

Danvers Public Schools Initial Return to School Plan July 31, 2020



Danvers Public Schools Teams Working on Reopening

<p><u>Reopening Committee:</u> Amanda Belotte - Parent and SEPAC Co-President Mark Carleo - Director Danvers Department of Public Health Alicia Cody - Parent and SEPAC Co-President Lisa Dana - Superintendent Denise DiGiuseppe - Great Oak Nurse, Nurse Leader Peter DiMauro - DHS Assistant Principal Adam Federico - HRMS School Principal Martha Jancaitis - Great Oak Principal Cathy Johnson - Riverside Teacher Aide - Union Steward Kathleen Murphy - DHS Teacher and DTA President Leif Rochna - DPW Building Supervisor Jody Sheehan - Highlands Teacher, DTA Vice-President Rich Souza - Parent and DPW Director of Operations Kathy Spinale - HRMS Administrative Assistant - Union Steward Keith Taverna - Assistant Superintendent Mary Wermers - Assistant Superintendent</p>	<p><u>Teaching and Learning / SEL Subcommittee:</u> Jeff Bartlett - HRMS Health Teacher Anna Corbett - HRMS Special Education Teacher Allison Day - Elementary Math Coach Keri Demers - Elementary ELA Coach Peter DiMauro - DHS Assistant Principal, Reopening Committee Liaison Amy Gerade - High School Curriculum Director Cindy Grady - Smith School Teacher Alex Grover - DHS Chorus and Specialist Representative Ellyn Feerick - Middle School Curriculum Director Mary Franz - HRMS Science Teacher Brea Plummer - Smith School Teacher Julie Posternack - Elementary Curriculum Director Violetta Powers - Riverside School Principal Julianna Robbins - ESL Teacher Tinamarie Sheckells - Elementary Librarian Jody Sheehan - Highlands School Teacher, DTA Vice President, Reopening Committee Liaison Mary Tatem - Student Services Director Rita Ward - Thorpe School Principal Mary Wermers - Assistant Superintendent, Reopening Committee Liaison John White - DHS English Teacher</p>
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Danvers Public Schools Initial Plan for Reopening School Models

Part I: Contact Information, Feasibility Study Results, and Preliminary Reopening Model

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1. What were the key findings from your in-person learning **feasibility study**, and what does this imply for the student learning model you may use this fall? Suggested word limit: 300.

Our district feasibility study was conducted between June 30 and July 20, 2020. Danvers Public Schools surveyed families and faculty/staff as well as taking distancing measurements in our schools. The district found that the in-person model is feasible with an average of 4-4.5 feet of distance between students in our classrooms. This fits within the DESE guidelines but falls short of the CDC and MTA desired distance of 6 feet. Additionally, in our planning for the in-person model, we are experiencing difficulty in accommodating lunch in the cafeteria and in classrooms due to the needed 6 ft distancing needed when masks are not worn and in having enough personnel to supervise students during this time. We will need to free up other large spaces (i.e. gym, music room, multipurpose room, etc.) in the schools in order to provide each student with the appropriate space to eat, however this will compromise the delivery of specialty/elective subjects.

The district has three committees responsible for planning the Reopening of Schools - the Danvers School Reopening Committee, the Teaching, Learning and SEL Subcommittee, and our Administrative Council. Together these groups will make the final recommendations about how the district will return to school. The Town of Danvers Department of Public Works, along with the Town of Danvers Board of Health have been integral parts of our feasibility study and our Reopening Committee by providing guidance on health and safety guidelines for our schools.

2. Which **reopening model** within your plan are you leaning towards for the start of the school year? Please select the predominant model for elementary, middle, and high school. (For example, in a plan where the majority of students are coming back in-person full time, a subset of students may continue to learn remotely if needed.) Districts can use the text box below this chart to provide further explanation of their selections, if needed.

