



Message from School Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Chub Whitten and Carl Nylén

On August 6, the Ipswich School Committee voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and the Reopening Oversight Committee to open the 2020-21 school year utilizing a hybrid model with a remote option. Keeping the health and safety of our entire school community during this pandemic as a primary focus, this model enables our students to return to school for a portion of their school week in smaller cohorts (groups of students) while also providing families, teachers, and staff the option of remote (at home) learning if that is their preference.

It is important to acknowledge the anxiety that all students, teachers, administrators, parents, and community members have with regards to school reopening. Like all communities in our nation, we are working hard to make the best choices in the face of an ever-changing environment. It is extremely important that the school district maintains the flexibility to pivot to a different teaching model if current situations demand. This summer, several collaborative committees have been busy assessing infrastructure, preparing facilities, and planning teaching and learning for the upcoming year. Now that the policy decision on reopening has been made, the next few weeks will be used to coordinate a detailed operational plan to re-engage our students, and to communicate that plan clearly to faculty, staff, families and students.

During these trying times, we all look forward to an eventual return to normalcy and a full reopening of our schools. In the meantime, we ask for your patience and support while the district focuses on a hybrid-with-remote option plan that balances the educational needs of our students with the health and safety of our families, staff, and community. Finally, we recognize that regardless of the choices that we make, the educational experience is going to be very different this year. Let us all resolve to use this experience as a real-time lesson in resilience, creative problem-solving, overcoming obstacles, and pulling together towards a common goal.

We are all truly in this together,

Chub Whitten
Chair

Carl Nylén
Vice Chair

Return to Learn 2020

Ipswich Public Schools has developed a special website, “**Return to Learn 2020**” (<https://sites.google.com/ipsk12.net/ipswichpublicschools/home>) to provide up-to-date information to the community about our fall reopening plans. It includes our district documents; guidance documents from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; public health updates; results from recent family, staff, and high school student surveys; information about the Reopening committees; and more. Detailed information regarding the hybrid plan, the remote option, transportation, changes to the school calendar, food services, and technology will be provided over the next few weeks. We recognize that there is an intense need for answers and are committed to providing them as soon as possible.

Thank you very much to everyone who has reached out with questions, concerns, and comments regarding the reopening of schools. Continued two-way dialogue between schools and families is essential as we all navigate through this national crisis. If you’d like to provide additional feedback, please email your building level administrator and/or 2020reopen@ipsk12.net.

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