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DCRSD Update 12.31.2020

Dudley-Charlton Regional School District <notifications@dcrsd.org>
To: Dudley-Charlton Regional School District <notifications@dcrsd.org>

Thu, Dec 31, 2020 at 12:17 PM

All,

First and foremost, we wish everyone a safe and happy New Year. The year 2020 was filled with lasting memories and it is our responsibility to remember the best of the experiences we all had. The communities of Charlton and Dudley are gracious and giving during the most difficulty times and revealed a character of will and perseverance – Thank You! The “can do” mantra from the staff in the Dudley-Charlton RSD was immeasurable – Thank You! Collectively, we have a lot to be proud of and bring with us in the year 2021.

Last evening the Dudley-Charlton RSD School Committee deliberated the recommendation from the Boards of Health. The Boards of Health recommended a move to remote learning for the first two weeks returning from the holiday vacation. This was a serious deliberation that lasted almost two hours. In the end, the DCRSD School Committee took no action therefore we are scheduled to return in our current hybrid learning model, Monday, January 4, 2021.

Public education has been built on opinions and beliefs, but during the pandemic emotions have overwhelmed them both. As we all know, this is a difficult time for decision-makers and our world continues to be a 50/50 split, one group will support the decision to return and another group will not. What is key to our collective survival will be consensus. More specifically, what can we accept as to why the decision may have been made.

As discussed last evening, we are aware of the rising cases in the towns of Dudley and Charlton. This is concerning and our communities should continue to practice all of the recommend community-based strategies. Our Boards of Health are certainly close to all of the community cases. We will maintain open lines of communication and review any new DCRSD cases with the Boards of Health and make note that all decisions for DCRSD schools remain on the table during this pandemic.

Again, the recommendation from the Boards of Health is serious and one outcome is that all athletics, band and show choir activities have been suspended through January 19, 2021. We will continue to monitor this decision and have further recommendations prior to January 19, 2021.

More important than ever, the daily [self-certification/pre-screening](#) for students and staff will continue to play an integral part in our ability to understand and control the integrity of our school environments during this pandemic. We need everyone to reestablish this habit as we return to school. This single action by everyone works and is an effective communication tool for our nurses and administrators.

Lastly, while we welcome staff and students back January 4, 2021, we must address the new Massachusetts Board of Education regulations specific to [Student Learning Time \(SLT\)](#) in our schools. These regulations mandate a progression for the Dudley-Charlton RSD as we are not meeting the required in-person or synchronous instructional regulated times. The [SLT regulations](#) will be integral to any movement from our current plan and a deadline to meet the regulations is January 19, 2021. We continue to evolve all ideas and will present more at the January 6, 2021 Special School Committee meeting. After our presentation on the 6th, we will provide a survey opportunity for staff, families and our secondary students to provide feedback.

Again, we welcome 2021 and wish you a Happy New Year.

Respectfully,

Steven M. Lamarche

Superintendent of Schools