



# Return to In-Person Learning Working Group

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School Committee | March 30, 2021



# Agenda


- Updates Since Last Meeting
- High School Updates
- High School Context Setting
- Extending K-8 Recommendations to Grades 9-12
- Unresolved Challenges for Grades 9-12



# Updates Since Last Meeting

- Updated Health Metrics
- Mask Policy Updates
- K-4 Progress & Implementation Updates
- Middle School Progress & Implementation Updates



| Prevention Strategies by Level of Community Transmission   |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| Low Transmission <sup>1</sup><br>Blue  | Moderate Transmission<br>Yellow   | Substantial Transmission<br>Orange   | High Transmission<br>Red   |
| <b>Elementary Schools</b><br>Physical distancing: at least 3 feet between students in classrooms   |   | <b>Elementary Schools</b><br>Physical distancing: at least 3 feet of distance between students in classrooms<br><br>Cohorting <sup>2</sup> recommended when possible                     |  |
| <b>Middle and High Schools</b><br>Physical distancing: at least 3 feet between students in classrooms<br><br> |   | <b>Middle and High Schools</b><br>Physical distancing: at least 3 feet of distance between students in classrooms<br><br>Cohorting recommended when possible                             | <b>Middle and High Schools</b><br>Schools that can use cohorting: at least 3 feet of distance<br><br>Schools that cannot use cohorting: at least 6 feet distance between students in classrooms <sup>2</sup> |
| <b>Sports and extracurricular activities</b><br>Sports and extracurricular activities occur with at least 6 feet of physical distance to the greatest extent possible <sup>3</sup>             | <b>Sports and extracurricular activities</b><br>Sports and extracurricular activities occur with at least 6 feet of physical distance required <sup>3</sup> | <b>Sports and extracurricular activities</b><br>Sports and extracurricular activities occur only if they can be held outdoors, with more than 6 feet of physical distancing <sup>6</sup> |  |

# Mitigation, Learning Modes, & Community Transmission

Levels of community transmission defined as:

- **total new cases** per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days (low, 0-9; moderate, 10-49; substantial, 50-99; high, ≥100), and
- **percentage of positive tests** in the past 7 days (low, <5%; moderate, 5-7.9%; substantial, 8-9.9%; high, ≥10%).

|   |
|---|
| <b>Belmont's Level of Community Transmission</b><br>(3/29/2021) |
| <b>Total new cases:</b> 36.62                                   |
| <b>Percentage of positive tests:</b><br>0.76% (14 day average)  |

**Sources:** Center for Disease Control. (2021). [CDC's Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Mitigation.](#)

Calculations determined by Belmont Board of Health. **Note:** CDC metrics are *different* than MA metrics/levels.



# Level of Community Transmission Over Last Month

## Level of Community Transmission Metrics Belmont, MA

| Date      | Total New Cases per 100,000 persons (last 7 days) | Percentage of Positive Tests (last 7 days)* | Belmont's Level of Community Transmission | CDC Recommendations re: Physical Distancing | CDC Recommendations re: Cohorting* | CDC Recommended Instructional Mode (Elementary) | CDC Recommended Instructional Mode (MS & HS) |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|------------------------------------|---|--|
| 3-29-2021 | 36.62   | 0.76%                                       | Moderate                                  | 3'+ between students                        | N/A                                |   |  |
| 3-22-2021 | 25.63   | 0.78%                                       | Moderate                                  | 3'+ between students                        | N/A                                |   |  |
| 3-19-2021 | <b>UPDATED CDC GUIDANCE RE: RECOMMENDATIONS</b>   |   |   |   |                                    |   |  |
| 3-15-2021 | 58.59   | 0.66%                                       | Substantial                               | 6'+ required                                |                                    | Hybrid mode                                     | Hybrid mode                                  |
| 3-8-2021  | 32.96   | 0.82%                                       | Moderate                                  | 6'+ to greatest extent possible             |                                    | Full in-person instruction                      | Full in-person instruction                   |
| 3-1-2021  | 40.28   | 0.98%                                       | Moderate                                  | 6'+ to greatest extent possible             |                                    | Full in-person instruction                      | Full in-person instruction                   |
| 2-22-2021 | 47.6  | 1.43%                                       | Moderate                                  | 6'+ to greatest extent possible             |                                    | Full in-person instruction                      | Full in-person instruction                   |
| 2-15-2021 | 65.92   | 1.85%                                       | Substantial                               | 6'+ required                                |                                    | Hybrid mode                                     | Hybrid mode                                  |
| 2-8-2021  | 113.53  | 2.42%                                       | High                                      | 6'+ required                                |                                    | Hybrid mode                                     | Virtual only unless strict mitigation        |
| 2-1-2021  | 124.51  | 3.01%                                       | High                                      | 6'+ required                                |                                    | Hybrid mode                                     | Virtual only unless strict mitigation        |

