



PITTSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ADMINISTRATION CENTER

269 FIRST STREET

PITTSFIELD, MA 01201

Superintendent

Jason P. McCandless, Ed. D.

[**jmccandless@pittsfield.net**](mailto:jmccandless@pittsfield.net)

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Pittsfield Public Schools Announces Updated In-Person Learning Transition Plan Details

The capacity for schools to plan to reopen safely, as well as for students and families to plan to confidently return to school safely, create demands in which the necessary conditions for successfully accomplishing the goal of transitioning to in-person learning are being monitored constantly by all stakeholders.

With an understanding of the complexity of the circumstances related to the transition to in-person learning in the COVID-19 era, the Pittsfield Public Schools is committed to providing our students, families, and staff the most up-to-date information regarding each phase of school re-openings. The purpose of this, and future, media correspondences from the Pittsfield Public Schools, regarding school re-openings, is to offer the most up-to-date overview of information pertinent to stakeholders within our community.

In an effort to implement realistic and detailed plans tied to how education is delivered to students in 2020-2021, the timeline associated with the shift from online learning, to in-person classroom instruction, is driven by reliable public health data, as well as considerations to the needs of our students, families, staff, and community. These considerations evolve, and are monitored, constantly – which in turn, dictate the path of our transition to in-person learning.

On September 15th, the Pittsfield Public Schools opened the 2020-2021 school year, offering education to our students via remote learning opportunities.

On September 28th, a transition to in-person education, primarily for students in substantially separate educational programs, commenced. Students enrolled in Special Education, CTE (Vocational), and English Language Learner (ELL) curriculums have physically attended school since.

With in-person learning already under way for a small portion of our student body, students enrolled in traditional education curriculums are anticipated to transition to a hybrid learning model, which includes in-person learning, in the days ahead.

Some of the major goals tied to the transition to in-person learning, include: ensuring student engagement at all learning levels, maximizing teacher-led instructional time, offering a robust curriculum that includes specialty classes and academic support services, placing an emphasis on the importance of age-appropriate in-person instruction in the development of elementary school children, providing college and workforce-bound high school and middle school students vital instructional time that meets the needs of their future paths, and recognizing the value of offering a consistent daily\weekly schedule to students and families.

As of today, the anticipated short-term timeline for shifting to the hybrid learning model - which requires specific health metrics to be monitored in order to proceed with in-person learning opportunities - is as follows:

Monday	October 12	NO SCHOOL	Indigenous Peoples' Day
Tuesday	October 13	NO SCHOOL	Teacher Professional Development/In-Person Learning Prep
Wednesday	October 14	ALL STUDENTS SHIFT TO A NEW SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE * <i>All Students Will Be Contacted In Advance Regarding Their New School Day Schedule</i> *	

Wednesday October 14 Grades PreK, K, 1, 2, 6, and 9 First Day of In-Person Learning

Wednesday October 14 PPS Virtual Academy Students First Day of PPVA Instruction

Tuesday October 20 Grades 3, 4, and 5 First Day of In-Person Learning

Monday October 26 NO SCHOOL Teacher Professional Development/In-Person Learning Prep

Tuesday October 27 Grades 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12 First Day of In-Person Learning

- Every PPS Student's daily schedule will change, beginning Wednesday, October 14, 2020, in comparison to the daily schedule previously followed at the beginning of the school year
- Each PPS Student Will Be Assigned Individualized In-Person Learning Schedules

Parent\Guardian Information Sessions

As the Pittsfield Public Schools further prepares for students to commence in-person learning opportunities, the school district will offer multiple virtual meetings for parents and guardians.

These meetings will provide an overview regarding the student transition to the in-person learning model.

The First Parent\Guardian Informational Meeting Was Offered On Tuesday, October 6th at 7:00 PM

A video recording of the October 6th Parent\Guardian Informational Meeting can be found at www.pittsfield.net

The Second Parent\Guardian Informational Meeting Will Be Offered On Tuesday, October 13th at 7:00 PM

Additional information, and registration, for parent\guardian informational meetings are posted on www.pittsfield.net. Parents and guardians are encouraged to register in advance for the October 13th meeting, in an effort to provide the school district an opportunity to address questions and concerns that are most common amongst students and families.

Registration for the parent\guardian information meetings can found at: www.pittsfield.net

As determined by the weekly COVID-19 Public Health Report, in-person learning can, and will, proceed if the following metrics are maintained in Pittsfield and Berkshire County:

- A 14-Day Average Test Positivity Rate Of Less Than 3%
 - A 14-Day Average Daily Incidence Rate Of Less Than 4 Per 100,000 In Pittsfield\Berkshire County
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Students and families are encouraged to frequently visit the ***Remote and Hybrid Learning Link***, on the www.pittsfield.net website for the most up-to-date information on each phase of the return to in-person learning. Important information, timelines, and answers to frequently asked questions can be found at <https://sites.google.com/pittsfield.net/athomelearning>

Anticipated Notification Regarding Individualized In-Person Learning Schedules

As the Pittsfield Public Schools prepares for students to transition to a hybrid model, which includes in-person learning for all students, families will receive information on individualized class schedules.

