



LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Henry J. Mroz Central Administration Offices
155 Merrimack Street
Lowell, MA 01852

September 15, 2020

Dear Lowell Public Schools Community,

We look forward to welcoming our students back on Thursday, September 17 for the start of the 2020-21 school year. Due to delays in a national supply chain, we were informed by our vendor that the remainder of our pre-ordered inventory of air purifiers will not arrive as scheduled in time for the first day of school. Currently, we have 128 air purifiers available for use across the entire district. To ensure the safety of our students, families and staff, **we have made the decision to initially alter our school reopening plan to limit the number of in-person classrooms for the start of the school year.** The modified plan for the start of school is as follows:

- Students who received an in-person learning seat at our day schools - Dr. Janice Adie, Laura Lee Therapeutic and LeBlanc Therapeutic - will still report to these school buildings for in-person instruction, as scheduled, on Thursday, September 17 for the first day of school.
- Students who received an in-person learning seat in the following substantially separate special education programs - Classrooms for Students with Autism (CSA), Life-skills Education and Planning (LEAP) and Language-based classrooms - will still report to their school buildings for in-person instruction, as scheduled, on Thursday, September 17 for the first day of school.
- Students in grades 1-12 (who are not assigned to substantially separate special education programs) who were scheduled for in-person learning will begin the school year in a remote learning setting. **Families will be updated with the date for resuming our in-person learning program for these students.**
- Preschool and kindergarten students who received an in-person learning seat will still report in person to their school building, as scheduled, on Monday, September 21 for their first day of school.
- All students currently enrolled in remote learning will continue as planned.

I understand how disruptive and disappointing this can be for families. Prior to making this decision, we exhausted all options - locally and nationally - for securing the air purifiers that we need as part of our protocol for exceeding health and safety guidelines necessary for reopening classrooms. Ultimately, we made a commitment to you to place student and staff safety as our top priority, and we are holding firmly to this commitment.

In planning for a new school year, we prepared for scenarios such as this, and we are ready to temporarily shift to remote learning district-wide for the students listed above and resume our in-person plans after monitoring COVID-related data points and fully securing safety and sanitization equipment.

In preparation for Thursday, you can expect to hear directly from your school about its individual plan for your child's first day of remote attendance. You can also anticipate updates about meal service and distribution of online learning devices.

Thank you for your flexibility and understanding as we look to get the school year started in the safest way possible for all of our students and staff.

Sincerely,

Dr. Joel D. Boyd
Superintendent of Schools