\* According to the CDC (2021a): "Cohorting involves creating groups of students that are separated from other groups by at least 6 feet throughout the entire day. Cohorting can be implemented in either full in-person instruction or hybrid instruction, or through other strategies."

Levels of community transmission defined as:

- **total new cases** per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days (low, 0-9; moderate, 10-49; substantial, 50-99; high, ≥100), and
- **percentage of positive tests** in the past 7 days (low, <5%; moderate, 5-7.9%; substantial, 8-9.9%; high, ≥10%).

Sources: Center for Disease Control. (2021). [CDC's Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Mitigation.](#)



# K-4 Progress & Implementation Updates

- **Assignments**
  - Teacher, Student, Administration
- **Communication**
  - Staff, Families, Students
- **Transitions**
  - Preparation
- **Operations**
  - Schedules, lunches, arrival & dismissal
  - Hiring
  - Absences & Elections



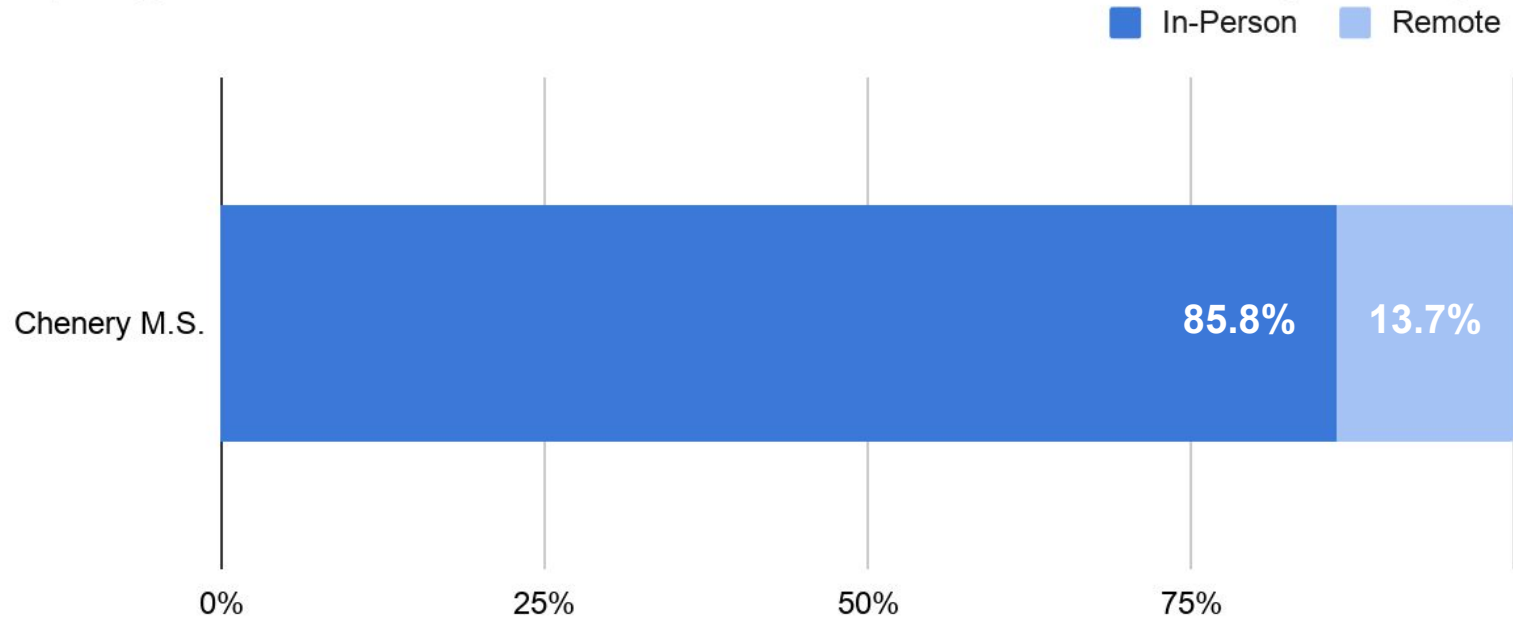
# Middle School Progress & Implementation Updates

