



August 13, 2020

Dear Lawrence Public Schools community,

Last evening, the Lawrence Alliance for Education determined we will begin our school year remotely, meaning most students will learn from home until a district-wide transition to in-person learning is possible.

In accordance with state guidance, a limited number of high needs students have been prioritized for in-person learning and will return to buildings when school starts in September.

Not being able to welcome all students back to our schools is a great disappointment, and full, in-person learning remains everyone's shared goal. But we fully recognize the very serious health risk that COVID-19 continues to present for our families, students and staff should we return too many students, too soon.

I cannot emphasize enough, however, that students will not be returning to the same remote learning approach implemented under emergency closure last March.

Our team has worked tirelessly – with help and input from countless staff, parents and students – to incorporate lessons from this spring's experience, and build a 2020-21 remote learning model that features high quality teaching and learning along with many of the key elements of the traditional school day. Important highlights include:

- A return to LPS attendance and grading policies
- High needs students will be prioritized for in-person learning to the greatest extent possible, with those students coming to school four days per week
- Enough devices will be deployed to ensure all students have access to a device during school hours
- In addition to additional training for teachers and staff, there will be online and technical support resources and training available for students and families
- Optional virtual enrichment camps will be offered in Grades 1-8

More information on the remote learning model can be found in our [updated LPS Reopening plan](#), and we will be sharing more details in the days and weeks before the first day of school. For now please know that all students will be automatically enrolled in remote learning with the exception of PK students, K students, and high needs populations Grades 1-12 who will return for in-person learning as noted in the updated plan.

You can ask any questions at our LPS Back-to-School Helpline by calling (978)722-8040 or emailing LPSHelp@Lawrence.k12.ma.us.

We are also aware that, though necessary at this time, students learning at home creates potential hardship for many families. We are committed to supporting family and student needs however possible during this period, including continued grab 'n go breakfast and lunch for all students, information on local child care options, and other important resources.

I am grateful to everyone – school and district leaders, educators and staff, parents and students – who contributed their voice and expertise to preparing for the 2020-21 school year. We look forward to seeing that work come to life with a transition to in-person learning as soon as is safely possible.

Please look for additional communication soon on our website, and thank you for your continued understanding and support.

Thank you,

Cynthia Paris
Superintendent of Schools