



## **NMRSD Update**

### **Thursday, June 25, 2020**

#### **Plan for the Fall**

Today, Governor Baker's office and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released their initial guidance, [Initial Fall Reopening Guidance](#), about reopening schools this fall. We applaud the level of thought and care that went into the development of this guidance and share its goal of the safe return of as many students as possible to in-person school settings in order to best meet students' academic, social, and emotional needs.

The initial guidance that has been released is the result of weeks of collaboration between the DESE Return-to-School Working Group, infectious disease physicians, pediatricians, and public health experts.

The state's goal is to bring as many students back in the fall in as safe a manner as possible. If the current public health metrics hold, there is hope that we can return to in-person instruction in the fall with plans in place to protect all members of the NM community. It is the opinion of state and medical officials that the risk of transmission in schools is likely lower than in other settings when health/safety requirements and rigorous protocols are in place. (pg. 7, Reopening Guidance)

DESE is requiring each school district in the Commonwealth to submit a comprehensive reopening plan, with three (3) models for the fall so that we are prepared to respond to any changes during the 2020-2021 school year:

1. In-Person Return with health/safety requirements
2. Hybrid Model that combines in-person and remote learning
3. Continuation of Remote Model

Clearly, it is our hope that a return to in-person instruction is possible, as there is no substitute for the attention and engagement that it brings to our students. In-person schooling plays a critical role in our ability to support students' physical health, cognitive, and social-emotional needs. In addition, we realize the level of disruption the school closure put on families with regard to work schedules, childcare, and remote learning support.

Over the coming days, we will be reviewing the guidance to begin to understand how it impacts what we can do in North Middlesex. We also acknowledge that these initial guidelines do not address every topic and that there will be additional guidance coming throughout the summer.

### Summary of Key Messages

Current medical research supports a safe in-person return to school - with preventive measures in place - as infection and transmission rates are lower for children than adults. Here are some key components of the guidance for an in-person return:

- Preventive measures include masks/face coverings, physical distancing, handwashing, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces.
- Masks/face coverings will be required for all students in Grade 2 and above and for all adults; they are recommended for students in Grade 1 and below. Masks are required for all on the bus.
  - Exceptions for those with medical conditions, disability impact, or other health or safety factors.
  - Mask breaks should occur throughout the day.
- Based on current medical research, and in conjunction with other preventive measures, a minimum physical distance of three feet has been established.
- There are no maximum group sizes as long as the physical distancing requirements above are followed.

We acknowledge that there are likely to be more questions than answers at this time, and we will continue to communicate with you in the coming weeks and months. We also encourage you to read the full document which is linked above. Additional surveys will be sent and forums will be scheduled in July for further collaboration with families and staff members. We encourage you to complete all surveys and/or attend forums to help with establishing a plan for NM.

We will remain in regular contact with you through the summer and will be prepared to respond to any new information or changes that we are presented by the state. In the meantime, our Return to School Working Group and various focus groups will be working to ensure as smooth as a return as possible.

Thank you for your understanding and patience in advance as we continue to navigate through these unprecedented times which require a great deal of time and planning.

## **Congratulations**

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate two fantastic young ladies on their impressive achievements:



**SOCCER & TRACK**

Soccer League All-Star 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019  
Indoor Track League All-Star 2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2018-2019 & 2019-2020  
Outdoor Track League All-Star 2017, 2018, 2019

The Lowell Sun Girls Soccer Team All-Star 2018 & 2019  
The Lowell Sun Indoor Track Team All-Star 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020  
The Lowell Sun Outdoor Track Team All-Star 2017, 2018, 2019

Central Massachusetts Division 1 Soccer All-Star 2018 & 2019

**MARTINA NKWANTAH**

Best of Hometown Soccer & Track All-Star 2019 & 2020  
Worcester Telegram Soccer, Indoor Track, & Outdoor Track All-Star 2018, 2019, 2020

MIAA Division 4 Indoor Track District Champion - Shot Put  
MIAA Division 4 Indoor Track All-State Runner-Up— Shot Put  
MIAA Division 1 Outdoor Track All-State Final 4— Javelin

**Future Plans:** Study Exercise Clinical Science & Compete for UMass-Lowell's Division 1 Track Team

**Favorite North Middlesex Athletic Moment:**  
THE BUS RIDES!!

**UMASS LOWELL**

**Martina Nkwantah** - in addition to the accolades above, Martina (Class of 2020) is also a FINALIST for the Best of Hometown Female Athlete of the Year in Soccer & Track. Martina is described by her coaches as not only a great student and athlete, but a great person. She holds herself accountable, has an elite work ethic, and has the uncanny ability to grow and reflect. Her accolades and accomplishments speak for themselves. She will be attending UMass-Lowell and competing for their track team.



**PROJECT 351**  
UNITE ACT LEAD

**NORTH MIDDLESEX GRAD RACHEL SABALL AWARDED THE 2020 'MYRA KRAFT GIVING BACK' SCHOLARSHIP!**

ASHBY, MASSACHUSETTS — North Middlesex Graduate and Ashby native, Rachel Saball, found out that she was the 2020 recipient of the esteemed “Myra Kraft Giving Back Scholarship” in a Zoom conference-call with New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft on Wednesday June 17, 2020. The \$20,000 Scholarship will support Rachel as she pursues a degree in Elementary Education at Husson University in Maine.

**NM**

**Rachel Saball** - when Rachel (Class of 2020) was in 8th grade, she was given an amazing opportunity to join Project 351, a youth-led service movement inspired

by the vision of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Being an Ambassador for Project 351 has helped Rachel develop a passion for community service and leadership. She demonstrated these values as a committed member and Captain of the Indoor and Outdoor Track Teams at North Middlesex. In honor of the late Myra Kraft, this \$20,000 scholarship is Project 351's highest honor and has been awarded annually to just one individual out of all 351 towns and cities in the Commonwealth.

### **Superintendent's Equity Advisory**

I recently formed a Superintendent Equity Advisory that will be charged with addressing issues around racism, bigotry, and social injustice. As educators and adults, it is critical that we model listening sincerely to other perspectives, strive for understanding to build trust, and commit ourselves to achieving racial equity in our school community. We will be working with students to build their awareness regarding the impact of their words and actions regardless of their unintentionality.