- Reviewing data to best understand learning models.
  - Grade 5 Remote Academy
  - Grades 6-8 Live-streaming
- Start date for grade 5 not determined yet.
- Developing schedule and livestream models with faculty.
- DESE team coming to CMS this week to review challenges unique to operationalizing return to in-person (building, grounds, and schedule).



# 5-8: Enrollment Data by Instructional Model

Spring 2021 Full Return Instructional Mode Selections (Gr. 5-8)







# 5-8: Enrollment Data by Instructional Model by Grade

| <b>Chenery M.S.</b> | <b>In-Person Students</b> | <b>Remote Students</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| All Students        | 86%                       | 14%                    |
| Grade 5             | 87%                       | 13%                    |
| Grade 6             | 85%                       | 15%                    |
| Grade 7             | 88%                       | 12%                    |
| Grade 8             | 84%                       | 15%                    |



## 5-8: Enrollment Data by Instructional Model for Subgroups

| <b>Chenery M.S.</b>               | <b>In-Person Students</b> | <b>Remote Students</b> |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| All Students                      | 86%                       | 14%                    |
| Students with an IEP              | 80%                       | 19%                    |
| Students who are English Learners | 85%                       | 15%                    |
| Students in the METCO program     | 66%                       | 31%                    |



# 5-8: Enrollment Data by Instructional Model by Race/Ethnicity

Categories determined by DESE and data self-reported by families  
(for race/ethnicity data where  $n > 20$ )

| <b>Chenery M.S.</b>       | <b>In-Person Students</b> | <b>Remote Students</b> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| All Students              | 86%                       | 14%                    |
| Asian                     | 82%                       | 18%                    |
| Black or African American | 82%                       | 16%                    |
| Hispanic or Latino: White | 78%                       | 22%                    |
| White                     | 89%                       | 10%                    |
| White and Asian           | 78%                       | 22%                    |

# Belmont High School: Updates and Looking Ahead

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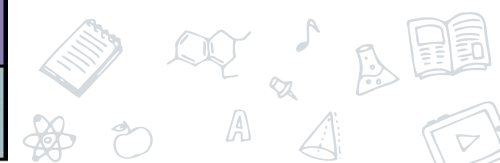


# High School Updates: Change to Learning Model

- Survey released this past week (due tomorrow - Wednesday, 3/31)
- **Starting April 12th: in-person students attend school 4 mornings a week (M/Tu/Th/F)**
  - Hybrid Cohorts A/B will be dissolved
  - No change to the class schedule
  - Dismissal at 11:55 am; lunch at home
  - Afternoons and Wednesdays remain remote