Students and families will be notified regarding individualized in-person class schedules and expectations by teachers and school administrators.

Each of the students\families eligible for in-person learning beginning on October 14th, will receive notification regarding their in-person class schedules on Thursday, October 8th or Friday, October 9th.

- Every PPS Student's daily schedule will change, beginning Wednesday, October 14, 2020, in comparison to the daily schedule previously followed at the beginning of the school year
- Each PPS Student Will Be Assigned Individualized In-Person Learning Schedules

Breakfast & Lunch

Upon transitioning to in-person learning, the Pittsfield Public Schools will provide breakfast and lunch to students in a "grab & go" bag.

Bus Transportation

The Pittsfield Public Schools recently solicited feedback from families eligible for school bus transportation.

The feedback provided by the responses to the transportation questionnaire distributed in late September, allows the Pittsfield Public Schools to prepare to provide logistical details for the 2,400 + students\families eligible for bus transportation.

Per state guidelines and PPS policy, a maximum of 25 students are allowed to ride on a school bus at any given time. Each student will be provided their own bus seat, and will be physically distanced from others. Masks are required to be worn at all times on buses. Bus windows will be open at all times.

Students\families eligible for, and requiring, bus transportation for in-person learning, will receive notification regarding their bus schedule by Monday, October 12th.

In the short term, as the Pittsfield Public Schools continue the transition to in-person learning, some important items for students and families to note include:

Elementary School In-Person Learning Schedules (Grades PreK-5)

In recognition of the goal of maximizing instructional time, as well as the importance and appropriateness of in-person instruction aiding in the development of elementary school children, the Pittsfield Public Schools In-Person Learning Schedule associated with Elementary School children will reflect an “AM Group” and “PM Group” schedule format.

All Elementary School students, whether in-person or remote, will receive instruction in both the morning and afternoon on a daily basis.

All Elementary School students will attend school, and receive in-person instruction, 5 days per week.

All Elementary School students will also receive remote instruction 5 days per week.

All Elementary School students will receive their daily in-person instruction via participation in either the AM or PM session as determined by individualized class schedules.

Anticipated Elementary School Schedule:

5 Days Per Week

8:30 AM School Day Begins

3:15 PM School Day Ends

8:45 AM-11:00 AM AM Students (At School) In-Person Instruction Session

8:45 AM-11:00 AM PM Students (At Home) Remote Instruction Session

1:00 PM-3:15 PM AM Students (At Home) Remote Instruction Session

1:00 PM-3:15 PM PM Students (At School) In-Person Instruction Session

- Visit www.pittsfield.net for school specific schedules

Middle School In-Person Learning Schedules (Grades 6-8)

In recognition of the goal of maximizing instructional time, as well as the importance and appropriateness of in-person instruction aiding in the development of middle school children, the Pittsfield Public Schools In-Person Learning Schedule associated with Middle School children will reflect an “Group 1” and “Group 2” schedule format.

All Middle School students will receive in-person instruction 2-3 days per week, based on a rotating daily school-wide academic schedule (referred to as “A Day”, “B Day”, “C Day”, and “D Day”)

All Middle School students will receive remote instruction 5 days per week.

All Middle School students will receive in-person instruction 2-3 days per week.

All Middle School students will receive their daily in-person instruction via participation in either the “Group 1” or “Group 2” session as determined by individualized class schedules.

Anticipated Middle School Schedule:

5 Days Per Week

7:35 AM	School Day Begins
2:42 PM	School Day Ends

Middle School Group 1 (Anticipated Schedule)

“A” Day	In-Person	7:35 AM-10:01 AM	Remote	12:15 PM-2:42 PM
“B” Day	Remote	7:35 AM-10:01 AM	Remote	12:15 PM-2:42 PM
“C” Day	In-Person	7:35 AM-10:01 AM	Remote	12:15 PM-2:42 PM
“D” Day	Remote	7:35 AM-10:01 AM	Remote	12:15 PM-2:42 PM

- Group 1 Remote Learning On “B” Days and “D” Days Will Include Specialty Classes (IE: Music, Gym, ELL), Guidance Department Counseling Sessions, Academic Support Services, & Homework
- Visit www.pittsfield.net for school specific schedules

Middle School Group 2 (Anticipated Schedule)

“A” Day	Remote	7:35 AM-10:01 AM	Remote	12:15 PM-2:42 PM
“B” Day	In-Person	7:35 AM-10:01 AM	Remote	12:15 PM-2:42 PM
“C” Day	Remote	7:35 AM-10:01 AM	Remote	12:15 PM-2:42 PM
“D” Day	In-Person	7:35 AM-10:01 AM	Remote	12:15 PM-2:42 PM

- Group 2 Remote Learning On “A” Days and “C” Days Will Include Specialty Classes (IE: Music, Gym, ELL), Guidance Department Counseling Sessions, Academic Support Services, & Homework
- Visit www.pittsfield.net for school specific schedules

High School In-Person Learning Schedules AM\PM Schedules (Grades 9-12)

In recognition of the goal of maximizing instructional time, as well as the importance and appropriateness of in-person instruction aiding in the development of high school children, the Pittsfield Public Schools In-Person Learning Schedule associated with High School children will reflect an “Group 1” and “Group 2” schedule format.

