



# Lawrence Family Development Charter School

[www.lfdcs.org](http://www.lfdcs.org)

*strengthening families...building community*

Academy for Early Academic Preparation (K-1-Grade 1)  
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## REOPENING LFDCS: Questions and Answers for Parents

### 1. When does school start?

**K-2 through grade 8 students will return on Monday, September 14; K-1 begins Tuesday, September 15**

The MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has allowed schools to reopen later to give teachers and schools time to plan and prepare. We need the extra time to plan the opening of school and make a safe learning experience.

### 2. What will school look like this year? What instructional model will we use?

The Academy will maintain a full in-person program as they have every year. We will start the year in grades 2-8 with a Hybrid Model which would allow us to maintain a class size of 10-11 students—½ of a classroom/homeroom will attend in person while the other ½ will do remote learning for a week and then they will switch. Each student will follow an “A-B” Week schedule (ABABAB...). For example, a student may be in the “A” Week while their friend is in the “B” Week. “A” Week is In-Person Learning—“B” Week is Remote Learning. Remote Learning Weeks are considered school days, and students must be in uniform when they are on screen. When students are on their Remote Learning Week (“B” Week), we will have support for students in grades 2-6 whose parents cannot stay home with them. Please watch for an invitation to attend a meeting regarding this new program.

### 3. Why are DESE and the medical community recommending in-person learning?

Because of the relatively low transmission rates of COVID-19 in Massachusetts, physicians, pediatricians and other public health experts agree that in-person learning is the preferred model. While remote learning went very well during the school closure last spring, there is no substitute for in-person instruction when it comes to the quality of students’ academic learning. In-person school plays an equally important role in supporting students’ social-emotional needs, including their mental and physical health.

### 4. What safety measures will be in place for students and staff?

It is important to note that the American Academy of Pediatrics has affirmed that children, particularly younger children, are less likely than adults to be infected with COVID-19. Furthermore, if they become infected, it appears children may not have the same transmission potential as adults. The health and safety requirements for school reopening use a combination of strategies that, taken together, will substantially reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in schools. All students and staff will wear masks except when eating. All students will bring their own masks and a small hand sanitizer for their desks and desks will be assigned. Supplies like crayons and pencils will not be shared. In each room, teachers will have a gallon of hand sanitizer, extra masks for students who forget to bring one and a box of gloves. All horizontal surfaces will be sanitized daily, and our buildings are and will continue to be clean and sanitized. All bathrooms will be cleaned hourly, and air filters that are designed to be changed twice yearly will be changed every 8 weeks. Physical distancing will occur in classrooms and other building areas. Only one student at a time will leave the classroom and will only go to their lockers at the beginning and end of the day. Lunch and breakfast will be served in classrooms.

Students will not change classrooms (Art, Music, PE, Digital Literacy, Spanish, Science (5-8), all 7-8 teachers). Teachers will move from room to room. When students return, we will be reviewing with them any building routines being put into place—such as, how to socially distance in the hallway or on the stairs. We will limit visitors to the buildings, including meetings and conferences, to keep the school’s population small.

**5. What happens during the Remote Learning weeks?**

Remote Learning is every student’s “B” Week. During that week your child will have a schedule of times that he/she will need to do work. No homework will be given during a child’s “A” Week; he/she will do all homework in “B” Week. Projects such as Book Reports will be done in “B” Week.

**6. What are the guidelines for safe distancing requirements between students?**

Medical experts have stated that the greater the physical distancing the better, but that the minimum acceptable distance is three feet when students are wearing masks. This is supported by guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the World Health Organization.

**7. Who needs to wear a mask, and when do they have to be worn?**

Students in second grade and above and all adults, including teachers and staff, are required to wear a mask that covers their nose and mouth at all times, except for designated breaks, which should occur throughout the day. Breaks should occur when students can be six feet apart and ideally outside. Students in K-1, K-2 and grade 1 are strongly encouraged to wear masks and will be encouraged to do so.

**8. Are there exceptions to wearing masks?**

Exceptions to mask-wearing requirements will be made for those for whom it is not possible due to documented medical conditions, disability impact or other serious health or safety factors. Face shields may be an option for students with medical or behavioral challenges who are unable to wear masks.

**9. Can parents send children to school without a mask?**

Masks should be provided by the parent, but the school will have available disposable face masks for a student who forgets their mask.

**10. Can students in K-1, K-2 and Grade 1 sit together on the rug?**

Students in K-1, K-2 and grade 1 should be encouraged to wear a mask. Schools should try to keep kindergarten and first grade students six feet apart but lesser distances are acceptable (but no less than three feet). This includes rug time. Teachers should also plan activities so that students can be spaced apart and increase outdoor time.

**11. Will there be changes to assessment requirements (MCAS)?**

The state has not changed anything at this time.

**12. Will there be bus transportation?**

Parents may contract with private transportation companies as usual. Trombly school buses will allow 1 student per seat; each bus has 25 seats. The bus will be sanitized before and after each trip, and all students, drivers and monitors must wear a mask. There is a possibility that this may not meet our needs and are discussing that now.

**13. Can parents opt-out of in-person learning for their child? What can a school do to avoid disruptions that occur if parents change their mind about whether their child will attend school remotely or in-person?**

In-school attendance is highly encouraged to promote student academic progress because there is no substitute for the attention and engagement that students receive with in-person learning. We will survey parents about their intention to return their children to school. If a student is not attending school in person, they must let us know at the beginning of a term, and the school must be notified in writing at least a week before the term starts. It will be a complete quarter before the student can return to in-school learning if they choose to return, and the school must be notified of the student’s return in writing at least two week’s before. Grading will be in effect during this time.

**14. What is the difference between homeschooling and remote learning?**

Remote learning means learning provided by the school district that happens outside of the traditional classroom because the student and teacher are separated by distance. Parents may choose to homeschool their children. For a child of compulsory school age, the homeschooling program must be approved in advance by the Superintendent. This is considered a private education, and it involves withdrawing from school.

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This is just a short summary to let you know what we are planning. There will be many details to be shared during your first week back. Please know that our main focus is to create the best learning environment that is **safe for everyone**: students, teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, nurses, etc. LFDCS is taking stringent, diligent measures to ensure a safe environment for all of us.

Please reach out to Yulissa Rodriguez (or Head of School) with any questions.