

August 13, 2020

Good Afternoon, All,

I hope this message finds you well. Thank you for your continued patience as we work through the various challenges related to opening school in September amidst COVID-19 concerns.

Attached is the **Auburn Public Schools' Reopening and Readiness Guide**. This is a substantially completed draft. There will be some refinement to the document as we receive feedback from Town Hall meetings and continue to add a touch more specificity in some areas as information becomes available. The final version of our reopening guide will go before the School Committee for final adoption on August 26th. Building specific plans will be shared with you by your building principal(s) during two Town Hall meeting events during the weeks of August 17th and August 24th. You will be hearing from them by the end of the day tomorrow (Friday) regarding how Town Hall meetings will proceed.

Included in this email, too, is an explanation from Commissioner Riley regarding the "metric maps" Governor Baker unveiled on Tuesday. As noted in our reopening guide, this tool is one data point of many we will use to monitor and inform school operations. People are mistakenly thinking that this tool alone governs school operations on a weekly basis. That is incorrect. It is a data point we will use in conjunction with other pieces of data from national, state, and local health agencies, in conversation with Auburn's Department of Public Health and Inspectional Services.

I also realize before and after school care is crucial for many families. We continue to examine if there's any way we can provide these services to you safely. We are hoping to have some direction for you mid to late next week. I was aiming for August 10th, but we just aren't ready to make that decision yet.

Finally, as we prepare to return to school in a measured and phased manner, I cannot impress upon you enough how important it is that we continue to: (a) wear face coverings; (b) wash/sanitize hands frequently; and (c) keep appropriate social distance. Over 80% of families in Auburn have indicated a desire to return to school in a hybrid manner. We can only do that if we remain vigilant in our actions individually and with each other.

As always, thank you for your ongoing support and collaboration while we navigate this most challenging time.

Most Sincerely,

Casey J. Handfield, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools