



August 30, 2021

Dear Lawrence Public Schools families,

Wednesday's first day of school for K-12 students (a half day) is finally almost here, and I am pleased to reach out with a warm welcome and some important back-to-school reminders.

First and foremost, however, we must acknowledge the devastating loss of Marine Sergeant and Lawrence native Johanny Rosario last Thursday in Kabul, Afghanistan. Johanny was a proud graduate of the Lawrence High Class of 2014 and -- as we learned over recent days from teachers and staff lucky enough to know her -- a truly bright light by whom our entire community will be forever inspired.

We will take an opportunity on Wednesday to recognize her extraordinary life, service and sacrifice, and I hope you will join all of us at Lawrence Public Schools as we keep Johanny and her loved ones in our thoughts.

As we approach our first day, schools continue working hard to ensure you and your child have everything you need for a successful start, and I know we are sharing a great deal of information. Please allow me to highlight some key points for our return:

- Updated information on everything from uniforms to COVID-19 practices and protocols is available on our [School Opening Information](#) page at LawrencePublicSchools.org. You can also contact our Back-to-School Help Line at 978-722-8040 or LPSHelp@Lawrence.k12.ma.us any weekday from 8-4:30.
- State education officials have implemented an indoor mask requirement for all Massachusetts public schools. Masks are required for all LPS students, staff and visitors when inside school buildings or using LPS transportation (unless eating or on an approved mask break).
- Students required to isolate or quarantine related to COVID-19 will be considered absent, as they would be for any other illness. Schools and staff will take steps to support impacted students with at-home work and making up missed instruction or assignments following a healthy return to the classroom.
- We are pleased to be collaborating with the City of Lawrence Public Health Department's Mobile Vaccine Clinic to host a series of COVID-19 vaccination clinics at our middle schools in September and October. These free, voluntary opportunities are open to all LPS students and their family members, 12 years old and over. Look for more information at LawrencePublicSchools.org later this week.
- BinaxNOW testing will be available, with parental consent, on site throughout this school year for symptomatic students and staff. LPS will also be offering routine COVID-19 safety checks, which use group tests to prevent potential spread of the virus before it starts. This program is also free and voluntary, and you will receive more details and an invitation to participate in the coming weeks. The more participants we have the more effective it will be, so thank you in advance for your consideration and support!

Thank you, as well, for everything you and your family have done to help us get off to the best possible start for this year, and again please don't hesitate to reach out with any last minute questions.

We can't wait to see you!

Cynthia Paris
Superintendent of Schools