



Superintendent's

# EDUCATION UPDATE

Randolph Public Schools | September 2020

Volume 6, Issue 6

## Superintendent's Summary

Greetings, Randolph Families,

We hope that you are well and safe. This school year is not what any of us would have ever imagined, but innovative learning for all begins on September 16<sup>th</sup>. Teachers are participating in training – that runs through September 15<sup>th</sup> – to prepare for the start of a unique 2020-2021 school year. Some of what we have covered so far is listed in this Education Update under the Teaching & Learning Department. This year will be different from any other time in the history of education; we are all pioneers! We continue to work to create schedules for our staffing needs and to provide the best learning opportunities for your children. Our goal is to send out cohort schedules by the end of this week, with Tuesday being the absolute latest. We know that you are anxious to receive your child's schedule so that you can plan your lives accordingly. We did our best to honor school day preferences but were unable to do so for everyone. We used multiple factors, with preference being one of them, to provide the best learning opportunities for each student. We thank you for your patience and look forward to welcoming you back.

I want to assure you that we are doing our very best for your children as they are our number one priority. We want to welcome your child[ren] back – whichever model you have chosen – and help them adjust quickly and comfortably to all of our new norm. We are here to fully support them.

As you know, we rolled out our Re-entry Plan as of August 12<sup>th</sup>, which you can access on our website – if you haven't already done so – by visiting <https://www.randolph.k12.ma.us/reentry2020> There, you will have the option to view the plan or download and print it.

Despite the challenges we face during this time to educate our children, we have prepared ourselves to rise to the challenge. I know that some may beg to differ, but we have left no stone unturned in ensuring that your child[ren] receives quality education, social emotional support, and other supports needed.

As the time nears for schools to open, should you need anything further or have any questions, please contact your child's school directly. Questions concerning registration of your child[ren] should be directed to the Registration Office – Attention: Regina Federle, Registrar – by calling (781) 961.6247 or by emailing [registrationoffice@randolph.k12.ma.us](mailto:registrationoffice@randolph.k12.ma.us) You may also visit the Registration Office on our website.

Randolph proud,

Thea R. Stovell  
Superintendent

RPS District Core Values: We C.A.R.E.

Continuous Reflection and Improvement • Academic Excellence and Innovation • Respectful and Responsible Relationships • Engaged and Equitable Community

## In the News:

### Teaching & Learning Department

We have finished our first four (4) days of professional learning and are feeling fortunate. We have another six (6) days before students return to ensure we are fully prepared to offer a safe, joyful, and challenging environment for all students. We are utilizing our time to be prepared to offer students incredible experiences within all three learning models offered by Randolph Public Schools: full in person, hybrid, and remote.

In the first four (4) days of professional learning we dedicated time to COVID and safety protocols, reimagining the student experience, planning the first four (4) weeks, social emotional learning, and blended learning.

Next week our educators will receive professional learning experiences on pertinent topics including Learning Management Platforms: Google Classroom and Seesaw, literacy assessment DIBELS, best practices in remote learning and more.

**School begins on September 16<sup>th</sup> for all students.** For one time only, Cohort B will come to school on Wednesday. Cohort A students will be learning from home on Wednesday. Remote learners will find a learning assignment on Google Classroom or Seesaw. Hybrid learners will have an assignment communicated via email, posted on our website and posted in Google Classroom and Seesaw. There will be a tech free option for the assignment.

If families have any questions about Randolph Public Schools' reopening please refer to our website to find our Re-entry Plan and a FAQ document. We have included a few FAQs below.

Our apologies that there was an error in the FAQ section in the EDUCATION UPDATE that was sent out last evening. Please see the highlighted section below for correction. Again, please accept our apologies.

