

Dear Holliston Parent/Guardians and Staff:

Today, Governor Baker's office and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released their initial guidance about reopening schools this fall. We applaud the level of thought and care that went into the development of this guidance, and share its goal of the safe return of as many students as possible to in-person school settings in order to best meet students' academic, social, and emotional needs.

Over the coming days, we will be reviewing the guidance to begin to understand how it impacts what we can do in Holliston. We also acknowledge that these initial guidelines do not address every topic and that there will be additional guidance coming throughout the summer. The full document can be found [here](#), but here are some key components:

- **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.**
- Preventive measures include masks/face coverings, physical distancing, handwashing, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces.
- Masks/face coverings will be required for all students in Grade 2 and above and for all adults; they are recommended for students in Grade 1 and below.
- Based upon current medical research, and in conjunction with other preventive measures, a minimum physical distance of three feet has been established.

It is essential to note that this plan acknowledges that districts will require adequate state and local funding in order to be able to safely reopen school in the fall. Specifically, the plan indicates that we will require, at a minimum, level-funded budgets plus DIRECT state/federal aid to school districts to fund the additional costs that will be required to make it possible to safely reopen. I am grateful to Commissioner Riley for acknowledging this fiscal reality.

Districts will need to develop three separate plans - one for return to full in-person instruction with safety requirements, one for full remote learning, and one for hybrid learning that combines in-person and remote learning. Based upon the current medical situation, the expectation today is that students will return to full in-person instruction when classes resume; however, that is subject to change based upon how the medical situation develops.

We acknowledge that there are likely to be more questions than answers at this time, and we will continue to communicate with you in the coming weeks and months.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Respectfully,

Bradford L. Jackson, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools