

Central Massachusetts Collaborative

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Dr. Susan Farrell, Executive Director
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August 14, 2020

Dear CMC Families,

I hope this message finds you well. It is time again to begin planning for students to return to school. As required by the The Massachusetts Department of Education, CMC submitted our full reopening plan to the state which included three required models: a remote learning model, a hybrid learning model and a full in-person learning model. All three plans provide a structured school day which includes all IEP grid services. Student work will be graded and attendance will be taken. Technology will be provided for students who need it. The full CMC plan is available on our website located at: <https://www.cmasscollaborative.org/>

Over the past month, the CMC Reopening Committee completed a feasibility study which included an examination of the following: Physical distancing in classrooms and common areas, student cohorting, scheduling and transitions, and health and safety protocols for staff and students. The study also included staff and parent surveys, a detailed review of state and local guidance, consultation with local stakeholders and other collaboratives and a review of member and non-member plans where available.

Based on our feasibility study, CMC has determined that Central Mass Academy, Robert Goddard Academy, Central Mass Prep, Hartwell Learning Center and THRIVE will offer students a hybrid learning plan. This model provides a combination of in-person learning and remote learning. School programs selecting a hybrid model will have three (3) cohorts of students. Cohort one (1) will consist of high needs students. These students will attend school in-person Monday through Thursday each week and attend school remotely on Fridays (80% in-person learning). The remaining students will be divided into two (2) additional cohorts. Each cohort will participate 40% of the time in-person, and 60% of the time remotely with a rotating schedule of one week on site, one week remote. For all students, Friday will be a remote learning day for all students. This plan was designed to allow all students to attend school on site and also develop and maintain the skills needed to learn remotely in the event that CMC must go fully remote during the coming school year.

Rockdale Recovery High School and all three Woodward Day Sites will begin with a modified in-person learning plan. Students at WDS will have the option to attend school each week Monday through Thursday onsite and will learn remotely on Fridays.

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All parents will also have the option to select a fully remote learning plan for their child. This model supports all students with instruction through our remote learning platform, google classroom, and utilizes additional remote learning tools and materials to individualize instruction for students at home. In this plan, students receive direct instruction and itinerant services provided through remote methods such as Google Meets and video calls.

The first day of school for students will be Monday, September 14, 2020. Program staff will reach out to you directly with more information regarding your child's individual plan. Staff will work with you to develop a rigorous schedule that meets your child's academic and social/emotional needs and includes all IEP grid services. This schedule may include shorter days for the first few weeks of school with a gradual increase in time on site over the first month of school. We believe our students need to return to in-person learning and believe this plan allows us the best opportunity to safely and successfully bring students back to our buildings.

We, at CMC, understand that there is no one plan that will work best for all students. We also know that this is a fluid situation and changes in health or safety information from DESE and DPH may necessitate changes to a program's initial reopening plan. **REOPENING WILL BE DRIVEN BY PUBLIC HEALTH DATA** at the start of September and it will be critical to maintain flexibility to balance staff and student needs.

Please know that our goal is the safe return of as many students as possible to in-person school settings. It is our hope that our families will understand the challenges presented by the pandemic and will work closely with us to meet the individual needs of their students. Parent input and support will be key to our students' success as we reopen schools in the fall.

With Kind Regards,

Susan Farrell
Executive Director
Central Massachusetts Collaborative