#### **CORRECTED** Abbreviated FAQs

**Q.** What is the Hybrid Learning Model?

**A.** Students in the hybrid model attend school in person for two full days a week. In this A/B model students would attend two days per week in person/on campus on a continuous schedule that has one cohort of students, COHORT A, attending on Monday and Thursday and another cohort of students, COHORT B, attending on Tuesday and Friday. On Wednesdays, high needs students who are in need of additional support (IEP, EL, Homelessness, RMTSS, or low achievement, etc.) will participate in small group sessions, related service provider sessions or other support services in person or remotely. When not in person, students will participate in learning through Google Classroom and Seesaw that will include prerecorded direct instruction lessons and assignments.

**Q.** How will student rigor be impacted by the Hybrid Model?

#### **Rigor**

**A.** Randolph Public School District is committed to holding ALL students to high standards of rigor while promoting students' growth mindset. As we move into the 20/21 school year we will continue to focus on students acquiring and applying knowledge accurately. In addition, students will also be able to analyze and articulate knowledge authentically through critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration and communication, and creativity and innovation. The Teaching and Learning Reentry team recognizes the need for a common definition and understanding of rigor across the district.

#### **Direct Instruction**

**Q.** What will direct instruction look like using the Hybrid Model?

**A.** Randolph Public School District is committed to holding ALL students to high standards of rigor while promoting students' growth mindset. As we move into the 20/21 school year we will continue to focus on students acquiring and applying knowledge accurately. In addition, students will also be able to analyze and articulate knowledge authentically through critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration and communication, and creativity and innovation. The Teaching and Learning Reentry team recognizes the need for a common definition and understanding of rigor across the district.

#### **RPS District Core Values: We C.A.R.E.**

Continuous Reflection and Improvement • Academic Excellence and Innovation • Respectful and Responsible Relationships • Engaged and Equitable Community

## SPED

**Q.** What is the re-entry plan for students with disabilities?

**A.** As part of the re-entry plan for students with disabilities, Randolph Public Schools special education and student services will make sure that all students on IEPs will work with their teachers and related service providers to the greatest extent possible, and teachers and related service providers will continue to assess students' progress and current levels of performance and at the same time, will adhere with the current health and safety protocols.

RPS will carefully develop classroom assignments and service delivery schedules for students with disabilities so that they receive services consistent with their IEPs in the least restrictive environment, as defined in [603 CMR 28.02\(12\)](#), while also maintaining the current health and safety protocols.

**Q.** How will students with high needs be addressed?

### **A. DESE High-Needs Definition**

Students with complex and significant needs include:

- Students already identified as "high needs" through the IEP process on the IEP form entitled "Primary Disability/Level of Need-PL3." Such students must meet at least two of these criteria:
  - Services provided outside of the general education classroom;
  - Service providers are special education teachers and related service providers;
  - Special education services constitute more than 75% of the student's school day;
- Students who cannot engage in remote learning due to their disability-related needs;
- Students who primarily use aided and augmentative communication;
- Students who are homeless
- Students in foster care or congregate care; and/or
- Students dually identified as English Learners.

### *Students with Disabilities*

**Q.** What, if any, special arrangements will be made for students with disabilities?

**A.** Randolph Public Schools' goal is to serve students with disabilities according to their IEP services and needs.

## **Transportation**

**Q.** Will transportation be provided for out-of-district students?

**A.** [Transportation](#) will be provided for all students who require it following the transportation re-entry plan. Dr. Marie-Juanita Di Gioia is the Randolph out of District Coordinator and can be reached at [digioiam@randolph.k12.ma.us](mailto:digioiam@randolph.k12.ma.us) for any questions or concerns. She will continue to work closely with all the students' placements to ensure the needs of our students are met.

**Q.** Does my child have to wear a mask on the bus?

**A.** Masks - All staff and students on the bus and waiting at bus stops, regardless of age, must wear masks at all times, covering the nose and mouth.

- Adults, including drivers and other transportation staff (e.g., bus monitors), are required to wear masks.
- Exceptions to masks for students: Face shields may be an option for students with medical, behavioral, or other challenges who are unable to wear masks.
- Please see the "physical distancing" section below for protocols on how to work with families of students who cannot wear masks due to medical, behavioral, or other challenges.
- Masks should be provided by the student/family, but RPS must ensure that sufficient extra disposable masks are made available on all buses for any student who needs them.

