

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

December 31, 2021

Dear Arlington Public Schools Families,

I am writing with an important update on Arlington's approach to our 2022 return from the holiday break. Rapidly increasing case rates in Arlington and the surrounding area necessitate some schedule adjustments next week. We are making these adjustments in an effort to ensure that we can fully operate and staff our schools and stay open for in-person learning as we enter the New Year.

IMPORTANT: Arlington Public Schools currently plans for early release days on Monday 1/3/22 and Tuesday 1/4/22. On these days we will be focused on making sure that all staff and students who have given consent are tested for COVID-19 using PCR pooled tests. We will provide a grab-and-go lunch option for all students on these days. Students should go home following dismissal and avoid gathering with peers.

- **All elementary schools and Menotomy Preschool will close at 11:30am on Monday and Tuesday.** After-school care is also canceled on these days. Opening time remains the same: 8:10am at all elementary schools, 8:30am at Menotomy Preschool.
- **All middle and high schools will close at 12:00pm on Monday and Tuesday.** Opening time remains the same: 8:30am for Gibbs, Ottoson, and AHS.

If your child is not currently participating in pooled testing and you would like to provide consent, please contact your child's school principal and/or nurse on Monday morning.

High-Quality Masks: In our last message, we recommended that students and staff wear KN-95 or similar high-quality masks with filtration when we return in 2022. *This is a recommendation and not a requirement.* This recommendation is made in collaboration with the Arlington Health Department and is motivated by our desire to remain open for in-person learning and to reduce transmission. We do not intend for this to be a long-term recommendation.

Quarantine and Isolation Protocols: The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and Massachusetts Department of Public Health recently released revised protocols for COVID-19 isolation and quarantine. We will be reviewing our protocols and revising them early next week; in the meantime, staff and families are expected to continue to adhere to protocols outlined in our [APS Recovery Plan](#). Our goal is to have revised protocols completed and communicated no later than Friday, 1/7/22.

It is our goal in Arlington to protect in-person learning for all students; all measures we are taking are meant to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission and maintain adequate staffing levels at all schools. We will communicate more information and any adjustments as quickly as possible. I hope you and your families have a safe and happy start to 2022; we look forward to seeing you on Monday morning.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth C. Homan, Ph.D.
Superintendent, Arlington Public Schools