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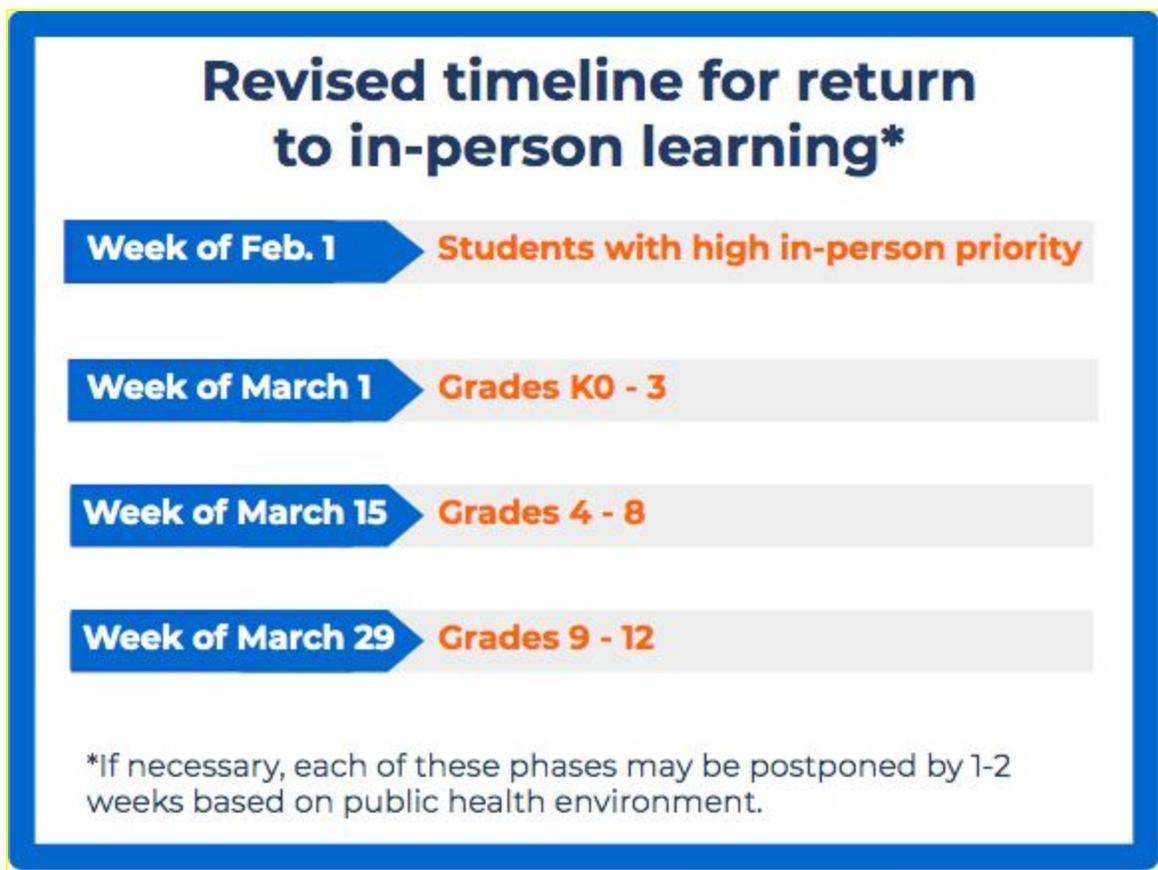
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Boston Public Schools Announces Tentative Schedule for Reopening Additional School Buildings

Agreement with Boston Teachers Union Expands Health and Learning Protocols to All School Buildings, Ensures Safety of Students and Staff



BOSTON -- Boston Public Schools (BPS) Superintendent Brenda Cassellius and Boston Teachers Union (BTU) President Jessica Tang today announced a new agreement as part of the [Memorandum of Agreement \(MOA\)](#) between the union and the district to extend key health,

safety, and staffing protocols to the future reopening of all school buildings for the remainder of the school year.

These protocols and standards, which will be implemented system-wide, are an extension of those originally implemented through prior MOAs and applied to all 32 schools currently open. As BPS continues reopening, these safety measures already in place will be extended to any school reopening in the future.