**Q.** What is Randolph Public School's plan for socially distancing children while riding school buses?

**A.** Distancing requirements apply both while waiting at bus stops and while in transit.

## **RPS District Core Values: We C.A.R.E.**

Continuous Reflection and Improvement • Academic Excellence and Innovation • Respectful and Responsible Relationships • Engaged and Equitable Community

- Children from the same household should be seated together and may be seated two or more students per bench (closer than 3 feet).
- As may be appropriate, consider marking off the ground at bus stops where students can wait at 6 feet of physical distance from one another (if not wearing masks).
- Students should face forward at all times and refrain from eating, shouting, singing, or sharing items while in transit.
- Determine and post maximum occupancy for each bus while following these distancing guidelines.
- Students who are not able to wear a mask while riding the bus should maintain 6 feet of distance between themselves and other students. The student should wear a face shield while on the bus. Districts should work with the families of students who are regularly unable to wear a mask regarding possible alternative transportation arrangements (i.e. walking to school or the family transporting the student).

**Q.** Will hand sanitizer be available for children boarding school buses?

**A.** RPS will install hand sanitizer dispensers on buses for students and drivers to clean hands as they board and exit. Hand sanitizer should be applied to all surfaces of the hands in sufficient quantity that it takes 20 seconds of rubbing hands together for the sanitizer to dry.

#### **Bus Monitor**

To ensure adherence to health and safety guidelines, RPS will add bus monitors to buses. This role could be a hired position, paraprofessional, current student, staff member, or volunteer, but should not be an individual at high risk for COVID-19. This bus monitor must also adhere to all health and safety guidelines outlined in this memo.

#### **Bus Monitor Responsibilities May Include:**

- Asking whether students received at-home pre-screening (see “Symptoms screening” below).
- Managing vehicle entry/exit processes including directing students to assigned seating.
- Ensuring all health and safety requirements are met (e.g., physical distancing, masks, ventilation, hand sanitizer, safe storage of health and safety supplies, etc.).
- Coordinating arrival/departure and entry/dismissal protocols.
- Assisting with routine cleaning and sanitization activities, as appropriate.

**Q.** My child would prefer to wear a face shield instead of wearing a mask. Is that allowed?

**A.** The standard set forth by the MA Department of Public Health and the DESE (supported by Governor Baker’s COVID-19 Executive Order No. 31) is that **masks** are required at all times. Face shields are additional possible mitigation strategies but do not replace the standard and requirement of mask/face coverings and do not provide adequate protection when used alone. This standard has also been confirmed by the Town of Randolph Board of Health.

## School News

### Donovan Elementary School (Donovan)

The Donovan is excitedly preparing for the return of students. We have new breakaway lanyards for the students and a wide assortment of new Spirit Sticks to earn this year! We are focusing our use of Spirit Sticks on highlighting positive choices, ongoing effort and perseverance when work is challenging. Please know that whether you are learning in Hybrid or learning Remotely - every Donovan student will be working to earn Spirit Sticks that highlight their hard work and accomplishments. Some people will be receiving their Spirit Sticks in person and others will get them in the mail.

We will be continuing to use Brain Power Wellness to supports students’ focus, mindfulness, and emotional wellness!

We want to help parents in accessing Brain Power for their home so stay tuned for a Live ZOOM date and time! While you are waiting, please take a look at the resources we have included to support your child:

1. What’s your SUPERPOWER? Teachers, Parents and Family YOU have a SUPERPOWER!

<https://youtu.be/w6T02g5hnT4>

#### **RPS District Core Values: We C.A.R.E.**

Continuous Reflection and Improvement • Academic Excellence and Innovation • Respectful and Responsible Relationships • Engaged and Equitable Community

2. Brain Power Intro:

QUICK Intro Video for new staff: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nzutl\\_ArNZU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nzutl_ArNZU)

Activity (lot's to view on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=06z3HyVC1-w>)

**And make note: If you have Instagram, Brain Power Wellness has more fun activities on weekdays from 1-1:15 and 1:30-1:45**

Finally, as adults we are working to grow as educators to make sure we provide for the needs of each student. This year during planning time, the Donovan Teachers will be splitting into 3 Professional Learning Communities to work together to improve the learning experience for all students. We have some GREAT Professional Learning opportunities for adults; including:

- 1) Universal Design for Learning and how we will meet the needs of all students;
- 2) Positive behavior support
- 3) Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices.

We are truly excited about the 2020 - 2021 School Year! Principal Gannon

## John F. Kennedy Elementary School (JFK)

At JFK, the leadership team (Mr. Licorish, Ms. Galvin, Mr. Graves) has been working feverishly over the summer to prepare for the reopening of our school. We have several early childhood classrooms at JFK including seven (7) pre-K classrooms and three (3) Kindergarten classrooms. We've ordered brand new sleek furniture for these classrooms, which will enable our students to be socially distant during the pandemic. Post pandemic, these same desks can be combined and used for collaborative student groupings. Our custodians (Mr. Hennessey and Mr. Cameron) have worked extremely hard over the summer to get the school building ready. Our teachers spent some time in their classrooms this summer decluttering, setting up rooms to fall in line with the new COVID-19 guidelines. Our JFK secretaries are back and working hard behind the scenes to prepare for the reopening. Teachers, paras, and all other staff started on August 31<sup>st</sup>. They all have been actively engaged in professional development sessions related to COVID-19 protocols, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), and more thus far. At JFK, we are looking forward to tying the new SEL Toolbox strategies, which families will learn about, with our PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports) initiatives.

We miss our JFK family and we look forward to seeing you in person and/or virtually soon. Please reach out to us at 781-961-6211 or via email if you have any questions or concerns.

## Lyons Elementary School (Lyons)

This summer we have been very busy, at the Lyons, preparing to welcome students back to school. The hallways and classrooms may look different, but the staff are ready to welcome back the Lyons students, whether that be in-person or remotely. Over the last few months, we've been working on hiring new staff to replace some people who have moved on. Our 5th grade teacher, Ms. Reid, has relocated to be closer to her family on the west coast. Mr. Brophy has left the science position and we are thrilled that he will be the new 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. We know he'll do a great job in this new role. Mr. Witt, who is a recent graduate of the Master of Education Program at Harvard and most recently taught at St. Peter Academy in Boston will take over as the new Science teacher. Ms. Gervino has taken a leave of absence for the year. In her place we have hired Ms. Schemel, who received her masters from Simmons College and most recently taught 2<sup>nd</sup> grade in Framingham Public Schools. We are pleased to welcome Rebecca Allen as our new social worker to Lyons, Ms. Allen has worked in the District for a number of years at the Randolph Community Middle School.

Please help us in welcoming them to the Lyons School and the Randolph Public Schools District.

## Young Elementary School (Young)

YES! staff is SO looking forward to reconnecting with our students and families! We have been working hard to get the building ready. We have new signage and materials to help with social distancing.

During our staff PD days, we are working on how we will build community, support students to feel safe, and how we will make sure that instruction, whether live or remote, will be engaging, meaningful and ensure students are learning as much as possible.

### RPS District Core Values: We C.A.R.E.

Continuous Reflection and Improvement • Academic Excellence and Innovation • Respectful and Responsible Relationships • Engaged and Equitable Community

Keep an eye on DOJO for additional updates! Letters with class assignments and additional information will be mailed. Check your mailboxes early next week!

## Randolph High School (RHS)

On behalf of the entire Randolph High School faculty, we welcome you to the 2020-2021 school year! We all recognize that this year will be challenging, yet it is also a year filled with new learning for everyone and we are excited about the possibilities and opportunities in front of us!

On Wednesday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, RHS administrators will host a series of forums throughout the day for both our students and families. Please see the attached flyer for more logistical information about the forums; we hope you will be able to attend to hear more information about the opening of school. We will send a zoom link home to all students and families on September 8<sup>th</sup>. Also, included with the email on September 8<sup>th</sup> will be our 2020-2021 Teaching and Learning Expectations for students and families to read together.

