

Lowell Public Schools

Community Forum

January 2021





Agenda

1. What is the current status of COVID-19 in Lowell?
2. What are the goals for returning to In-Person Learning in school buildings?
3. What resources and support are available for Remote Learning?
4. What is the status of standardized assessments (MCAS/ACCESS/SAT/AP)?
5. What other resources are available for LPS families?





COVID-19 Data in Lowell

Date	Average Daily Incidence Rate Per 100,000	Percent Positivity Rate
8/12/20	2.24	1.18
8/19/20	2.9	1.34
8/26/20	2.4	1.18
9/2/20	4.2	1.5
9/9/20	5.9	1.74
9/16/20	6.4	1.98
9/23/20	7.9	2.24
9/30/20	10.9	2.71
10/7/20	16.3	3.57
10/14/20	16.4	3.29
10/22/20	13.3	2.89

Date	Average Daily Incidence Rate Per 100,000	Percent Positivity Rate
10/29/20	17.6	3.95
11/6/20	27.7	4.97
11/12/20	42.1	6.45
11/19/20	64.2	8.85
11/27/20	80.7	10.18
12/3/20	78.3	10.37
12/10/20	102.03	11.90
12/17/20	134.4	12.33
12/24/20	120.9	11.49
12/31/20	91.1	10.80
1/7/21	78.8	10.15

**Revised as of 1/11/21*



Access to COVID-19 Testing in Schools

- Studying feasibility of utilizing Abbott BinaxNOW antigen testing program for when more students are in schools;
- State Sponsored Pool Testing: Pooled testing involves mixing several test samples together in a “batch” or “pool” and then testing the batch. This approach increases the number of individuals that can be tested using the same amount of resources. Test is performed once a week with an anterior nasal swab for all students and staff members.
- Results are delivered within 24-48 hours.
- If the pooled test result is negative, all are presumed to be negative. If the pooled result is positive, all are quarantined until re-tested individually.





Lowell Public Schools COVID Dashboard

Located on the Lowell Public Schools website: <https://www.lowell.k12.ma.us/coviddashboard>

Includes information and updates on:

- COVID-19 data
- Protocols and guidelines
- Where to go to get tested
- What to do if you test positive, or are a close contact
- COVID-19 Vaccine

COVID Data Monitoring

COVID-19 Data in Lowell (Last 3 Weekly Reports)

Date	Average Daily Incidence Rate Per 100,000	Percent Positivity Rate
12/24/20	120.9	11.49
12/31/20	91.1	10.80
1/7/21	78.8	10.15

Updated: 1/11/21

- [1/6/21 COVID Data Monitoring](#)
- [12/21/20 COVID Data Monitoring](#)
- [12/16/20 COVID Data Monitoring](#)

COVID Protocols and Guidelines

- [Potential COVID Symptoms](#)
- [Face Mask Protocol and Guidelines](#)
- [Quarantine Guidelines](#)



What are the goals for returning to In-Person Learning in school buildings?

Return to in-person learning is dependent on the prevailing data

- Decisions are made based on three-week trends in incidence rate, positivity rate, community-wide spread and in-school transmission following the guidance of DESE and in consultation with the Lowell Board of Health.

The School Committee set the following target dates for returning students to in-person learning, provided the COVID-19 data can improve between now and then:

- February 1 - Students in substantially separate special education programs who were previously participating in our in-person learning model
- March 1 - Students, who are not in a substantially separate special education program, but were previously served in-person this school year as part of our original school reopening plan
- April 1 - Expansion of our in-person learning model to include additional students beyond those who were assigned to in-person learning at the beginning of this school year.



Current Status of COVID-19 Vaccine

MA Plans a Three Phase Roll Out

- The first group will include healthcare workers, people in long-term care, and first responders, as well as inmates at correctional facilities.
- **The second phase will likely begin in February** and targets those with underlying health problems, people over the age of 65 and **essential workers** like grocery store employees and **teachers**.
- Phase three is for everyone else and is set to start in April.





Resources and Supports for Remote Learning

- 15,000 Devices distributed to students to support student learning Pre-K-12
- 1,500 mobile hotspots provided to all families in need of internet access
- 8,000 technology support work orders resolved since the start of the school year
- Drop-in and remote support on hardware, software and remote learning resources available for families through daily Tech.Tent, web resources and help desk
- Development of a districtwide digital learning plan to leverage and enhance the 1:1 device infrastructure for students throughout their K-12 LPS experience.





