

WAYLAND * PUBLIC * SCHOOLS

W

August 24th, 2020

Good morning everyone-

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I hope this letter finds you and your families doing as well as possible under the circumstances. I wanted to let all of you know about the work we have completed over the summer, the communication you can expect from staff when they return this week and our plans for special education this fall.

First of all, I want to thank all of you who completed the recently issued special education survey. The information you provided will be really helpful as we plan our return to in-person special education. There were two sets of information that I found intriguing, based on your responses relative to mask wearing, hygiene and social distancing. I can report that 85% of respondents reported students managing well with these new aspects of their lives. I also enjoyed reading about what students have been up to since March. This list was long and included...camping, golfing, swimming, diving, reading, movie making, bike riding, horse riding, mountain climbing and enjoying time with siblings. I was so pleased to hear that your children and our students have been actively participating in some fun stuff in this new and different world. If you were not able to complete the survey before it closed, your school based liaison may ask you some of the questions in an abbreviated format in their welcoming email.

As I hope you are aware, Wayland Public Schools will be returning to school in a 'Staged-Hybrid' model that will start with remote learning and then to a Hybrid model that is planned to start on October 19th. There is also the Wayland Remote Alternative Program (WRAP) that some of you may have signed up for. Special education is operating a little differently in the opening weeks and I wanted to explain again how we plan to come back to school.

- During the first five weeks of school, based on your survey response, we may see you student in-person, in-school for some services.
- In weeks 1-3 of our return, we are planning for up to 25% of service delivery minutes to occur in-person in school if you have chosen that option. The balance of service minutes, 75%, will be delivered remotely.
- In weeks 4-5 of our return, we are planning for up to 50% of service delivery minutes to occur in-person in school if you have chosen that option. The balance of service minutes, 50%, will be delivered remotely.
- Once we start the Hybrid model on October 19th, we plan on delivering a consistent 50% of service minutes when your student is present in school.
- The schedule that we establish for the first five weeks of school will change when we move to Hybrid. We want to use the time we have in weeks 1-5 to reconnect with students in small groups in a controlled manner as we all get used to the new version of school.

- If you have opted not to return to school or have enrolled in the WRAP program all service minutes will be delivered remotely.

It is difficult to predict exactly how the time will go for students when they come back to school in those first five weeks. For some it will be as if they never left and for others it will be really challenging. It is not our intent to push any student beyond their comfort zone and we will need you to support us when things go better or worse than planned. No one has ever experienced a return to school like this and our collaboration and communication with you will be so crucial in these opening weeks and beyond.

Teaching staff return to work this week and you can start to expect communication from them as they plan and organize for your student. What information can you expect to receive in the next few weeks and when should you expect it?

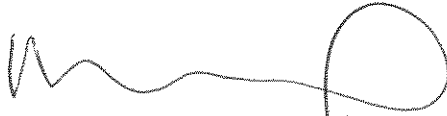
- Friday, August 28th: You will receive a 'Welcome email' from your school based liaison that will include who is on your IEP team this year as well as some questions that are unique to your student. Please respond to this email by Monday, August 31st. They will need a response from you in order to keep planning
- Wednesday, September 9th: DESE has provided all districts with a planning template called the 'Covid 19 Special Education Learning Plan (C-SELP for short). We will be using this template to outline service delivery in both remote and hybrid settings. You are not required to accept or reject the C-SELP, and it is not considered to be a change or amendment of the current IEP. It is notice of continued, changed circumstances and should be viewed as that alone.
- Friday, September 11th: Testing will be completed by appointment until further notice and you will receive dates for testing from the school based staff. Schedules will be tight so, in advance, we appreciate your flexibility. **If you would like to postpone testing until later this year please let school staff know as soon as possible. This will greatly help our planning.**
- Friday, September 11th: Your student may be due for an IEP meeting this fall and you will be notified of the meeting date by school-based staff. All IEP meetings will be conducted virtually this year. Many of you experienced this in the spring time and we will continue with the same model this year. **If you would like to postpone that meeting until later this year please let school staff know as soon as possible. This will greatly help our planning.**

I hope this is helpful information and it begins to explain my thinking about how we can successfully and gradually return to the work we do best, in-person service delivery.

This year will be my third year in Wayland as the Director of Student Services

and I certainly didn't plan for anything like this at my interview in February 2018! I want to thank you for your continued support and encouragement as we cautiously make our way into school year 20-21.

My best wishes to you all,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Whitehead', with a large circular flourish at the end.

Richard Whitehead M.Ed
Director of Student Services
Wayland Public Schools