BPS also announced a new timeline for returning students to in-person learning, starting in February. The hybrid learning model remains opt-in for parents and caregivers. The tentative timeline for returning students whose families have selected hybrid learning is as follows:

- **Monday, February 1:** All students who have qualified for high in-person priority*
- **Monday, March 1 & Thursday, March 4:** Students in K0 - Grade 3 (Group A & B)
- **Monday, March 15 & Thursday, March 18:** Students in Grades 4 - 8 (Group A & B)
- **Monday, March 29 & Thursday, April 1:** Students in Grades 9 - 12 (Group A & B)

“Throughout the pandemic, we worked diligently to implement the appropriate planning and safety measures to allow more students to return for in-person learning because we understand the importance of providing a range of learning options for families,” said Mayor Martin J. Walsh. “Under the Superintendent’s leadership, in partnership with President Tang, I am grateful that BPS and BTU have reached a significant agreement that outlines the return to in-person learning for additional students in a safe and sustainable manner. I look forward to welcoming more students and teachers back into school buildings, while also remaining committed to the continued success of remote learning for families that prefer that option.”

Through the system-wide agreement, BPS, BTU, and the Boston Public Health Commission will be working collaboratively to take key building preparedness steps in order to further cultivate trust and codify our commitment to implementing the same health and safety protocols currently in place at the 32 schools currently open across all school buildings, including:

- limiting the number of students and staff in a building at one time to ensure social distancing,
- instituting creative scheduling and staffing, among other approaches on hybrid instruction,
- providing air purifiers into classrooms, offices and common areas or highest grade HVAC filters in schools with HVAC systems
- increasing air quality testing and reporting,
- Installing data loggers that provide daily air quality measures in our schools,
- delivering additional personal protective equipment to schools for students and staff,
- offering access to free COVID-19 testing for teachers on site or nearby their school,
- expanding a pilot program for student COVID-19 testing, and
- continuing to report all positive confirmed cases in schools to the school community and the public.

“The best learning environment for our students is in their classrooms, with their peers, under the care of our educators and staff. This agreement charts the course for the rest of the school year and establishes a safe return to in-person learning for additional students and staff,” said Superintendent Cassellius. “Our announcement today provides stability and clarity for our students, families, and the entire BPS community. I am thankful to President Tang for her leadership on this agreement and appreciative of the dedicated work of the High In-Person Priority Task Force, our school leaders, educators and staff who work tirelessly every day. I look forward to our continued collaboration with the Boston Teachers Union as we return strong and maintain our focus on advancing equitable outcomes for our students and supporting our families through these challenging times.”

The Memorandum of Agreement outlines the shared expectations for school building readiness, health and safety protocols, and approach to staffing buildings. The agreement is built on the foundation of the two Memorandum of Understandings signed on September 9th and 29th, 2020, and further developed in the November 14th, 2020 agreement.

“Throughout the pandemic, BTU educators have long advocated for and emphasized the importance and value of returning to in-person learning, especially for our highest-need students. Achieving this system-wide framework for health, safety, and staffing protocols will help us do so with essential protections for students, families, educators, and administrators alike. This framework adopts important safety standards that union educators have been advocating for on a system-wide basis in order to protect the learning experience and health of not just our high-needs students, but of all students, educators, and families throughout Boston and beyond,” said BTU President Tang. “We are thankful to Mayor Walsh and Superintendent Cassellius for hearing and understanding these needs -- and for helping to implement these common sense and concrete provisions with regard to PPE, ventilation and filtration, testing, room temperature, handwashing, in-person status notification, staffing, and more. We are thankful to the district for leading the formulation of the High In-person Priority Task Force proposed by BTU educators. We look forward to continued dialogue and collaboration this new year as we continue to address the needs of families, students, and educators during this pandemic.”

The MOA is effective through the duration of the school year, ending in June 2021.

“On behalf of the Boston School Committee, I thank the Superintendent, BTU President Tang and their teams for their collaboration on reaching this agreement,” said Boston School Committee Chairperson Alexandra Oliver-Dávila. “With this announcement, BPS families can be certain that their children are entering buildings where critical measures have been taken to ensure the health and safety of our entire community, and our educators and students can remain focused on teaching and learning.”

**Students recognized as high in-person priority include:*

- *High needs/Level 4 students with disabilities*

- *English Learners who are EL levels 1 and 2*
- *Students who are in the care of of the Department of Children and Families*
- *Students who are experiencing homelessness*
- *Students with limited or interrupted formal education*
- *Students identified by their school's Student Support Team (SST) as requiring additional in-person schooling*

For more information on BPS reopening, visit bostonpublicschools.org/reopening.

MEDIA AVAILABILITY:

BPS Superintendent Dr. Brenda Cassellius, BTU President Jessica Tang, and Boston's Chief of Health and Human Services Marty Martinez will host a brief, joint media availability via Zoom at 1:30 p.m. EST on Monday, January 11, 2021. To RSVP and to request the Zoom link, please send an email with journalist name and outlet details to both communications@bostonpublicschools.org, and Press@BTU.org ***