



## EAST LYME PUBLIC SCHOOLS

P.O. Box 220 • East Lyme, Connecticut 06333 • (860) 739-3966 • Fax (860) 739-1215

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August 7, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Last night at the East Lyme Board of Education Special Meeting, the ELPS Roadmap to Reopening Fall plan was reviewed and discussed. The plan has been approved with all ELPS students beginning the **2020-2021 school year in the Hybrid Blended Learning Model**. You can reference this model of instruction on page 23 of our [reopening plan](#).

The Hybrid Blended Learning Model of opening our school's mirrors how other surrounding districts are opening their schools as we have focused on a regional approach for the safety of all students and staff. Additionally, this model provides the following advantages of a phase-in approach to opening our buildings:

- A thorough training, protocol review and practice of all new procedures can be done with reduced density in the school buildings.
- Having half the school population in a given building at one time allows us to build confidence in implementing safety measures, practicing social distancing and usage of PPE equipment (masks, etc.).
- A hybrid approach reduces anxiety amongst staff, students and families.
- Smaller classes at the initial onset of the year would allow us to target appropriate social and emotional resources for students and staff.
- We will have the ability to forge more one-to-one relationships between staff and students given the large decrease in building population density.
- This approach allows for additional support with the implementation of synchronous learning for students. This is especially important if we move to a full remote model of instruction due to changing virus transmission rates in our community.

It is important to note that we plan to do a reassessment at the beginning of October as it pertains to health conditions across the town and region. At that time, we could decide that it is safe to move to full in-person learning. There would be a transition time of approximately two weeks if this were to happen. Again, a reassessment will be conducted (in conjunction with our local health department and medical advisor) at the beginning of October.

*East Lyme Public Schools will inspire, engage and educate each student to become a contributing citizen and a responsible, independent, and critical thinker.*



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**Now that we have solidified our model of instruction to begin the school year, please access the following [survey](#) requesting your final commitment for Fall enrollment.**

The building principals will be sending out correspondence early next week regarding Town Hall style Zoom calls that parents can engage in. There will be separate elementary, middle school, and high school meetings run by the building principals. During these meetings, a full review of the hybrid blended learning model will be conducted. This will provide parents further clarity regarding the hybrid plan and the building-based schedule that your child(ren) will take part in. Tentative dates/times are as follows for these meetings:

Flanders, Lillie B. Haynes, and Niantic Center School: August 13<sup>th</sup> from 4:30-6:00 p.m.

East Lyme Middle School: August 13<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-7:30 p.m.

East Lyme High School: August 11<sup>th</sup> from 5:00-6:30 p.m.

We recognize that the start of school is not far away, and we are doing everything we can to make decisions and communicate them to you as quickly as possible. Additionally, decisions made this week could evolve as we receive ongoing guidance from the state and our local health department. If you have not had a chance to view the reopening plan video, please click on the [YouTube Link](#) or the [ELPS Roadmap to Reopening Plan for Fall 2020](#) document that have both been previously released to parents.

Thank you for your continued support and patience. I know there have been many questions and we are doing our best to continue to respond through videos, our upcoming Zoom calls next week and consolidated answers to questions in our Parent Q & A that will continue to go out every Wednesday.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey R. Newton  
Superintendent of Schools

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