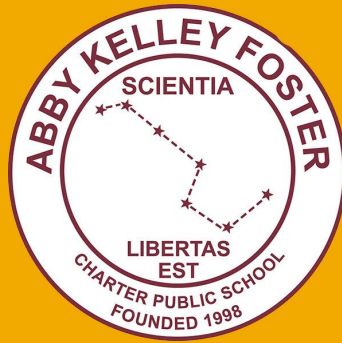


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Preparing for more changes at AKFCS

Dear Abby Kelley Families:

As you know, AKFCS has been fully operating in the HYBRID model since January 11, allowing all students K-12 the opportunity to learn in person at least two days per week. In many cases, we have accommodated requests for families who wanted additional days for their student(s) to learn in person. We have also continued to support the nearly 52% of our students who have chosen to remain REMOTE with live, synchronous/simultaneous instruction.

I know how challenging this has been for both students, parents/families, and teachers all who have worked extremely hard to make the best of this unique year. I thank everyone for their patience and perseverance.

As you likely heard, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has asked for authority to change the learning model for schools across the state, including Abby Kelley Foster Charter School. As I send this newsletter to you all, DESE just voted to give the Commissioner of Education the authority to decide **if/when** HYBRID learning and REMOTE learning models no longer count toward our required number of academic hours. We await more information for DESE.

What does this mean for AKFCS?

The Administrative team is looking at all options to safely bring back more students in a five-day per week, full day schedule. We are starting with our younger students at the Elementary School, while building the plans for grades 4-12. We know the Commissioner wants students grades K-6 back in school as early as April 5 five days per week.

Things we are taking into account include:

- How many families will want to remain fully remote for the rest of this school year?
- How many student desks are in each room, especially at the Middle School where the building configuration makes it more of a challenge?
- How quickly will our teachers be vaccinated, providing them a level of safety?
- What new or revised regulations will the CDC and DESE provide to us to be able to accomplish this plan?

What do families need to do now?

You either have been sent a survey by your student(s) principal (Elementary and Middle School) or will receive a survey link next week (for High School) inquiring what your plans are for the remainder of the year. For example, do you want your student(s) to come back five days per week, or will you be keeping them home remotely until June? **PLEASE fill this survey out as soon as possible so we can have an accurate count of students who will be returning to in person learning. This information will be essential in helping us plan for the next steps.**

What is next?

There are many details to be worked out once additional guidance comes from DESE, we analyze our survey data, and finalize our plans. I will continue to keep you updated --as will the principals--on what comes next. We appreciate your patience and understanding once again! Thank YOU.

Wishing you and your families good health and a great weekend.

Best,

Heidi

Heidi Paluk
Interim Executive Director

AKFCS Report Card

DESE Report Card

Each year, public schools in Massachusetts receive a report card. Just as your student's report card shows how they are doing in different subjects, the school's report card is designed to show families how our school is doing year to year. I invite you to review the [2020 Abby Kelley Report Card](#).

The report card includes multiple measures at Abby Kelley – it is more than just MCAS scores. It represents a way of looking at school performance, by providing information on student achievement, teacher qualifications, student learning opportunities, and more. Families can use the information to have meaningful conversations with us about what Abby Kelley is doing well and where there is room for improvement. Community and education leaders can use the information to better understand how to support students and our school.

Abby Kelley receives federal Title I funds, which means you have the right to request the following information about the qualifications of your student's classroom teachers:

- Whether your student's teacher is licensed in the grade levels and subject areas they teach
- Whether your student's teacher is teaching under an emergency license or waiver
- The college degree and major of your student's teacher
- Whether your student is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you have questions about our school's report card, would like to become involved in school improvement activities, or would like to request information about the qualifications of your student's classroom teacher, please contact AnnMarie Little, Director of Special Education & Government Relations at amlittle@akfcs.org.

We see parents as critical partners in the success of our students and school, and we are grateful for your continued support.

Pooled Testing Results

No Positive Cases

As you know from a previous letter from me, Abby Kelley Foster Charter School is participating in the DESE and Project Beacon **COVID-19 Pooled Testing Pilot Program** for our staff and students. This optional testing program is offered at no cost to our school (students or staff) and will continue to April 18, 2021.

I am happy to report that after the first week of testing (106 samples from testing on

Monday and Thursday) we have had NO positive CoVID cases in our district.

Participating in this optional program offers an additional safety measure for our school community. Weekly testing (with results within 24-48 hours) will allow us to identify and isolate a COVID positive individual sooner, reducing the number of potential close contacts, while supporting our efforts to maintain and expand the in-person learning.

If you registered your student but she/he did not get tested this week, you might not be linked to Abby Kelley in the testing database. Please reach out to your school nurse to make sure your student's profile is linked or use the codes below.

You can still sign up:

Visit [visit https://app.beacontesting.com](https://app.beacontesting.com) and enter the Student organization code **DRJYUU**

Meals for AKFCS Students

Food Assistance For Abby Kelley Families/Students

Please be sure to sign up for FREE meals if you have students 21 years or younger. If your family is in need of assistance please register the Abby Kelley [Meal Pickup Program](#).

Follow Abby Kelley on Social Media

For daily news and updates across the District, follow Abby Kelley on Social Media. These links (below) bring you to the District's pages; however, there are pages specific to the school's PTOs, Booster Club, and various student organizations as well. Stay connected, stay informed.

