


# FALL RIVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*"The Scholarship City"*

417 Rock Street, Fall River, MA 02720

*Matthew H. Malone, Ph.D., Superintendent*

To: Fall River School Committee

From: Matthew H. Malone, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools 

Date: December 16, 2020

Re: Return to Full Hybrid Transition Plan

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As you know, we opened the full-hybrid learning model on September 16, 2020. At that time, we had roughly 4,000 families select full remote learning (Cohort B), leaving roughly 6,200 students to be divided into our three in-person cohorts. Previous to December 7, 2020, when we transitioned to the modified-hybrid learning model we served roughly 3,600 students per day in cohort A and cohorts C/D (rotating weeks). Presently, in the modified-hybrid model, we are serving roughly 1,400 students in-person each day. Wednesdays remain fully remote learning/teacher-planning days. Since September, the numbers of positive COVID-19 cases and quarantines have increased to a point where staffing capacity has become stretched to the maximum point. This was the rationale for switching to the modified hybrid model from December 7<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>; a proactive measure to reduce the total number of students in buildings and decrease the overall contact footprint to have a better chance to slow the spread.

I am sharing with you very detailed data that illustrates our employee attendance to date, COVID-19 community spread rates to date, and the more important impact that such spread has had on both employees and students in schools. This data is robust and I am sharing it both as raw data and as a set of graphs for your review and analysis. I know you will have questions; my team and I will be prepared and ready for discussion on the December 21, 2020, School Committee Meeting.

The data trends suggest that our overall attendance is a steady decline. We also broke out those groups directly involved in student instruction and support services (FREA, FRAA, and Para's). Those groups are currently operating in an "all hands on deck" mode, and are used for coverage. Since the impact of the Thanksgiving break, the attendance chart shows that attendance for ALL employees is running in the mid to upper 80% range. The teaching staff is in the lower 80's. A snapshot of attendance for the second full week of December highlights that situation.

We currently have approximately 850 teaching staff, and the attendance reflects that we are currently running about 9% lower than last year's attendance rates. Each percentage point represents about 8.5 teachers so we are currently short approximately another 75 fewer teachers per day vs. last year. In real numbers, we have 125-135 teachers missing per day at this point. Under typical conditions, absences are only for a day or two, but under quarantine restrictions, these absences are typically between 7-10 instructional days. When this trend is compounded by the absentee rate within the FRAA and Para units, it leaves schools scrambling for coverage.

So, based on the data and our experience so far, my goal is to get back to the full-hybrid model as quickly and safely as we can. In recognition of the impact the 4-day Thanksgiving break had, I am proposing that we remain in the modified hybrid mode until at the middle of January (the Day after Martin Luther King Jr. Day to be exact), Tuesday, January 19, 2021, with Durfee and RPA staying in the modified-hybrid through the end of the first semester on January 29, 2021. Under this transition, we would be back to the full-hybrid model K-12 on Monday, February 1, 2021. This will allow us to assess the impact of the extended break, which contains two major holidays with further exposure to potential "super spreader" type events

**I am not asking the School Committee for approval on this return to the full-hybrid transition plan. I am asking for your support through consensus. We know there will be a post-holiday spike in spread rates, but with the advent of the vaccine roll-out and our planning and mitigation efforts in place, returning to full-hybrid K-8 on January 19, 2021 and for all grades K-12 on February 1, 2021 is prudent, practical, and makes the most sense in terms of the safe operating procedures that have been our hallmark.**

MHM/ps

## **COVID DATA INFO PACKET**

- 1.) Return to Regular Hybrid Plan – January Calendar
- 2.) DPH DATA From Fall River, consolidated to show FR data week by week through 12 /11
- 3.) FRPS weekly dashboard data, consolidated to show data trend week by week through 12 /11
- 4.) A comparison of teacher attendance 2019 vs. 2020, and the impact of teacher %
- 5.) The impact of COVID by schools and by individual roles
- 6.) COVID-19 Data Trends
- 7.) FRPS Quarantined Students/Employees



# Return to Regular Hybrid Plan – January 2021

January 2021						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 New Year's Day No School	2
3	4 Cohorts A & CTE Shop	5 Cohorts A & CTE Shop	6 <u>District=</u> <u>wide</u>	7 Cohorts A & CTE Shop	8 Cohorts A & CTE Shop	9
10	11 Cohorts A & CTE Shop	12 Cohorts A & CTE Shop	13 <u>Remote</u>	14 Cohorts A & CTE Shop	15 Cohorts A & CTE Shop	16
17	18 MLK Holiday - No School	19 Return to Regular Hybrid Plan PreK-8	20 <u>Day</u>	21 Cohorts A/D	22 Cohorts A/D	23
24	25 Cohorts A/C	26 Cohorts A/D	27	28 Cohorts A/C	29 Cohorts A/C	30

