



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

The Ipswich School Committee looks forward to the return of students to our buildings beginning Monday, September 14. As a Commonwealth and as a community, we have flattened the curve, kept our positivity rates low, and implemented a broad range of health and safety measures so that we may now provide our students with the structure of in-person learning and engagement. We would like to thank our entire Ipswich community for making the hybrid reopening a reality: the amount of collaboration, hard work, and creative thinking required has been truly inspirational. It also would not have been possible without the phenomenal support of the Ipswich Educators Association who negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding with the School Committee. Please join us in thanking the IEA for their commitment. The MOU, which was ratified by the IEA with the approval of 97% of votes cast, is posted on the [District website](#) for your reference.

Education will have a very different look this fall, full of compromises, adjustments, and varying blends of in-person and remote learning. It will probably feel strange at first, or disjointed: after years of encouraging teamwork, small groups, student collaboration, and other innovative learning practices, we now find ourselves pivoting to an entirely different set of teaching and learning methods. Will it be perfect? No. Will we be persistent in our goal to provide an outstanding educational experience? Yes. This pandemic has not been equitable to all of us. Our prioritizations must be to foster those vital student-teacher connections, address achievement gaps, give extra support to our highest needs children, provide much-needed social interaction, and bolster social-emotional wellness.

We are so appreciative that our teachers and staff have been leaning in and working together to make September 14 a reality for our kids, and have been more than impressed at how hard everyone has been working for this Commonwealth in our community. We will cherish this school year as a true example of collective effort.

Thank you, and welcome back.

Chub Whitten  
Chair

Carl Nylén  
Vice Chair

# Updates: Return to Learn 2020

Updates to the District's Return to Learn Plan will be published this week to reflect recent changes and revised guidance from the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the MA Department of Public Health. Visit [www.ipsk12.net](http://www.ipsk12.net) and our Return to Learn 2020 website at <https://sites.google.com/ipsk12.net/ipswichpublicschools/home> to view the plan, school calendar, food services, transportation, public health updates, technology assistance, and more.

## GW cc`7 UYbXUf`

The first day of school for students is Monday, September 14. Students in Cohort A will attend in-person, and students in Cohort B will attend remotely. Thursdays will not be early release days this school year.

Specific information about student schedules, remote learning, arrivals/dismissals, attendance, and health/safety protocols are being sent to all families by each school building. Please contact your building principal if you have any questions about your student's first week schedule. As a reminder, school grounds are closed to public use during school day hours.

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**IPSWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
2020-2021  
SCHOOL CALENDAR**

School Hours		
Elementary	8:40 AM	3:05 PM
Secondary	7:45 AM	2:21 PM

JANUARY						
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**Important Dates**

August 31    Opening Day for Teachers

September 1    Teacher Workshop

September 14    First Day of School

  

June 17    Last Day of School

June 24    Last Day of School w/  
5 snow days

**WEDNESDAYS WILL BE REMOTE FOR ALL STUDENTS**

FEBRUARY						
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**Holidays and No School Days**

September 7    Labor Day

October 12    Columbus Day

October 14    Professional Development

November 11    Veterans Day

November 26    Thanksgiving

November 27    Thanksgiving Break

December 24-    Winter Holiday Break

January 1

January 18    Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February 15-19    Winter Break

April 19-23    Spring Break

May 31st    Memorial Day

MARCH						
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**Thanksgiving Early Release (TER)**

Elementary Schools    11:55 AM

Secondary Schools    11:20 AM

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**Key:**

**FD** First Day

**TW** Teacher Workshop

**PD** Professional Development Day

**ER** Early Release

**TER** Thanksgiving Early Release

**H** Holiday

**V** Vacation

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JUNE						
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The single most important thing to do if you or your child is exhibiting common symptoms of COVID-19 is to **gHUm\ ca Y**. Our collective health relies, in part, on individual attention and responsibility. Although some symptoms of COVID-19 are the same as the flu or a cold, when in doubt, stay home.

Below is the full list of symptoms for which caregivers should monitor their children, and staff should monitor themselves:

- Fever (100.4° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache *when in combination with other symptoms*
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) *when in combination with other symptoms*

**If staff or students have any of these symptoms, they must get tested for active COVID-19 infection prior to returning to school.**

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has launched a website, **F Yhi fb]b[ ' hc'GW cc`GUZY miHc[ YH Yf**, for families and caregivers. It includes information from doctors, school reopening guidelines, frequently asked questions and answers, and an option to email with questions or concerns: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/backtoschool/>

### **Families play a critical role in preventing the spread of COVID-19:**

- Check your children** daily for any COVID-19 symptoms.
- Keep children home** from school if they are sick or have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19. Have a back-up plan ready in case your child wakes up with symptoms and needs to stay home.
- Remind your child** to wear a mask in school and on the bus.
- Arrange for transportation** other than the bus whenever possible.
- Communicate with teachers and school leaders** if your child's health changes, if they come into contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, or if you have concerns. Districts have plans in place for when a student receives a positive COVID-19 test or is a close contact of someone who tests positive.

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All individuals in school buildings, on school grounds, and on school transportation must wear a well-fitted face covering that covers the mouth, nose, and chin (no single-layer masks, gaiters, bandanas, valves, or buffs). Please read the face covering policy on our District website, [https://www.ipsk12.net/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=1418&dataid=3426&FileName=EBCFA\\_%20Face%20Coverings%20.pdf](https://www.ipsk12.net/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=1418&dataid=3426&FileName=EBCFA_%20Face%20Coverings%20.pdf).

## **6 i g`Fci Hg`**

Transportation routes are currently being finalized and will be posted as soon as possible on the District's website, [www.ipsk12.net](http://www.ipsk12.net). Because of the required health and safety protocols, such as assigning bus seats, any new requests for regular bus transportation will be placed on a wait list which you can find here: <https://www.ipsk12.net/domain/47>. Thank you for your patience as we work to accommodate the transportation needs of our students.

## **: ccX`GYf j JW`**

Meals will continue to be offered this year to all students. Students who are in school will be able to order meals either online or in the classroom, and students who are learning remotely will be provided packaged meals by delivery/pickup as has been done since March. The USDA has extended the Free Meal program through December 31, 2020 to provide all children with access to nutritious food.

## **Contact Information**

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