Centralized Technology Resources for Families

Visit the [Family Resource Page](#) and the [Technology Resources Page](#) on the district website for trainings, tips, and tricks on resources such as:

Google Classroom

Seesaw

Chromebooks

Clever

[Technology Tent Days and Times](#)

Help Desk

And more...





ELA & Literacy Resources

- [Family Resources](#)
[K-8 for](#)
[Supporting](#)
[Literacy at Home](#)
- [K-4 ELA](#)
[Curriculum Map](#)
- [5-8 ELA](#)
[Curriculum Map](#)

Online Literacy Programs
your child may use:

- Lexia
 - Raz Kids
 - Epic!
 - iReady
 - Common Lit
 - Virtual Library
- Rooms that your
child's teacher shares



Read Everyday!



Key Strategies for Successful Remote Learning

- Strong partnerships between educators and families
- Direct and regular interaction of ELs with their teachers and classmates



English as a Second Language Resources

DESE

- [Remote Learning](#)
- [ACCESS Testing 2021](#)
- [Family Guidance](#)
- [COVID-19](#)

Mathematics Resources

- [K-4 Mathematics Curriculum Map](#)
- [5-8 Mathematics Curriculum Map](#)
- [Eureka Math Support for Families](#)
- [Other Math Resources](#)



Virtual Science and
Engineering Fair,
March 4, 2021
(grades 5-12)



Science Resources 2020-2021

[Science Curriculum Map](#)

K-8 Resources

- [Plum Landing Outdoor Adventures](#)
- [Nature Cat DIY Science Investigations](#)
- [STEAM Activities for Kids](#)
- [Notice and Wonder Walks](#)
- [Design Squad Nation](#)
- [Zoom](#)
- [Smithsonian Fun Stuff for Kids and Teens](#)
- [NSTA Daily Do](#)
- [Science Buddies](#)
- [Code.org](#) - Learn Computer Science at Home



Social Studies Resources 2020-2021

[Social Studies Curriculum Map](#)

K-8 Resources

- [Civics, Making a Difference](#), Arthur Collection, PBS LearningMedia for Grades K-2
- [iCivics](#) - Games to support civic engagement
- [The Hidden Worlds of the National Parks](#) - from Google Arts & Culture
- [KidCitizen](#) - Activities Exploring Congress and Civic Engagement for Grades K-5
- [Explore the World](#) with 360 degree Virtual Reality Tours
- [Lowell Mill Girl](#) - Make a series of choices that a mill girl might make. Each choice has a consequence and leads to new choices and a new future. From the Tsongas Industrial History Center





What is SEL?

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

– The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

Social Emotional Learning Resources

K-12 Assessment Tool

- Devereux Student Strengths Assessment
- Measuring 8 Competencies

K-5 SEL Curriculum

- Open Circle
- Second Step

5-8 SEL Curriculum

Second Step Online
Restorative Justice

High School

- Restorative Justice Practices

LPS Social Emotional Learning resources website:

[Social Emotional Learning / Parent Resources](#)



Afterschool and Summer Programs

The Lowell Public Schools are fortunate to have been awarded 21st Century Community Learning Centers grants at 11 schools:

- Butler Middle School
- Lincoln Elementary
- Lowell High School- Freshman Academy
- Morey Elementary
- McAuliffe Elementary
- McAvinnue Elementary
- Murkland Elementary
- Robinson Middle
- Shaughnessy Elementary
- Stoklosa Middle
- Sullivan Middle

For more information on the programs and contacts at each school:

[21st Century Enrichment Programs](#)

Summer 2021

Summer school programs are being planned and more information will be provided in April 2021.





Guidelines for attendance in Remote Learning

Attendance Matters....Even More ~ Stay Present, Stay Engaged, Stay Supported

- **Current Policy** - Students are expected to have regular attendance during remote learning. All students will be expected to attend classes on time each day.
- **Remote Learning:** Attendance will be determined by each students' engagement in virtual, live lessons and completion of assignments. Every students' time on task will be monitored and recorded.
- **Communicate Communicate Communicate** - If families are experiencing challenges due to technology or schedules, they should reach out to their child's school teachers and administrators.

