



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

December 11, 2020

Dear Lowell Public Schools Families,

I hope this letter finds everyone safe and well during these difficult times. Since October 19, 97% of our students have been participating in remote learning due to the surging rates of COVID-19 here in Lowell. Meanwhile, a small percentage of students in our substantially separate special education classes have continued to have the option to participate in on-campus, in-person instruction since the first day of school. Through this unprecedented health crisis, we have prioritized having our most vulnerable students on campus because of their highly specialized needs and the related level of services and instruction they receive each day.

We remain confident in the level of safety of our school buildings with the strict protocols in place, but the community-wide spread of COVID-19 - which has surged to more than 100 incidences per 100,000 Lowell residents this past week - is and will continue to have an increasingly more significant impact on staffing and substitute availability due to exposures and quarantining. At the current pace, the rate of community-wide transmission of COVID-19 will inevitably compromise the sustainability of our in-person programming in the coming days as we are forced to quarantine individual classrooms and schools. Thus, to provide families with as much notice as possible and eliminate the likely event of overnight shifts to remote learning (which would be necessitated by our quarantine protocol), **all substantially separate special education programs that are currently on campus will shift to remote learning during the partial week leading up to the winter break, including:**

Monday, December 21
Tuesday, December 22
Wednesday, December 23

These students will continue to attend school in-person for the upcoming week of December 14-18, and we plan to return these students to in-person instruction as soon as possible after the conclusion of the winter break, with the first day back to school currently scheduled for Monday, January 4.

We appreciate the impact these difficult decisions have on students and families, so this letter is intended to provide as much notice as possible to allow families to plan for these three (3) remote school days listed above.

As for the remainder of our students attending school remotely, we will be continuing with our current remote learning plan until further notice. We plan on providing an update to families prior to the winter break.

Thank you again for your continued partnership and flexibility as we work to keep our students, families, and staff safe during these difficult and uncertain times.

Sincerely,

Dr. Joel D. Boyd
Superintendent of Schools