES Act.

Spring vs. Fall

	Phase II	Phase III
Dates	4/1/2020 – 6/17/2020	September 2020
Mode	<i>“Remote Learning”</i> Educator-directed learning	<i>“Virtual School”</i> Synchronous educator-led learning
Focus Area(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SEL Connection - Resources - Curriculum advancement as the learning circumstances permit - New meaningful and productive learning opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SEL Connection - Resources - Curriculum advancement for all students - New meaningful and productive learning opportunities
Platforms Used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Google Meet & Google Classroom - PlusPortal - Teacher-directed platforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Google Meet & Google Classroom - PlusPortal - Teacher-directed platforms

Spring vs. Fall (*cont'd*)

	Phase II	Phase III
Teacher Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Role: Facilitator - Collect and assess assignments for completion (for credit or no credit) (5-12), and prepare and send via email to families daily specific schedule of activities/learning opportunities (K-4) - Post pre-recorded lessons (original or sourced online; i.e. Khan Academy) - Regular “in-facing” meetings with colleagues & “out-facing” meetings with students - Address individual questions from students or parents/guardians in a timely fashion - Direct students to online learning resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Role: Instructor and Facilitator - Collect and assess assignments, providing feedback and grading - Collect and assess assignments, including online quizzes and tests - Synchronous / Real-time lessons - Daily “in-facing” meetings with colleagues - Daily “out-facing” meetings with students - Address individual questions from students or parents/guardians in a timely fashion - Direct students to online learning resources

Spring vs. Fall (*cont'd*)

	Phase II	Phase III
Student Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 50% of the time of a regular school day (~3 hrs), per Commissioner Riley's recommendation- Complete and submit opportunities within deadlines (5-12), and Engage in daily specified activities that families will receive by email (K-4)- Check email each morning for messages from teachers (5-12)- Reply to messages (5-12)- Read daily for at least 60 minutes (5-12), and 30 minutes (K-4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 100% of the time of a regular school day- Attend classes online according to a synchronized schedule- Access all assignments through an "Academic Hub"- Additional homework time (grade-level appropriate)

Spring vs. Fall (*cont'd*)

	Phase II	Phase III
Grading Expectation	- Pass/Fail/Incomplete grade	- Traditional (letter) grade

Summary

- Instruction will be teacher-led & synchronous.
- Sometimes instruction will be whole-class, other times it will be small group; Students will not necessarily be on screen all day.
- Now that we are 1:1, full attendance can be expected (and will be taken).
- Students will receive feedback and will be assessed in a way they were not last spring; traditional grades will be given.
- Although remote schedules may vary by level- just as traditional schedules do -- they will follow a traditional schedule format.
- Students with “complex” needs attend every day (as designated by DESE: Students with disabilities, English learners, and economically disadvantaged).

A red square with a white border, containing the text "Next Steps" in white. The square is centered on a white background.

Next Steps

Timeline & Upcoming Meetings

- **7/30:** Preliminary plans due to DESE; DESE will review the plans and give feedback by 8/7.
- **8/4:** School Committee Meeting to review return-to-learning options, school calendar, and School Committee questions.
- **8/5-10:** Family survey (closes on 8/10 @ 9:00am)
- **8/6:** Public release of BPS “return-to-learn” plan
- **8/6:** School Committee Meeting / “Community Forum”
- **8/11:** School Committee Meeting to review survey results, formally vote
- **8/12:** Submit final decision due to DESE



Thank You