Engagement in this new remote learning era starts with a shared commitment

5 ways parents can help kids thrive amid remote learning

1. Have a dedicated space for learning. Many parents have already set up a space in their home for kids to complete school work. Remember a side table, a play table, or the kitchen table can be a great use of space for learning. If space is limited then try to make their area free from distractions...use headphones, remove the tv or gaming station.
2. Create routines, not schedules....
3. Take brain breaks....
4. Breakdown tasks into smaller pieces. Incentives can be a helpful tool to encourage engagement i.e family movie night, prizes etc...
5. Stay in contact with teachers. Help your child check messages and communicate with school.

Report card/Progress Report dates

Report Cards

Grade 5-12: 11/30/20, 2/10/21, 4/26/21 and 6/16/21

Grade PK-4: 12/21/20, 3/29/21 and 6/16/21

Progress Reports

Grade 5-12: 10/19/20, 12/16/20, 3/22/21 and 5/13/21

Grade PK-4: 10/28/20

Grade 1-4: 2/3/21



What is the status of standardized assessments?

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)*

Grades 3-8:

- Test will be shortened to reduce testing time
- Only take a portion of each MCAS assessment in each subject

High School:

- Biology: First time 9th graders can be offered this test in June, instead of or in addition to offering in February
- Make-up window scheduled for January 14th for Grade 12 students, has been postponed
- Competency Determination will be recommended to BOARD by Commissioner for ELA and Math
- Seniors who want to take the MCAS assessments can do so later in the year

Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS) for English Language Learners*

Grades K - 12 who are identified as English Language Learners:

- In-person testing
- Testing window: January 7 - May 20, 2021
 - Due to the current remote learning status, the start date for testing ACCESS will be delayed until Lowell Public Schools' resumes in-person learning.
- Assesses the four language domains of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing

**Information as of January 4, 2021*



What is the status of standardized assessments continued?

Advanced Placement Assessments (AP)

- College Board offering in-person assessments, will reassess closer to May
- LHS created an online AP registration process opening up January 22 - March 15
- Eligible students will be offered the free reduction rate or those students who are not required to pay the full price
- Students will have option to take assessment
 - LHS surveyed students: 75% indicated they would take the assessment

Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT)

- October and November 2020 exams were not offered due to COVID-19
- Plan to offer the assessment in May and June 2021
- Students sign up for the exams directly on the SAT website

How will my child participate?

- In-person
- Plans/schedules are currently being built



What Other Resources Are Available for Families?

McKinney-Vento - Students experiencing homelessness

- The McKinney-Vento Act covers children and youth who don't have a fixed, adequate, and regular nighttime residence, including living:
 - in a shelter
 - in a motel, hotel, or campground
 - in a car, bus, or train station, or some other inadequate accommodations
- OR
- Living with other people due to loss of housing (due to fire, eviction, domestic violence, unemployment, etc.), economic hardship or similar reason
- This includes migrant and unaccompanied youth living in any of the above situations.
- For further assistance, contact the Family Resource Center at 978-674-4321





What Other Resources Are Available for Families?

P-EBT

- Students who are eligible for free or reduced-priced meals in our school will get Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) funds through the 2020-2021 school year.
- Eligible students in a fully remote learning situation will get \$117.20 per month.
- Students attending school either half-day or fully in person are not eligible for P-EBT.
- Funds for October and November will be issued in ONE issuance.
- Each month, funds will be added to your card on the 25th of each month for the month before. No longer have your P-EBT card? Request a replacement card at DTAconnect.com/pebt or 1-877-382-2363.





What Other Resources Are Available for Families?

Communication

- Update your contact information (phone number and/or email) by submitting an online form or contact your child's school
- Messages from Central Office and Schools are sent out via phone call, email, text message and social media (Facebook & Twitter)
- All Central Office messages are sent out in the most commonly spoken languages in the district (Spanish, Portuguese, Khmer and Swahili)
- Families can also call any school or central office department and request support from the language interpretation line (Lionbridge) or translation of key documents and communications for families who indicated translation/interpretation needs for languages other than English
- *New* - regular zoom community forums and district-wide newsletter





What Other Resources Are Available for Families?

Catie's Closet

- Access to clothing and toiletries
- Closets in each school building as well as the Family Resource Center
- Contact your child's school, social worker or teacher regarding your needs

Grab and Go Meals

- Grab and go meal service is offered at 10 sites for Lowell Public Schools students taking part in remote learning. Over one million meals have been distributed by LPS since March 2020.
- All LPS students are eligible for meal service. All meals are free of cost. No student ID is required and students don't have to be present to pick up a meal. A parent or neighbor can pick up the student's meal.
- Students will also receive meals for the weekend days on Fridays at all of our meal sites.