MHMalone, Ph.D  
Superintendent of Schools  
12/16/2020

- > Durfee High School will remain in the Modified Hybrid Plan until January 29, 2021
- > February 1, 2021 All Cohorts return to the Regular Hybrid Plan

"E" / 12.5

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COVID-19 Dashboard: Weekly Update ( Updated through: 11/27/2020 3:00 PM)

Data through week ending : 11/27/2020

10/23	10/30	11/6	11/13	11/20	11/27*	12/4	12/11
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Total Number of Students	10085	10096	10085	10085	10096	10096	10096
Total Number of Students (Hybrid)	5773	5773	5773	5773	5652	5652	5652
Total Number of Students (Remote)	4312	4312	4312	4312	4444	4444	4444
Number of NEW Positive Students with potential student contact (Hybrid)	2	8	13	14	17	12	24
Number of NEW Positive Students who had no student contact (Remote only)	6	3	2	11	2	0	4
Total Number of All FRPS Students Newly Reported this week - (Positive COVID-19 Status)	8	11	15	25	19	12	28
Number of Students Currently in Quarantine Due to Exposure at School (Hybrid students)	11	13	54	38	22	38	18
Number of Students Currently in Quarantine Due to Non-School Exposure (Hybrid students)		18	43	70	126	105	93
Number of Students Currently in Quarantine Due to Non-School Exposure (Remote only)	29	14	19	18	8	5	9
Total Number of Employees	1980	1980	1980	1980	1978	1978	1978
Number of Employees Newly Reported this week with a Positive COVID-19 Status	2	7	4	6	9	3	18
Number of Employees Currently Quarantined Due to Exposure at School	4	13	19	14	6	18	23
Number of Employees Currently Quarantined Due to Non-School Exposure	14	22	22	16	21	12	27

\*\*\* Note Quarantine period is 14 days, quarantined students & staff may appear in more than 1 week

\* 11/25  
2.5 days

# **Teacher absences--December 2019 vs. 2020**

Teachers: 849 Teachers

				% Difference vs. 2019	Increase in teachers absences
2019		2020			
9-Dec	93.70%	7-Dec	85.92%	7.78%	66
10-Dec	96.60%	8-Dec	86.51%	10.09%	86
11-Dec	96.70%	9-Dec	87.16%	9.54%	81
12-Dec	93.90%	10-Dec	85.98%	7.92%	67
13-Dec	92.80%	11-Dec	83.04%	9.76%	83
		1% =	8.5 teachers	9.02%	77
				average	avg. more per day

There are roughly the same amount of teachers from this year to last year.

The FREA Unit includes attendance officers, nurses, SLP/SLPA's, etc.- those were removed for this analysis. This comparison is TEACHERS VS. TEACHERS

The actual impact of teacher attendance on the number of vacancies to cover:

849 Teachers	Attendance %	# Present	# absent ?
	87%	739	110
	85%	722	127
	83%	705	144

# COVID-19 Related Absences Through December 14, 2020

## FRPS STAFF IMPACTED BY COVID-19

### By Building or Department

Doran	25
Fonseca	32
Greene	37
Henry Lord	52
Letourneau	15
Silvia	23
Spencer Borden	33
Tansey	14
Viveiros	29
Watson	6

Kuss	38
Morton	17
Talbot	22
Durfee	115
RPA	16
Stone	12

District	17
Facilities	31
Nutrition	18
PACE	4
SPED	14

570

### By Roles

Asst Athletic Director	1
Attendance Officer	3
Autism Specialist	2
Behavior Therapist	4
Bldg Sub	2
Carpenter	1
Clerk	14
Contracted/Teacher	3
Cook Manager	2
Coordinator	6
COTA	1
Courier	2
Custodian	18
Dean	3
Dept. Head	6
Director	1
Driver	2
Guidance Counselor	4
HVAC	1
ISL	3
Media Instructor	4
Nurse	6
Painter	1
Para	133
Parent Outreach	3
Plumber	1
Principal	3
Psychologist	7
PT Cafe Worker	14
PT Safety	3
SAC/ Counselor	25
SAM	2
SLP	3
SLPA	1
Social Worker	2
Specialist	1
Storekeeper	1
Teacher	270
Vice Principal	11

