

EAST LONGMEADOW PUBLIC SCHOOLSs

180 Maple Street
East Longmeadow, MA. 01028-2788



Achievement *Accountability*

Gordon Smith
Superintendent of Schools

Pamela Blair
Asst. Superintendent for Business

June 16, 2020

Dear ELPS Families,

I hope that this letter finds all of you doing well and staying healthy. As we move through our final week of the 2019 – 2020 school year, I want to thank all of you for your incredible patience and flexibility that allowed us to successfully shift our entire learning program from an in-person one to a remote learning program in just a few days after our closure on Friday, March 13th.

Even as we close down our current school year, we have been planning for the opening of the 2020 - 2021 school year. We do not have the specific guidelines yet from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), but we do know that our operation in the Fall will include new health and safety protocols. This letter is being sent out to provide information on what some of the daily health and safety protocols that most likely will be needed when we return to school on September 1st.

The safety and protective measures that are in place now and have been effective along with some new ones are listed below. **These safety and protective measures are subject to change as more information and medical data from DESE are received:**

- ❖ If any student or staff member is feeling ill, the person should stay home and alert the school of the absence
- ❖ Frequent handwashing and hand sanitizing always has been and continues to be so important in maintaining one's health. We know that the washing of one's hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is the best way to minimize risk.
 - During the school day, we will be working with our students to incorporate this practice multiple times during the day.
 - We ask that families discuss the importance of frequent hand washing with their children and practice this throughout the summer.
- ❖ The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has not finalized the guidance on face coverings and masks for school districts during the 2020 - 2021 school year. It may be that the current practice of all students and staff wearing masks on a daily basis in order to protect themselves and others will continue as schools reopen in the Fall. We ask that families as they prepare with their children to return to school discuss the proper way to put on and use a mask. Families should purchase cloth, reusable masks or face coverings this summer as they prepare for the new school year to begin.
- ❖ Whenever possible, we will practice social distancing during the school day. More guidance on this will be forthcoming from DESE in coming weeks.

Please know that the safety guidelines for school operations in the Fall have not been finalized by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. ELPS will implement all changes and revisions as they are received from DESE. We also will be updating our families throughout the summer through the BlackboardConnect automated system.

The ELPS custodial staff has continued to clean and disinfect the school buildings throughout the closure due to Covid-19, and a comprehensive cleaning of all buildings will continue through the summer in order to be ready to reopen. Daily building cleaning and sanitizing protocols will continue to be implemented as we prepare to return for the new school year.

We have included links below to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that provide specific information on health and safety protocols that we all should practice in order to keep everyone safe. These links provide specific information and steps people can take to protect themselves.

[CDC Guidance on Handwashing](#)

[CDC Guidance on Wearing Face Coverings](#)

I want to again thank you for all of your support, flexibility, and cooperation. We will get through this challenge together. Have a happy, healthy, and safe summer!

Sincerely,

Gordon Smith
Superintendent of Schools