# CURRENT HYBRID STUDENTS ATTEND IN-PERSON CLASSES 4 DAYS/WEEK

| MONDAY                                    | TUESDAY   | WEDNESDAY     | THURSDAY                | FRIDAY                                    |   |
|---|---|---------------|-------------------------|---|---|
| Yellow<br>8:00-8:55                       | Green<br>8:00-8:55                                  | <b>REMOTE</b> | Yellow<br>8:00-8:55     | Green<br>8:00-8:55                        |   |
| Light Blue<br>9:00-9:55                   | Pink<br>9:00-9:55                                   |               | YELLOW<br>8:00-8:20     | Light Blue<br>9:00-9:55                   | Pink<br>9:00-9:55                                   |
| Orange<br>10:00-10:55                     | Purple<br>10:00-10:55                               |               | LIGHT BLUE<br>8:30-8:50 | Orange<br>10:00-10:55                     | Purple<br>10:00-10:55                               |
| Dk. Blue<br>11:00-11:55                   | X-Block<br><i>Cohort A ONLY</i><br>11:00-11:55      |               | HOMEROOM<br>8:55-9:05   | Dk. Blue<br>11:00-11:55                   | X-Block<br><i>Cohort B ONLY</i><br>11:00-11:55      |
| Cohort A Dismissal / Lunch<br>11:55-12:50 |   |               | PINK<br>9:10-9:30       | Cohort B Dismissal / Lunch<br>11:55-12:50 |   |
| <b>ALL REMOTE</b>                         |   |               | DARK BLUE<br>9:40-10:00 | <b>ALL REMOTE</b>                         |   |
| Yellow<br>12:50-1:10                      | Green<br>12:50-1:10                                 |               | GREEN<br>10:10-10:30    | Yellow<br>12:50-1:10                      | Green<br>12:50-1:10                                 |
| Light Blue<br>1:15-1:35                   | Pink<br>1:15-1:35                                   |               | ORANGE<br>10:40-11:00   | Light Blue<br>1:15-1:35                   | Pink<br>1:15-1:35                                   |
| Orange<br>1:40-2:00                       | Purple<br>1:40-2:00                                 |               | PURPLE<br>11:10-11:30   | Orange<br>1:40-2:00                       | Purple<br>1:40-2:00                                 |
| Dk. Blue<br>2:05-2:25                     | X-Block<br><i>Remote-Only Students</i><br>2:05-2:25 |               |                         | Dk. Blue<br>2:05-2:25                     | X-Block<br><i>Remote-Only Students</i><br>2:05-2:25 |





# Looking Ahead: Recommendations for 9-12 Full In-Person Model

- Bring all grades 9-12 students back to full-in person school in accordance with DESE requirements (when they come) and upcoming timeline in a model that will:
  - **Have students in school 5 days/week between 8:00-2:25 (M, T, Th, F) and 8:00-1:30 (W)**
  - **Offer academics, electives, and lunch as part of the school day;**
  - **Include specialized instruction for students in special education and students who are English Language Learners;**
  - **Provide bus transportation in accordance with DESE guidance;**
  - **Implement classroom capacity, individual distancing, and quarantining requirements from CDC and DESE guidance; and**
- Offer a remote learning option via live-streaming for grades 9-12 students that includes academics, electives, and specialized instruction; and
- Eliminate the hybrid school option for grades 9-12 students.



# Belmont High School Hours and Structure of the School Day

- High School Hours:
  - M/Tu/Th/F — 8:00a.m. - 2:25 p.m. | W — 8:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
- Start date: TBD
- In-person instruction: Students will retain all of their courses (including specialized instruction and electives)
- Lunch: TBD





# Transportation to School

- Bus capacity: Up to full capacity (consistent with DESE Transportation Guidance)
  - Aspirational: 2 students per bench
- All windows open at all times (at least 2 inches)
- All students must wear masks at all times.
- All students will be assigned to a specific seat.
- Parents are encouraged to provide alternative transportation options for students (family-provided transportation, walking, biking, “walking buses,” etc.).



# Classroom: Physical Distancing and Capacity

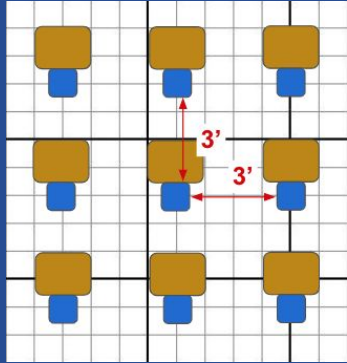
- General classroom setup:
  - 6' reserved space for teachers
  - 3'+ distancing for students



