



Enrollment Survey for A/B Days & Hybrid Model: Community Update 8/6/2020

1 message

Superintendent Tom Flanagan <superintendent@bsdvt.org>
Reply-To: superintendent@bsdvt.org
To: superintendent@bsdvt.org

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Hello BSD Community,

We've had another productive week focused on preparing for reopening. Thank you for your engagement (and patience!) through this process. We have received many thoughtful questions, suggestions, and offers of partnership from across the city. Our planning process has been and continues to be intentional and thoughtful; every decision we make prioritizes equity, engagement, deep learning, and the safety of our students, faculty, staff, and community.

This past week, I've been meeting with school faculty across the district and we are having positive conversations about reopening. Andrew Styles (Burlington Education Association President) and Becca McCray (COVID-Coordinator, Edmunds MS School Nurse, and President-elect of the School Nurses Association) are joining me in these meetings. As you can imagine there are a lot of questions, and all ideas we hear are making our plans better. From these conversations, it is clear to me that our staff are committed to serving our students and our community, and they are gearing up for in-person instruction in September.

We are also excited to provide BSD-specific reopening guidance this week, and a survey so we can hear your preferences around the start of the school year. Please see below for a number of important updates, including our Enrollment Survey, the new start date for school (September 8), and information regarding our Reopening Guidance document.

Sincerely,

Tom

Enrollment Preferences Survey - Parents, we are ready to hear your preferences regarding options for this coming fall, including whether you plan to have your student access their education through the hybrid model or through 100% remote learning. For those of you who are choosing the Hybrid model, you will also be asked if you prefer "A" Days (Mondays and Thursdays) or "B" Days (Tuesdays and Fridays) and why. Please remember, we will do our very best to accommodate schedules but there is a possibility not every family will receive their first choice of hybrid days.

The survey also asks about access to transportation, thermometers, food, and internet. The feedback obtained through this survey will be CRUCIAL to our planning team. Thank you for your response, [please complete the Student Enrollment Survey in Powerschool today](#). Once you log-in, you will find the survey in the "Forms" section on the left side of the page. Click on forms and then scroll down to until you reach the "Reopening Enrollment" section where the form is located. Please note that you will need to complete this form for each of your students in the District. If you need help completing your students' forms, please call our central office at 802-865-5332 ext. 1 or send us an email at bsdreopening@bsdvt.org.

New School Start Day, September 8 - On July 31 Governor Scott's office issued an Executive Order (signed July 29, 2020) to delay the start of all schools in Vermont until Tuesday, September 8th. This will allow more time for staff to plan the reopening at their schools prior to school reopening. We will abide by Governor Scott's Executive Order and are awaiting additional guidance from the AOE regarding the impact of the order on a number of decisions including but not limited to teacher workdays and student instructional days. At this time, we are planning for all teachers and paras to begin work on August 20 and will continue to communicate with staff and union representatives leading up then.

Guidance - As we prepare for Reopening BSD, we know parents and staff have many questions. Please visit our Reopening Task Force website for [version one of our Reopening BSD guidance document](#). It is important to note that this document will be updated between now and the start of school. We still have additional details to put into our plans and as you know, guidance from state and federal agencies is continually changing. I hope this document provides a solid baseline understanding of our plans to date and I encourage all staff and parents to continue to reach out with questions, comments, and suggestions.

ABCAB Model - Last week I communicated the District's decision to implement an ABCAB Hybrid Model, where "A" Days are Mondays and Thursdays, and "B" Days are Tuesday and Fridays. This is an example of a decision not made lightly, and one that prioritizes equity, deep learning, and safety.

After careful consideration, our Reopening Task Force decided upon the current model after consulting principals and health professionals. Ultimately, we decided the ABCAB model would better support social-emotional learning, allowing for more regular contact between staff and students, as well as students with their peers. In an AACBB model, we would have gone 5 days each week in-between seeing students. An ABCAB model allows us to reduce that large amount of time, which will better support student learning.

Additionally, we determined that in our District the ABCAB model makes it much easier to ensure food access for our food-insecure families by allowing for additional meal distribution days between remote learning days. And this model offers much better continuity of learning, particularly for our EL, special education, and high-need students.

And finally, the science now shows that this disease primarily spreads person to person through the air, not from surfaces to a person. As we will be wearing masks, maintaining physical distancing and hand washing frequently, the cleaning done on a daily basis in our buildings is sufficient between pods. The deep cleaning on Wednesday will ensure our building remains extra clean every week, but we feel the possible benefits of deep cleaning between pods (the AABCC model) do not outweigh the negative effects of 5 consecutive days away from school every week. While no hybrid model is perfect, we feel an ABCAB model better ensures "whole health" (physical, mental, social-emotional) for every student.

New Hire - BSD is thrilled to have Quaron "Q" Pinckney join our team as our new District Coordinator - Head of Athletics. Quaron joins at an exciting time as we explore how to make athletics part of our larger reopening plans while ensuring the safety of our student-athletes and coaches. Welcome Q!

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