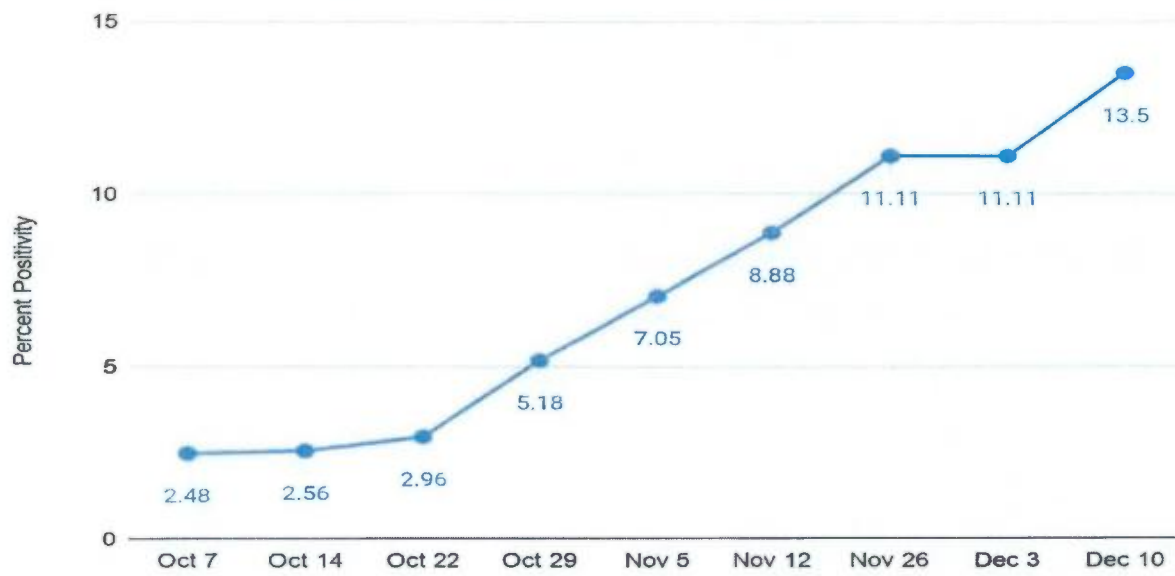
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\*\*\* These are employees involved in COVID related absences. Those include employees who are positive cases, quarantined cases, and people who may have accessed time for diagnosis and testing. Through 12/7/20 the average number of lost educational days was just under 6 days.

## Fall River COVID-19 Trends

Since early October, and with the exception of December 3, 2020 reporting, (following the shortened reporting period in the Thanksgiving week), **Fall River has seen a steady increase in its two week Average Daily Rate of new COVID-19 cases per 100K**. As shown in the graphs below, this increase in the daily rate of new cases has coincided with the positivity rates of tests administered. The city is not only seeing more positive cases because more people are getting tested; the percent of positive tests is also increasing.

