



## Schools to Reopen with Hybrid Model

3 messages

**BSD Superintendent** <superintendent@bsdvt.org>

Wed, Jul 22, 2020 at 10:47 PM

Bcc: bhs-staff <bhs-staff@bsdvt.org>, btc-staff <btc-staff@bsdvt.org>, champlain-staff <champlain-staff@bsdvt.org>, ees-staff <ees-staff@bsdvt.org>, ems-staff <ems-staff@bsdvt.org>, flynn-staff <flynn-staff@bsdvt.org>, hms-staff <hms-staff@bsdvt.org>, Horizons Staff <horizons-staff@bsdvt.org>, iaa-staff <iaa-staff@bsdvt.org>, ira-staff <ira-staff@bsdvt.org>, ontop-staff <ontop-staff@bsdvt.org>, pms-staff <pms-staff@bsdvt.org>, sa-staff <sa-staff@bsdvt.org>, smith-staff <smith-staff@bsdvt.org>, Tom Flanagan <tflanagan@bsdvt.org>

Good evening BSD Staff,

I am writing to provide you with an update on our plans to reopen our school buildings. The information in this letter below was drafted together with the members of the Champlain Valley Superintendents Association (CVSA), who are all working towards implementing the same type of model. I'm sending this to you all tonight and will be sending parents this message late tomorrow or early Friday, once our team finishes translating the information so that all families can receive the information at the same time.

To start the school year, Burlington School District, along with all 16 school districts covering Addison, Chittenden, Franklin, and Grand Isle Counties who are members of the CVSA, will implement a hybrid instruction model that will include both in-person and remote learning. This plan to return to school is student-centered, focused on social-emotional needs, and designed to keep our students learning at a high level. Most importantly, a hybrid model affords the ability to offer in-person learning in the safest environment possible while adhering to the best practices of the [guidance issued by the Vermont Agency of Education \(AOE\)](#). Here's how the hybrid model will work:

- Students will be divided into two groups.
- Groups will attend school in-person two days a week and learn remotely three days a week.
  - Students and staff attending in person will wear masks and practice physical distancing.
  - Groups will be thoughtfully created so they best support families, including grouping family members together whenever possible.
  - We are working on scheduling and will have that information to families as soon as possible.
- Almost all students will be learning remotely on Wednesdays. We will use this day to provide individualized support to students, engage in professional learning and planning for our staff, and deep clean our buildings.

While we all agree that nothing compares to the benefits that students receive from in-person instruction, after extensively reviewing the AOE's guidance and evaluating how to operationally implement those requirements and recommendations in our schools, reviewing survey submissions from our families and staff, and consulting with our reopening committee, we feel the hybrid model will best address the health and safety of our students and staff given the current health data available.

Having fewer students in the building at a time will help reduce contact with others and allow for better distancing. The smaller groups will also allow teachers and staff more time to assess the academic progress and needs of our students. With fewer students in the building, we can better help them adjust to new expectations while fostering healthy routines throughout the day, such as regular hand washing. In these pandemic conditions, it is also imperative that we continue to improve our remote systems so that we can be ready to adapt if health data requires a shift to full remote learning again.

While we move forward planning to implement this hybrid model, we are also continuing to explore other options, such as offering remote-only options. More information regarding this will be available soon, though we do know that additional learning options will be determined by the capacity of our staff and our community's needs.

We acknowledge the hardships that hybrid and full remote models may place on families, including our own faculty and staff. Although it will be a challenge, the overwhelming majority of families and staff surveyed preferred opening schools in a hybrid learning environment. By working together, openly communicating, and being creative and flexible, we can overcome these challenges together. That said, please understand there are many moving pieces to these plans, and we will need to adapt as the situation surrounding COVID-19 evolves and we receive further guidance from the AOE and the Department of Health.

Finally, please know I have appreciated the engagement, suggestions, and advocacy from the BSD staff over the past few weeks. It is clear that all of us care deeply about education and our students. We will send more communication in the coming days and weeks as we finalize plans, but in the meantime, I encourage you to continue to reach out and stay engaged.

Sincerely,

Superintendent Tom Flanagan

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**Ann Marie Costa** <[acosta@bsdrv.org](mailto:acosta@bsdrv.org)>  
To: BSD Superintendent <[superintendent@bsdrv.org](mailto:superintendent@bsdrv.org)>

Thu, Jul 23, 2020 at 12:05 AM

I am heartened to hear of this plan. Thank you for this information. Welcome to the district.

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**Laura Allyn** <[lallyn@bsdrv.org](mailto:lallyn@bsdrv.org)>  
To: BSD Superintendent <[superintendent@bsdrv.org](mailto:superintendent@bsdrv.org)>

Thu, Jul 23, 2020 at 10:26 AM

Hi Tom, thanks for pulling this together! I think the smaller classes will be beneficial to all as we work our way through this disaster.  
Laura

Sent from my iPad

On Jul 22, 2020, at 10:47 PM, BSD Superintendent <[superintendent@bsdrv.org](mailto:superintendent@bsdrv.org)> wrote:

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