# Masked Spectrum of Distancing (per 3/9 DESE Guidance)

## MINIMUM DISTANCING

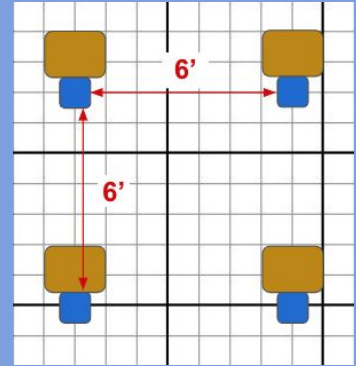
3 feet  
edge of chair  
to  
edge of chair



*...Additional expanded distancing options...*

*Physical distancing in most high school classrooms will fall somewhere in this range and will depend on number of in-person students.*

6 feet  
edge of chair  
to  
edge of chair



# Additional Safety Protocols at Belmont High School

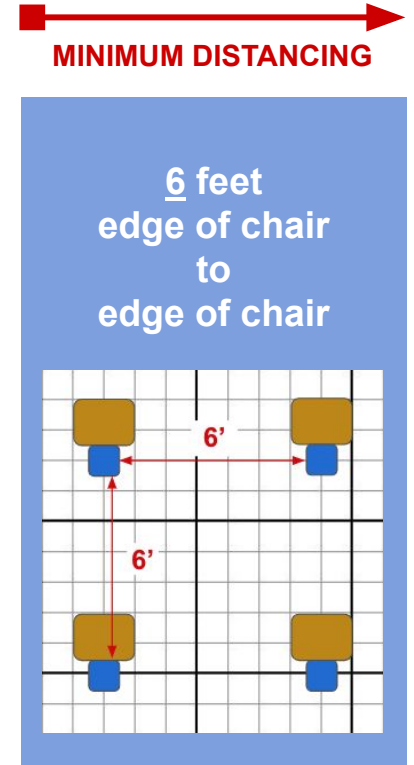


- Masks must be worn in the building at all times
- **During class, students utilize a QR Code Scan (using their cellphone) to “sign out” of a class and to “sign in” to a location (bathroom, nurses’ office, main office)**
  - The QR codes in locations track student movement and are time stamped
  - The data is automatically collected on a google sheet
  - We utilize the google sheet to identify close contacts, if needed
- **Students utilize a one-way traffic flow in the hallways during transitions**
- Hand sanitizing units are available in every classroom and in hallways throughout the school
- **Teachers require students to wipe down desks at the end of class**
- Students do not share manipulatives or materials



# Unmasked Spectrum of Distancing (per 3/9 DESE Guidance)

- Students will observe 6' distancing for lunch and for outdoor mask breaks





# Unmasking for Lunch and Mask Breaks

6'+ distancing is required for:

- **Lunch**

- Locations: Cafeteria and tents
- Schedule: TBD
- We are in the process of renting and purchasing tables, chairs, tents
- No talking while unmasked
- Lunch seating has been modeled with both square & hexagonal arrangements

- **Mask breaks**

- Locations: Courtyard (designated spots) and outdoor spaces



# Electives

- All high school students will continue to have access to *all* of their courses.
- Each class will continue to have a specific, assigned location.
  - Some courses might meet outside.
  - When feasible, we will hold certain elective classes in outdoor spaces (especially when singing in music)
  - Consider specific location for music when singing (e.g., outside, large space) to accommodate masked 10'+ distancing when singing (per updated DESE guidance)



# Specialized Instruction

- Specialized instruction (e.g., services for students in special education, English Language Learners) will occur for in-person and remote students as it has since September.





# Why Now? Full In-Person Planning for BHS

- Established Return to In-Person Learning Working Group (Jan 2021)
- Health metrics moved into CDC “yellow” (Feb 22, 2021)
- Facilities investments (Aug 2020 onwards; ongoing)
- New CDC Guidance (Feb/Mar 2021)
- Updated DESE Guidance (Feb/Mar 2021)



# Why Now? Full In-Person Planning for BHS

Current DESE guidance:

**“High school phase (grades 9-12):** We will announce the details and timing of the high school phase of the plan in April. Districts will be provided with at least two weeks advance notice of the specific date requirement for high school students but should start making such plans now.” (DESE, Mar. 9, 2021)

