



August 28, 2020

Dear LPS Families,

As you know, Lawrence Public Schools will start the school year with remote learning on Sept. 16. While we will miss seeing everyone in person, we are excited for our first day and everyone at LPS is hard at work preparing for a successful start.

We continue to adapt our planning around the many challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Today I am writing with an important update regarding the schedule for returning our high needs students to in-person learning, as we make adjustments for a district-wide building ventilation assessment.

This work is an important part of our efforts to provide safe facilities, but it does mean that we are unable, as initially intended, to bring at least some high needs students back to our buildings on day one. These students will start the school year in remote learning, with a three-phase approach to bringing them back in-person over the fall and early winter.

Phase I consists of larger, newer schools with the fastest anticipated assessment process, allowing us to return approximately 1,200 high needs students to in person learning. Phase II would focus on the remainder of our early childhood schools so we can welcome back preschool and remaining kindergarten students (an additional 1,400 students), and Phase III includes all remaining schools' high needs learners (approximately 500 additional students).

The current school grouping and timeline is:

- Phase 1: Arlington Middle, Community Day Arlington, Guilmette Elementary, Guilmette Middle, Parthum Elementary, Parthum Middle, Wetherbee, SES, SES-Annex, South Lawrence East, Spark Academy, and Lawrence High School (Lower School, Upper School, ENLACE, Abbott Lawrence, RISE). *Projected start for in-person learning for high needs student groups enrolled in these schools is mid-October.*
- Phase 2: Rollins, Breen, Lawrence Family Public Academy, Hennessy, Lawlor, Frost Elementary and Frost Middle. *Projected start for in-person learning for high needs student groups enrolled in these schools is mid-November.*
- Phase 3: - Leahy, Tarbox, Oliver Partnership School, UP Oliver, UP Leonard, High School Learning Center, International High School and Bruce. *Projected start for in-person learning for high needs student groups enrolled in these schools is early January.*

Schools will be reaching out directly very soon with more details and information, and we will continue to provide regular updates about the progress of this work and the schedule for students' return. During these communications, families of high needs students will be asked to confirm their interest in having their student attend in person learning or if they would prefer to remain on a remote learning plan.

While this delay will help us provide safer spaces for everyone, we know how especially challenging this extended period of remote learning is for our students and their parents. We are committed to supporting you in any way possible, including an even greater focus on family engagement; innovative delivery of student services; more technology distribution and family training for online learning tools; and frequent, direct communication from schools and the district.

Families are invited to join me in another round of Virtual Coffee Hours, beginning this Monday, August 31 with a session for families of Special Education students and English Learners. You can find details and [RSVP](#) here or by visiting LawrencePublicSchools.org. You can also get answers to questions through our LPS Back to School Helpline by calling 978-722-8040 any weekday from 8:00am to 5:00pm, or emailing LPShelp@lawrence.k12.ma.us.

Thank you again for everything you do to support our students and schools during this challenging time. We look forward to starting the school year together on September 16.

Cynthia Paris
Superintendent of Schools