Everyone at RHS is committed to doing all we can to ensure that each RHS student has the best 2020-21 school year possible! One main idea that is leading our work this year comes from Maya Angelou, **“Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.”** This school year will look and feel very different than the spring; we have learned so much and we are much more prepared to educate and support all of our students in this new reality of hybrid, remote, and online teaching and learning. We know better and we will do better and that is what we will expect from all of our young adults as well.

Go Blue Devils!!

## AIM Academy (AIM)

We are looking forward to welcoming our students, returning and new for the 2020-2021 school year. We are hard at work to put all of our program components into place and thinking creatively about how we can show our students how excited we are to work with them and get them oriented to the new year.

AIM will have a hybrid model that includes three (3) days in person each week (Tues/Thurs/Fri) and two (2) days learning remotely (Mon/Wed) along with a full remote option. Our teachers are creating engaging lessons and working on connection activities to help build community in each class and the program.

# Department Updates

## Math Department

Over the summer, entering first - twelfth grade Randolph students were given math choice boards for math experiences each week. Activities included online math activities, social emotional activities with connections to math, as well as offline math projects. The goal was for students to think about math each day/week over the summer break. Nice work to all of our students that participated!

This past school year, The K - 5 Math Curriculum Team worked together to create a new scope and sequence and common assessments for math content standards. Teachers this year will be working with the curriculum to create engaging lessons for hybrid and remote learning.

The math department looks forward to a great year collaborating with each other and creating new exciting ways of learning for our Randolph students!

### RPS District Core Values: We C.A.R.E.

Continuous Reflection and Improvement • Academic Excellence and Innovation • Respectful and Responsible Relationships • Engaged and Equitable Community

## Language Acquisitions & World Languages

We will begin language screening for incoming kindergartners next Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons (3:30 pm – 6:30 pm). We have started calling families to schedule them. ESL teachers, coaches, and school-based administrators are working together to make sure that ESL services are provided following DESE recommendations and that special attention is paid to scheduling the lowest English proficiency students for additional in-person learning. Language screening for incoming students in grades 1-12 will begin on Tuesday, September 15<sup>th</sup> and will continue through the start of school.

## Registration

At this writing, we have 311 open registrations, with 178 approved and assigned to their district schools and 133 waiting for families to provide additional documents. We are currently reviewing registrations submitted from August 27<sup>th</sup> onward. We have already called over fifty of the longest standing open registrations to encourage families to complete their registration and upload the additional needed documents. Staff members are in the office during the posted office hours to answer phones and process registrations and work permits.

## SPED

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I know you have a lot of things on your mind and I am here to provide as much clarity and information as I can for your child's re-entry to school. There are a lot of new things that all of us are learning to navigate during this time and I ask that you continue to practice patience and kindness. Due to this ever-evolving newness of scenarios, we do anticipate that mistakes will be made along the way and we are prepared to correct them as soon as we can. Rest assured that in terms of instruction and services of your child throughout this school year, we will provide them to your child in the safest and the healthiest way possible following strict protocols and health guidance from CDC, DESE and the local BOH.

By now, you have received a form of communication either by survey, email or phone call from your child's school regarding the different learning models. In the next few weeks you will be contacted by your child's SPED Liaison to get your input regarding how instruction and services could look different this fall. In this conversation you will also discuss the COVID-19 Learning Plan.

By at least the third week of September, you will also be contacted by your child's SPED Team member regarding COVID-19 Compensatory Services (CCS). As a team, you will determine if your child is eligible for these services and will create a plan to execute these services. For planning purposes, we will prioritize our PK and students in the sub separate programs in terms of CCS discussions and following that our students in the inclusion and partial inclusion setting.

