



NMRSD Update Sunday, September 26, 2021

As we wrapped up our 4th week of school, we would like to thank our parents and students who have helped make the first month a success. Your understanding and flexibility have been evident in our schools as the students' perseverance has been exceptional. It has truly been great to have the students back in our buildings. Our test and stay program is up and running thanks to our phenomenal health services staff who have truly gone above and beyond to keep as many students in school, with as few disruptions, as possible.

IMPORTANT - NMRSD Organizational & Facilities Review-Collins Center

As you may be aware, the North Middlesex Regional School District has seen a steady decline in enrollment over the past decade. The District is not alone in facing this demographic trend, which has not only created challenges in our attempts to balance class sizes, staffing, and facilities needs across our campuses, but has also resulted in a steady increase in our expenditures per pupil. This cost trend is not sustainable long term. Using grant funds from the Commonwealth, we have engaged the Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management to study alternatives for cost savings that may be available to help us continue to provide the educational environment our communities deserve and demand.

As part of this study, the Collins Center will be soliciting public feedback and engagement during the month of October to help determine the values and priorities of our residents when it comes to educating our children. This effort will include both resident surveys and public engagement forums and we would like to invite your participation in both.

Beginning October 1 and continuing through October 31, a district-wide online survey will be available here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NMRSD-Values>

During the week of October 11th, the Collins Center will also host a series of public engagement sessions to more directly facilitate discussion and hear your ideas. These 60-90 minute sessions will be online, and participants **will be expected to actively engage in the discussion**; as such, the number of participants will be limited to ensure a quality experience and constructive feedback. You can find out more information and register for the sessions here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NMRSDforumregistration>

Your opinion matters! Please be sure to complete the survey to make your voice heard! If you have questions on the survey, or require an alternative format, please contact michael.edwards@umb.edu.

The results of these sessions and the survey will be presented to the School Committee at the November 15th regular meeting.

Masks - From the Supervisor of Health Services

If possible, we are asking parents and caregivers to provide cloth masks for their children as they last longer than paper ones. To start the year, we are going through a large number of disposable masks....far more than last year. The problem seems to be that parents and caregivers have started sending their students in with the paper masks and they break quickly. This is the situation at all the schools. If the students start using cloth masks we should see this drop because the cloth ones are more durable and will last the entire day. These cloth masks are also machine washable.

Vaccination Update

We continue to request that families complete the google form for reporting on vaccination status and interest in our in-school testing programs. The form is linked here: [NMRSD Student Consent Form](#). If you have not completed the form, please take the time to do so. It only takes a few minutes. We have received a number of questions about it and will address the more common ones here.

First, the google form feeds a spreadsheet that will enable the nurses to effectively manage COVID cases and testing, as well as provides us with the needed information related to vaccination status. The only people who have access to this spreadsheet are the nurses. We will use the information to guide quarantine conditions for each of our close contacts. The vaccination status helps determine which quarantine protocol your child will need to follow. We are asking all families to complete this form.

Second, the testing questions on the form let us know which testing options you would like your student to participate in (or opt-out). You can select “yes” for one type of testing and “no” for another within our internal form. We will use this information to guide us if testing is needed. In addition, **no child will be tested without notifying the parent first.** So, even if you selected “yes”, you can change your mind about it if you want when we call you.

Next, we are not doing Pooled Testing at this time in our district. Should we decide to implement Pooled Testing at some point during the year, we will notify our NM communities before we begin doing so.

Finally, some of you have completed the google form and indicated that you want your child to participate in testing, but you are not showing up in the CIC health database as having provided consent. CIC Health is the program that we are using to manage the testing and legal consent . If you completed the form, but did not sign consent using the CIC health link that was on the form, please go [here](#) and complete the consent form. It takes about 24 hours for your consent to be uploaded into our database. On this form, you have the ability to consent or opt-out of testing. You will need to complete the form even if you choose not to consent to participation.