All High School students will receive in-person instruction 2-3 days per week, based on a rotating daily school-wide academic schedule (referred to as “A Day”, “B Day”, “C Day”, and “D Day”)

All High School students will receive remote instruction 5 days per week.

All High School students will receive in-person instruction 2-3 days per week.

All High School students will receive their daily in-person instruction via participation in either the “Group 1” or “Group 2” session as determined by individualized class schedules.

Anticipated High School Schedule:

5 Days Per Week

7:25 AM School Day Begins

2:34 PM School Day Ends

High School Group 1 (Anticipated Schedule)

“A” Day	In-Person	7:25 AM-9:50 AM	Remote	12:07 PM-2:30 PM
“B” Day	Remote	7:25 AM-9:50 AM	Remote	12:07 PM-2:30 PM
“C” Day	In-Person	7:25 AM-9:50 AM	Remote	12:07 PM-2:30 PM
“D” Day	Remote	7:25 AM-9:50 AM	Remote	12:07 PM-2:30 PM

- Group 1 Remote Learning On “B” Days and “D” Days Will Include Specialty Classes (IE: Music, Gym, ELL), Guidance Department Counseling Sessions, Academic Support Services, & Homework
- Visit www.pittsfield.net for school specific schedules

High School Group 2 (Anticipated Schedule)

“A” Day	Remote	7:25 AM-9:50 AM	Remote	12:07 PM-2:30 PM
“B” Day	In-Person	7:25 AM-9:50 AM	Remote	12:07 PM-2:30 PM
“C” Day	Remote	7:25 AM-9:50 AM	Remote	12:07 PM-2:30 PM
“D” Day	In-Person	7:25 AM-9:50 AM	Remote	12:07 PM-2:30 PM

- Group 2 Remote Learning On “A” Days and “C” Days Will Include Specialty Classes (IE: Music, Gym, ELL), Guidance Department Counseling Sessions, Academic Support Services, & Homework
- Visit www.pittsfield.net for school specific schedules

Career & Technical Education (CTE) In-Person Learning Schedules

In recognition of the goal of maximizing instructional time, while meeting the challenge of fulfilling requirements associated with Career & Technical Education (vocational) curriculums, the Pittsfield Public Schools In-Person Learning Schedule associated with High School CTE Students will reflect a daily schedule that aligns with the PHS and Taconic hybrid learning schedules.

All CTE Students will receive a minimum of 2 days of CTE, and 1 day of academic, in-person instruction per week. This instruction will take place each morning based on a rotating daily school-wide academic schedule.

All CTE Students will also receive remote instruction 5 days per week, in the afternoon, based on a rotating daily school-wide academic schedule.

CTE curriculum requirements, including shop classes and traditional core courses, will be fulfilled via the anticipated hybrid learning schedule.

All Junior and Senior Students in CTE Programming will receive specific career readiness instruction, in person, a minimum of two days per week.

All Junior and Senior Students in CTE Programming will receive specific career readiness instruction, remotely, a minimum of two days per week

The anticipated schedule format for Career & Technical Education students reflects the need for lab and/or practical experience, apprenticeship hours, and the ability for demonstrating competencies, which target advancements towards board licensing requirements and credentialing in the industry of study.

For additional information about the Pittsfield Public Schools Career & Technical Education, please contact Assistant Superintendent for Career & College Readiness, Tammy Gage at tgage@pittsfield.net

PPS Virtual Academy

All Students/families that have registered for the PPS Virtual Academy have begun the 2020-2021 school year receiving education in their respective home schools.

Students that have registered for the PPS Virtual Academy will transition to their virtual learning academy commitments on October 14th, 2020.

The administration and staff of the PPS Virtual Academy will be notifying students/families of the names of student's teachers, and anticipated class schedules, by Friday, October 9th, 2020.

For additional information about the Pittsfield Public Schools Virtual Academy, please contact Principal Carl Tillona at ctillona@pittsfield.net

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Additional press releases, associated with pertinent return to in-person learning information, will be made available as needed in the days to follow.

The logistical considerations associated with the transition to a hybrid educational model are numerous. As we approach offering in-person education to the children of Pittsfield for the first time since March 13, 2020, and with an emphasis on providing our students the necessary resources to succeed during - and after – the COVID-19 era, the Pittsfield Public Schools looks forward to meeting the challenge tied to the upcoming transition.

The ongoing commitment, perseverance, and sacrifice that our students, families, and staff are making to facilitate education in Pittsfield will pave the way to returning to a sense of normalcy. As we re-envision the academic experiences of our student body during these unprecedented times, The Pittsfield Public Schools is grateful for the continued resiliency and spirit of our community.