



**BEDFORD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
*Inspiring and Challenging Our Students*  
Amy Fishkin  
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August 10, 2020

Dear PRES Families,

I hope you and your family have remained safe and have restored power after the recent storm last week. It feels like the year 2020 keeps testing our patience, our resilience, and our ability to persevere through some of the most challenging days of our lives. I am certainly the kind of person who is always up for a challenge. In fact, when confronted with a difficult problem, the harder the puzzle the more I dig in to find a solution. Yet, the more we dig into the details of bringing children back to school in the middle of a health pandemic, the more obstacles and hurdles we seem to encounter along the way. The media has certainly had a field day with this extraordinarily challenging task that lays ahead of us. And yet, we persevere with an unwavering commitment to our children because teaching and caring for our children is the reason we all went into this field of education. We don't give up because we know that school is what brings a sense of normalcy and predictability to our children's lives. We don't give up because children grow when they are away from their parents and they need the connection to their peers, their teachers, and their community. We don't give up because school provides children with meals, a sense of safety and security, and a place to step outside their comfort zone and learn new things. We all want so desperately to get back to normal. And, yet, I fear that any schedule or learning plan we create will never live up to the vibrant and dynamic learning environment where our students have always thrived. With tables in rows, 6 feet apart, masks on, limited collaborative experiences, and no cozy reading nook in which to curl up with a good book, school will just not look the same as it has in the past. However, we will not give up. We will make sure that our students are given every opportunity possible to learn and grow in a new and different version of school this year. We will get outdoors as much as possible and take advantage of our natural surroundings. We will continue to evaluate, re-evaluate, and revise our plans as they unfold. Our administrative team, in collaboration with staff and parents, has spent every waking hour, as well as sleepless nights this summer, trying to develop plans that meet the State guidelines, keep our children and staff safe and healthy, and continue to move teaching and learning forward.

Here are some guiding principles that helped us to develop the [BCSD reopening plans](#) that are outlined on our District website:

- **Predictable Schedule:** Bringing our youngest children back to school everyday (K-2) will allow our youngest students the predictable, face-to-face time they need with teachers to get the year started. Our grades 3-5 students, while on a hybrid schedule, will have predictable days, both at home and at school. During in-school days, they will receive direct instruction from their teacher(s). The home days will provide students with guided practice for remote learning, as well as face-to-face time with their teacher(s). Specials (art, music, and PE) will be incorporated into these schedules.
- **Maintaining a manageable capacity** in the building is essential to keep everyone safe. Our hybrid model for grades 3-5, as well as staggered arrival, dismissal, lunch and recess times,



will help us achieve this. If we can bring students in grades 3-5 back full time, in a safe manner, this will certainly be a priority as we continue to develop our plans.

- **Get outside as much as possible:** Teachers will plan to bring their students outside as much as possible during the “in-person” school days. As long as weather permits, we plan to bring children outside for instruction as frequently as we can. Please plan to pack a towel, labeled water bottle, and a mask each day! A more detailed daily packing list will be coming.
- **Health and safety precautions** such as daily health screenings, masks, social distancing, frequent hand washing, open windows and air ventilation, as well as increased cleaning and disinfecting will all be in place to ensure everyone’s safety.

I find that with each scenario, each plan we develop, each schedule we create, we are continually giving up something to get. With everything there is a risk. No solution is perfect and no model will bring us the sense of “school” that we have come to love and adore. This will be far from perfect, but I can tell you that we will give it everything we’ve got. We have incredibly smart leaders and teachers in our District who will not settle for less than our best. But it will take more than just our staff to make this work. This is a community effort. If we want to keep everyone safe and healthy, we will need to work as a team. I know Pound Ridge is up for the challenge because we’ve already weathered many storms together. This time will be no different. It is our toughest times that make us stronger and how we respond to a challenge truly defines who we are.

While there are still details to iron out, and I know many questions still unanswered, we will do our best to keep you informed as our plans continue to take shape in response to your needs and questions. In the coming days, you will have an opportunity to ask questions and share with us your priorities. Please make sure to attend the BCSD Town Hall meetings coming up and **complete the District questionnaire by Wednesday, August 12th**. See email below from Dr. Joel Adelberg:

*Email sent on Wednesday, August 5, 2020:*

*Dear Parents/Guardians,*

*We hope you are all doing well after yesterday’s storm. Due to the extensive power outages across the county, we are rescheduling the Town Hall Reopening Plan meetings that were originally scheduled for tomorrow, August 6th. The new dates for these Town Hall meetings are:*

*August 11th from 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm (for all parents K-12)*

*August 12th from 8:30 am - 9:30 am (for all parents K-12)*

*Please see the link for the Town Hall meetings [here](#).*



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Also, we ask that you submit your questions to the Town Hall meetings by using the link to the Google Doc [here](#).

We want to thank you for your patience as we work through our planning for the upcoming school year. We know that there are still many questions and we hope to address your questions at these Town Hall Reopening Plan meetings.

**Also, please be sure to complete the [“Back to School Learning Plans Questionnaire”](#) by Wednesday, August 12th at 4:00 pm.**

*Bedford Central School District*

I look forward to partnering with you in the coming days and weeks to create a new version of school that will get us through this pandemic. We are looking forward to welcoming many new families to PRES and will be in touch shortly with more details regarding our New Family Orientation, Kindergarten Meet & Greet, and the opening of school.

Stay safe,

Amy Fishkin  
Principal