**As of Mar. 30, these details and the timing have not been released.**

Source: DESE. (March 9, 2021). [On the desktop - March 9, 2021: Guidance on in-person learning requirements.](#)



# Why Now? Full In-Person Planning for BHS

Current DESE requirements re: definition of in-person learning:

**“Definition of full-time in-person learning.** The requirement for “full-time” in-person learning means that **all structured learning time hours (on average 5 hours per day of structured learning time at the elementary level and 5.5 hours per day at the secondary level)** are required to be delivered in-person, **five days per week.** This will generally mean that students are attending a full school day equivalent to the length of their school day pre-pandemic. Any deviation from offering full-time, in-person instruction five days a week to all students requires a waiver.”

Source: DESE. (March 9, 2021). [On the desktop - March 9, 2021: Guidance on in-person learning requirements.](#)



# Belmont High School: Context Setting

- Considerations surrounding the creation and implementation of a five day, in-person schedule:
  - Maximizing usable space, given that May is a month of testing at BHS (MCAS and AP testing)
  - Minimizing the number of close contacts for students given:
    - More students in the building
    - No way to “group” students, given the absence of teaming and the presence of mixed-grade level students in a single class
  - Offering lunch safely to students given structural constraints
    - More information on the next slide...



# Belmont High School: Context Setting - Lunch

- We do not currently have lunch in our 15-mod schedule
  - Lunch depends on what class you are in during the allotted 3 lunch times
- We have courses comprised of multiple grade levels
  - Cannot do lunch by grade or team
- We have limited large spaces right now
  - The Field House (gyms) will be used for testing the full month of May and will be turned over to the building project on June 1
  - The auditorium, little theater, and library are classroom spaces
- We are limited to offering lunch outside under tents and in the cafeteria (capacity: 100)



# Questions Still Remaining...

- What will the state guidance be for full in-person learning at high schools? What will they require of Belmont High School and how can we best meet what they are asking us to do?
- How do we provide lunch safely and secure the mandated number of instructional minutes?
- How will lunch work outside with hundreds of students?
- Does it make sense to shift to a schedule with seven full classes each day at this point in the year?
  - For in-person students?
  - For remote-only students?
- How do we meet the mandates and provide a humane experience for the Belmont High School community?



# Return to In-Person Learning Working Group Recommendations

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Recommendations for 9-12 Full Remote Option



# Recommendations for 9-12 Remote Learners

- Utilize live-streaming for grades 9-12 remote learning in Spring 2021
- High school hours will be the same as for in-person students
- Core and elective classes offered for all grades
- Specialized instruction (e.g., services for students with disabilities, English learners) will occur for in-person and remote students as it has since September.





# Unresolved Challenges for Grades 9-12: Lunch

For each option (and any others you brainstorm/consider):

- What feedback do you have about this lunch model? Any additional ideas to enhance or problem-solve it?
- What are the *benefits* or *strengths* of this option? What are the *costs* or *drawbacks* of this option?

## Option A:

Multiple, rotating lunches during one elongated class period

## Option B:

One common, elongated lunch period with off-site option

## Option C:

Lunch at the end of the day (early release)

## Option D:

Additional option(s)



# Unresolved Challenges for Grades 9-12: Lunch

**Option A:**  
Multiple, rotating lunches during one elongated class period

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <b>Period 2</b>   |                |
| <b>Period 3 &amp; Lunch</b><br>(1.5 times as long as other periods) | <i>Lunch A</i> |
|   | <i>Lunch B</i> |
|   | <i>Lunch C</i> |
| <b>Period 4</b>   |                |

**Option B:**  
One common, elongated lunch period with off-site option

|                            |                |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Period 2</b>            |                |
| Lunch hour<br>(no classes) | <i>Lunch A</i> |
|                            | <i>Lunch B</i> |
| <b>Period 3</b>            |                |

**Option C:**  
Lunch at the end of the day (early release)

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Period 3</b>                  |  |
| <b>Period 4</b>                  |  |
| Early release<br>(lunch at home) | <i>(30-60 minutes before end of day)</i> |

**Option D:**  
Additional option(s)

?

Period numbers and sample schedules for illustrative purposes only.