



June 25, 2020

Dear Lawrence Public Schools community,

Today Gov. Baker and the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) shared their initial guidance for schools to reopen this fall. While this is only the first in a series of guidelines and there is not yet a specific timetable for returning to buildings, it makes clear we all share a goal of safely bringing back as many students as possible to in-person school settings for the start of the 2020-21 school year.

The staff, parents and students of our LPS Reopening Task Force have been hard at work for several weeks already and will be reviewing this guidance and what it means for Lawrence. You can find the entire document at the [DESE homepage](#), but highlights include:

- Current medical research supports a safe in-person return to school – with preventive measures in place – as infection and transmission rates are lower for children than adults.
- All districts must create three plans: one for in-school learning, one for remote learning, and one which combines both.
- Preventive measures for a return will include masks/face coverings for all adults and students in Grade 2 and older (also recommended for Grade 1 and lower), physical distancing, handwashing, and frequent cleaning.

Again, many questions remain unanswered and additional guidance is expected in July. A great deal of thought and care continues to go into the careful planning for students' safe return – both by the state and here at LPS – and we deeply appreciate your patience as we move forward based on the most up-to-date public health evidence available during this ever-evolving situation. We remain hopeful for a return to in-person school attendance this fall, and will continue to update you throughout the coming weeks and months.

Thank you,

Cynthia Paris  
Superintendent of Schools