Grade Span	Reopening Learning Models		
	In-person	Hybrid	Remote
Elementary		X	
Middle School		X	
High School		X	

The district will ensure that there are consistent structures/features across all learning models. Our goals are to:

- *Provide consistency in teaching and learning across all 3 models - in-person, hybrid and remote.*
- *Develop safe, supportive, culturally sustaining, and equitable learning environments through the use of consistent routines across all 3 models that will help build strong relationships among students and teachers.*
- *Support student learning through differentiated and small group instruction.*
- *Develop students into skilled communicators and problem-solvers who engage in collaborative inquiry, make effective use of technology and apply their learning in authentic, real-life situations.*

We believe that having consistency across all of our learning models will provide the needed support for our students and their families regardless of the model they are learning in. To that end, we will use Google Classroom as our learning management platform to communicate expectations for learning.

Part II: Summary of Three Reopening Learning Models

1. In-person: Please provide a summary of your plan for how students would return to full-time in-person learning. Please reference the “Step 2” section of this document (page 2) and provide an overview of what you believe to be the most critical information about how this model would work in your district.

Suggested word limit: 400.

We found in surveying our families and staff that about 84% of our families would like to return to school in-person, while 79% of our teachers prefer this or the hybrid model. Our current capacity for socially distancing a full classroom of students is 4 to 4.5 feet between students rather than the 6 feet desired by the teachers’ union and recommended by the CDC. Moreover, if we return to school in a full in-person model, our schedules at all levels will have to accommodate mask breaks and multiple lunch periods. In order to allow all students to eat lunch in school with 6 ft social distancing and with appropriate supervision, we will need to utilize the large spaces in our schools like gymnasiums, multipurpose rooms, art rooms, music rooms, etc. Given this need for additional space, it will impact how we provide PE, Art, Music and other elective courses during the school day.

Not all students will return if we employ the in-person model. We had 12% of our families surveyed reply that they preferred the remote learning model if we return to school fully in-person. This could mean that we would have to be educating over 400 students remotely while teaching in-person full time. An additional challenge we face is staffing remote learning. Six percent of faculty/staff prefer to or will have to work remotely if we return in-person. This will impact our scheduling of students and will require additional staffing to make the in-person model work.

Finally, our survey shows that transportation is another challenge. Our costs will substantially increase when we reduce the number of students able to ride on both full sized busses and special education vans. We will need additional bus runs to accommodate the approximately 980 students who take advantage of bus transportation. Realistically, in our in-person transportation plan, the district will only be able to transport students in grades K-6 as well as grade 7-12 students with special circumstances. Even with this model, the district will incur additional costs and lose substantial revenue in bus fees.

- Will any of your students be learning fully remotely? **Yes/No**
- Anticipated percent of students learning remotely **12%**

2. Hybrid: Please provide a summary of your plan for how students would return to school through a hybrid learning model. Please reference the “Step 2” section of this document (page 2) and provide an overview of what you believe to be the most critical information about how this model would work in your district. Suggested word limit: 400.

The hybrid models preferred by families were half-day AM/PM and the two-day in-person/three-day remote models. Forty-three percent of staff preferred a hybrid model to return to school with the two-day in-person/three-day remote as the favored model (44%). At this time, our district plans to implement the two-day in-person/three-day remote hybrid plan with identified high need students coming to school for four out of the five school days each week. We would assign 2 cohorts of students: Cohort A would attend in-person on Mondays and Tuesdays and Cohort B would attend in-person on Thursdays and Fridays. Students will work remotely for three days a week with all students having a remote learning day on Wednesdays. A key to this hybrid plan is providing teachers the needed time to plan both the in-person and remote learning for the week as well as the remote learning day on Wednesday which will ensure the teachers have that needed time. Further, to make this schedule work, we will have to adjust our in-person schedule to prioritize the most important instruction while the students are in school. To that end, we will also design remote lessons for greater student engagement in a “PBL lite” approach where students are working to apply the knowledge they learned while in-person.