If you have concerns about filling out the google form and the consent, please feel free to reach out to the Supervisor of Health Services, Cathryn Hampson, champson@nmrsd.org. We appreciate your support of health services as we endeavor to keep all of our students and staff members safe during this pandemic.

COVID-19 Testing

Clearance to return to school after you have been symptomatic with COVID-like symptoms requires a negative PCR test, a negative molecular assay test or a negative antigen test that has been processed through a lab. If you

want to do a home test, it must be a proctored test that requires you to log in on the computer with the company, demonstrate valid proof of identification, and then be observed as you are conducting the test on yourself or your child. There needs to be a laboratory printout of the test result for you to submit to your school nurse prior to returning. Please do not return to school without receiving clearance to do so from your school nurse.

Important Dates

October 2021

- 6 Early Release - Professional Development
- 11 No School - Indigenous Peoples Day

November 2021

- 2 No School - Election Day - District-wide Professional Development
- 11 No School - Veterans Day
- 22 K-8 Early Release - Parent Conferences High School in Session
- 23 K-8 Early Release - Parent Conferences High School in Session
- 24-26 No School - Thanksgiving Recess

Tentative Virtual Coffees

All coffees will be held remotely. Please use the link below to join.

Tuesday, October 26th - 4:00 pm (Date Change)

Tuesday, November 16th - 9:30 am

Tuesday, December 21st - 4:00 pm

Tuesday, January 18th - 9:30 am

Tuesday, February 15th - 4:00 pm

Tuesday, March 15th - 9:30 am

Tuesday, April 12th - 4:00 pm

Tuesday, May 31st - 9:30 am

The link for all coffees:

For Video: meet.google.com/vfc-wzau-yem

For Phone: (US) +1 484-416-2706 PIN: 194 998 043#

NMRSD Adopt a Spot Program

The NMRSD "Adopt a Spot" Program provides opportunities for companies, civic groups, and community members to adopt a "spot" (island/mulch bed/entryway) to create attractive, welcoming "oases" throughout the District. Adopters agree to invest "sweat equity" to maintain a spot at one of our schools, in return for which an Adopt a Spot sign recognizing the spot's adopter will be installed by the District. Adopters agree to maintain the area for one fiscal year (July-June) during the summer, fall, and spring seasons. Spots are available at all of our schools.

To begin the process of becoming a Spot Adopter, please contact Andrea Royer at 978-597-8713 ext. 1900 to find a spot that suits your interest and discuss guidelines.

Fall Parent/Caregiver Information Series

This fall, NMRSD will be offering four (4) parent/caregiver information nights in the Performing Arts Center at NMRHS at 6:30 pm. Please mark your calendars:

Tuesday, October 12th

Navigating the Common Application & Naviance

NMRHS Guidance Team

This presentation will be geared towards current 9th, 10th, and 11th graders' parents/caregivers and their students planning to attend two or 4-year colleges.

Tuesday, October 26th

How to Manage Teen Mental Health

Dr. Dan Rosa

This presentation will be geared towards parents/caregivers of middle and high school students. Dr. Rosa is a veteran clinical psychologist in the Chelmsford Public Schools and was instrumental in bringing in a K-12 team of clinical psychologists to the district. He has a private practice and has done presentations throughout Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

Wednesday, November 3rd

Internet & Social Media Safety

Katie Greer (klgeer.com)

This presentation will be geared towards all parents/caregivers and students at both the middle and high school levels. As we all realize, technology is unavoidable, and this presentation will help both adults and students better understand the Internet and social media. Katie has done presentations all over the country and has been featured in several national media outlets.

Wednesday, November 10th

How Do We Create Safe & Welcoming Schools for All Students?

How Can We Support Our LGTBQ Students?

Jeff Perrotti

This presentation will be geared towards parents/caregivers of all grade levels. Jeff is a renowned expert in the field of Gender Education - creating a Safe School Climate and the founding director of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education's Safe Schools Program for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Students.