Lastly, we concluded a Special Education and EL Community Forum the evening of September 2<sup>nd</sup>. We heard that a few families did not get the link from last night's forum and we sincerely apologize for that. A video recording of the forum will be uploaded on the RPS website, under the SPED tab as soon as possible. Should you have further questions, please use this Google Form to send in your questions or please call your school Assistant Principal for Special

Education: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd5F\\_ryM42cYJTnMT5ZvTBmtEW9nQUw6ZUJNaPga7b74TWQVQ/view\\_form?gxids=7628](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd5F_ryM42cYJTnMT5ZvTBmtEW9nQUw6ZUJNaPga7b74TWQVQ/view_form?gxids=7628) "

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to seeing your child back in school.

## Finance

The Finance Department has continued to be in operation throughout the COVID-19 closure serving the needs of the district, paying payroll and warrant bills, managing benefits, and closing out the FY20 budget while opening the FY21 budget.

The Finance Department has also coordinated the efforts to write three major grants: A) The ESSER grant to be applied to JFK, Lyons, and Young elementary schools for COVID-19 related expenses to support the purchase of student hardware, improving technology infrastructure and curriculum supports for distance learning, PPE supplies and materials, and renovations to prepare for hybrid opening; B) The COVID-19 Relief Fund to provide all of the above for the high school, middle school, and Donovan elementary school; C) Finally, the state's Local Technology grant that was strictly for the purchase of student devices.

### RPS District Core Values: We C.A.R.E.

Continuous Reflection and Improvement • Academic Excellence and Innovation • Respectful and Responsible Relationships • Engaged and Equitable Community

## Human Resources

The Human Resources Department has been busy hiring new staff for the 2020-2021 school year at all schools and all levels. All positions are advertised on SchoolSpring.com. Currently we are looking to hire Permanent Building Substitute Teachers (\$100 per day) to work 2-3 days a week on a continuous basis. These positions will have opportunities for more days per week as well as possible long-term assignments. For more information or to apply please visit: <http://www.schoolspring.com/job?3353642>

## Technology

Four hundred and eleven (411) Lenovo laptops are being delivered to the IT Department on September 14<sup>th</sup>. IT Department staff will have an additional 200+ devices ready to hand out to students.

## Athletics Department

Greetings Families,

This is certainly a time filled with anxiety and questions as we approach the start of the school year. The Athletics Department has remained busy before and during the time of the pandemic.

On August 28, 2020 The MIAA/DESE officially announced the sports modifications for the fall season including the addition of a 'Floating' Season for football, competitive cheer, and other fall sports districts and leagues decide to move. The official season and dates are below.

MIAA 2020-2021 H.S. Sports Seasons:

- September 18 to November 20: Fall Sports
- November 30 to February 21: Winter Sports
- February 22 until April 25: Fall Sports II aka 'floating season'
- April 26 and end July 3: Spring Sports

Each sport that is offered at the middle and high school in the Fall, Winter, Fall II, and Spring will be played with specific modifications to the game. The modifications are designed to minimize contracting and spreading the COVID-19 virus.

As part of preparing for the sports season in addition to the state mandates coaches and first aid/CPR certifications, I am requiring members of the athletics and coaching staff to complete a COVID-19 course offered through the National Federation of High Schools. The coaches will serve as an additional resource for the athletes and families.

The sports we are planning to offer in the fall (Pending Approval)

RCMS – Boys & Girls Soccer

RHS – Boys & Girls Soccer, Boys & Girls Cross Country

Moved to the Fall II season: Football, Cheer, Middle School Cross Country

Please note: the Athletics Department will work closely with the Randolph Department of Public Health, School Committee and administration regarding extra-curricular opportunities based on the risk level of the town of Randolph.

Athletic Information Meeting with Tony Price, Athletics Director – (September) Zoom TBA

Registration for fall sports at the high school is open, please visit [www.bluedevelsathletics.com](http://www.bluedevelsathletics.com) for up to date information.

### RPS District Core Values: We C.A.R.E.

Continuous Reflection and Improvement • Academic Excellence and Innovation • Respectful and Responsible Relationships • Engaged and Equitable Community