



## Gateway Regional Middle School and High School

12 Littleville Road • Huntington, MA 01050 • Tel: (413) 685-1102 • Fax: (413) 667-5593

Jason S. Finnie  
Principal

Martha Clark  
Assistant Principal

### MS/HS WORKING GROUP MINUTES July 2, 2020

- Working Group Overview/Invitation
  - Lays out district vs. building focus and membership
- **District Working Group update**
  - Putting out Parent Survey
    - Focus on reopen option preferred, input on specific guidelines, online learning capacity & tech needs, transportation, ultimate decision on return
  - Teacher/staff survey under development
- MS/HS Working Group Membership & Group Norms
  - Commitment- Tu/Th 8:00- 9:30 through August 6th
  - Facilitating input from all staff (depending on role, certain admin/staff may only participate in particular meetings)
    - *Stressed importance of confidentiality/objective approach; when sharing out, we need to gather input from stakeholders, but need to recognize how incomplete information can be misleading*
      - *The district level group has a Communications subcommittee that will be sharing out the work of the 3 groups publicly*
- [DESE Reopening Guidance](#)
  - Goal is to develop 3 plans to be submitted to the state by 8/7 for the following formats:
    - In-person learning w/ new safety requirements
    - Fully Remote Learning
    - Hybrid Learning
      - Will start here given initial Draft Plan
      - *State is looking for this to be a full day schedule, which means specials/electives would need to be in person*
      - *DESE guidance indicates starting with In-person plan, so we will work to do these 2 plans simultaneously, given most of the issues will be the same*
      - *Concern was raised that facilitating online students in this or fully in person model faces contractual challenges (recording teachers, and time)*
        - *Point was made that since most online schools/courses are all online, this is really “reinventing the wheel”*
        - *Lessons from summer program will be helpful in*



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### *identifying successes and challenges*

- *Technology is investigating options for facilitating synchronous and asynchronous learning for online students. Also looking at expanding options without recording teachers like virtual white boards.*
- *Suggestion was raised to make one of 5 teaching periods, but we will likely not be able to maintain class sizes that meet social distancing requirements if we were to do this; ability of HS students to get requested courses would be negatively impacted*
- Key areas for consideration
  - Min. 3 ft. social distancing; 6 ft. without masks
    - All seating must be in the same direction
    - *Concern was raised that student movement (even in seats) will make 3ft spacing of desks difficult to maintain; students will need visual cues*
    - *Group is looking for guidance on max number of students in classroom given guidelines; district sub-committee is looking at this and Jason will bring to this group*
  - Cohorting of students
    - *Discussed minimizing the number of transitions for students; concern was raised that moving teachers will be problematic related to issues around syncing Smartboards, access to manipulatives, and increasing teacher exposure*
    - At the HS this would likely necessitate combining college prep & honors sections
      - *Concern raised about maintaining the rigor of honors level work; will need to look at restructuring classroom time to accommodate*
  - Masks required for students and staff
    - Regular scheduled mask breaks (frequency & details to follow)
  - Lunches (more specific guidelines to follow)
    - Will likely require additional lunch if in Caf (HS)
  - Specials/electives (more specific guidelines to follow)



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- Additional Topics for Future Agendas
  - 6 Period Schedule 7-12
    - Increase instructional time to assist with gaps
    - Reduce transitions
    - Assist with cohorting, and potentially shifting between 3 formats during the year
    - Common schedule to facilitate coverage especially under COVID guidelines
    - Adjust to current budget & expected shortfalls next year
    - *Began discussion on this related to other topics above. Rationale above outlined. Suggestion of considering block scheduling or trimesters was made. Jason indicated the following key factors limit other schedule options especially this year:*
      - *Shared staff, current budget reduction of 1 MS position, and need to internally cover teachers this year due to COVID guidelines necessitates a more consistent schedule 7-12*
      - *Work with SSoS regarding MS MCAS status, and challenges of current MS schedule lead to consensus that more instructional time in MCAS subjects (especially Math) is needed*
      - *For MCAS, AP, and gaps from this year, condensing coverage and leaving additional time that students are not exposed to certain content areas does not seem appropriate given current uncertainty; this would also require time for additional curricular work- state audit and NEASC report indicates other priority areas for curriculum work.*
      - *Given current budget projections for FY'22, schedule must be able to accommodate further cuts next year (even the initial cuts avoided by the furlough this year would have necessitated a reduction in periods)*
  - State Curriculum & Assessment Expectations
    - Stressing common assessments to allow for adjusting to student gaps in learning while maintaining focus on grade-level standards (will not be able to fill all gaps)
  - Remote Learning Structure & Expectations (further guidance from state to come)
  - Incorporation of furlough days (9)
  - PD & Preparation Needs (staff) and Expectations (staff, students & parents)
    - Plan for the first week