The district is collecting information from employees to determine staffing needs should we return in this model. At this time, we believe that we will need additional staff in order to make this model work as we have 6% of our faculty/staff (about 40 teachers) requesting to work remotely. We hope that we can absorb the students who would normally be assigned to these 40 teachers/staff working remotely in order to stay within our budget constraints. Teachers and staff working remotely will be assigned groups of students and will be asked to conduct daily SEL check-ins with students, monitor the progress of students’ remote learning work, and provide individual or small group support to students needing assistance with their work.

Our high needs students will attend school four out of the five days a week. Our current vision for these students is to attend their classes with a cohort two days a week and receive their specialized services during the cohort's remote learning days. This will provide the high needs students access to the general curriculum while getting needed support for the curriculum during two days of “remote” learning time.

3. Remote: Please provide a summary of your plan for remote learning as the default model of instruction for all students. Please reference the “Step 2” section of this document (page 2) and provide an overview of what you believe to be the most critical information about how this model would work in your district. Suggested word limit: 400.

The full remote model was the least preferred for both families (11%) and faculty/staff (21%). However, if we were to employ the remote model, there would be consistent structures/features in student learning across the in-person and hybrid models. We will employ consistent routines for students in order to develop a safe, supportive, culturally sustaining, and equitable learning environment. One such structure will be the use of Google Classroom to communicate learning expectations for students and for students to submit their remote learning work. Another would be the use of Google Meet for synchronous learning sessions. We envision that all students will start their day with a synchronous SEL check-in meeting and receive guidance for the work of the day in addition to teachers taking attendance for the remote learning day.

Our priority is to provide each student with the support they need through differentiated and small group instruction. This approach will help mediate the gaps in learning many students experienced while learning remotely this spring. We will use the flipped classroom approach where students would receive their instruction/lessons through asynchronous videos that can be viewed anytime with synchronous learning prioritized for differentiated instruction in small groups. This will ensure that teachers can efficiently and

effectively meet the needs of the range of learners in their classrooms. We will also utilize support staff (Reading Specialists, Title I teachers, and teacher aides) to help support the small group differentiated instruction so that the groups can meet with more frequency during the week.

There will be many challenges we face when implementing remote learning for our students - child care for families who work outside the home (806 families replied that they will have child care issues if we return to school in a remote model), younger students (PK-2) needing extra support to complete learning activities, technology access issues if a student's Chromebook needs repair (600 students rely only on a school-issued Chromebook), and reliable high-speed internet access.

4. High needs students: Please provide a summary of how students with disabilities, English learners (ELs), former EL students, and Economically Disadvantaged students will be supported within each of the three reopening models. Suggested word limit: 400.

Our high needs students will have extra support in all of our reopening models particularly preschool-aged students, English Language Learners, and those with significant and complex needs. These students were the most vulnerable during the spring remote learning and will need specialized instruction to make the needed gains in their learning. These students will be prioritized for full in-person learning if at all feasible. The district will develop criteria for this designated high needs student cohort which will include our ELLs, students with IEPs, economically disadvantaged students, homeless students, and students who truly struggled during remote learning this past spring. These students will have weekly schedules developed with prioritized skills and learning identified. In each of our learning models our special education faculty will focus on the specific learning needs of the students on their caseload to ensure access to the general curriculum. During the in-person and hybrid learning models, the identified high needs students will attend school in-person full time in order to provide the services as prescribed in their IEP. During remote learning, the district would still look for ways to service students in-person in order to continue providing needed services for our high needs students. If in-person instruction cannot be provided and students with disabilities must receive instruction remotely in full or in part, these students "must receive special education instruction and related services necessary to provide FAPE through an Instruction and Services model of delivery." This includes structured lessons, teletherapy, video-based lessons, etc. For students with more significant and complex disabilities, one-on-one in-person instruction in the home or community-based setting may also be considered if it is not possible in an in-school setting.