### Percent Positivity (over previous 14 days)



### Average Daily Rate of New COVID-19 Cases Per 100K (based on previous 14 days)

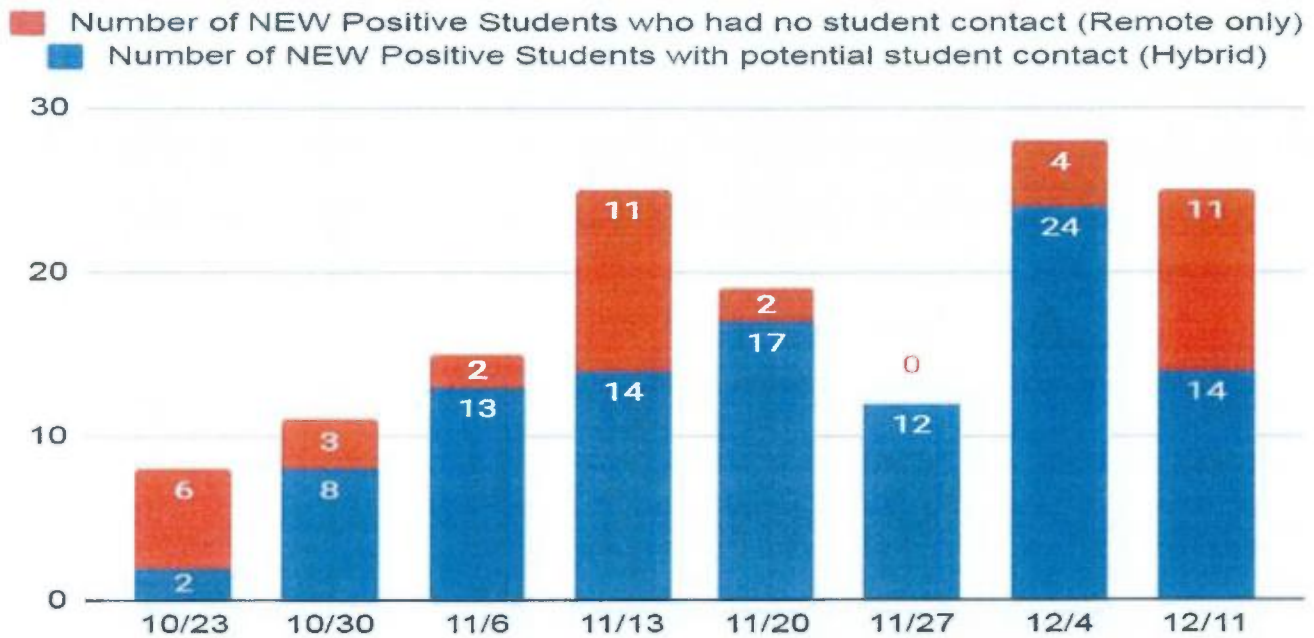




## FRPS COVID-19 Trends

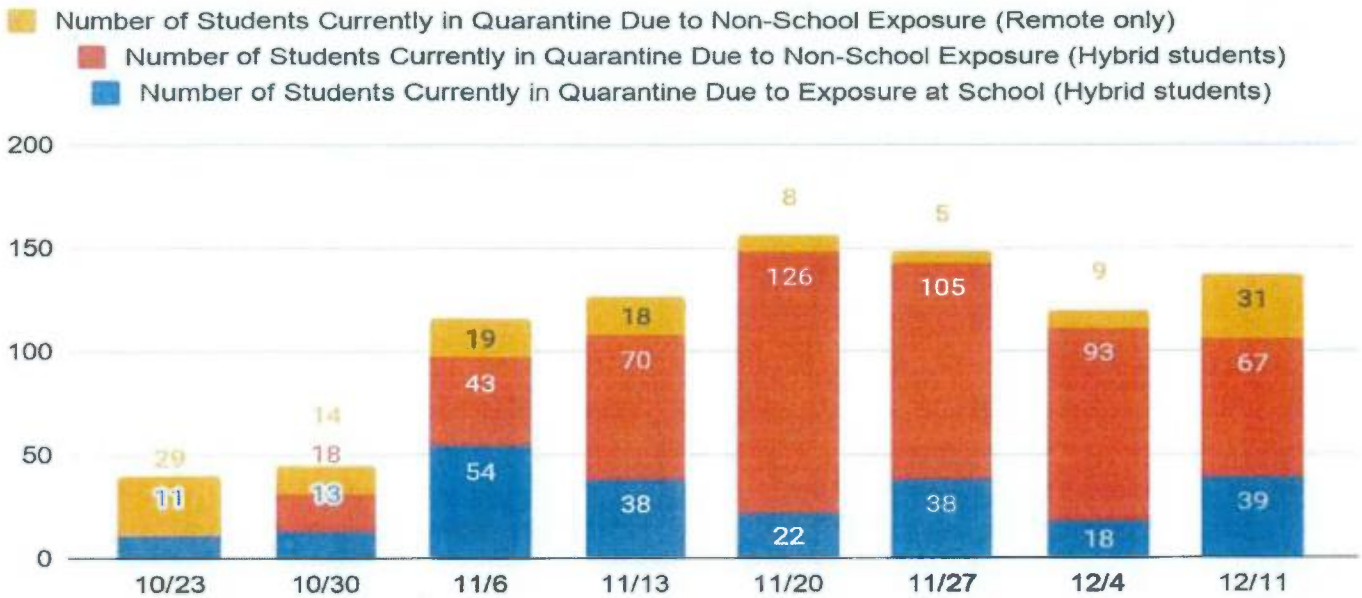
Over the course of a similar time period in the Fall River Public Schools (we did not start tracking until mid-October), we have not necessarily seen a steady increase from week to week in the number of FRPS students testing positive, although no counts in November or December have been as low as those in late October. **Specifically, following a three week decrease prior to the Thanksgiving break, FRPS saw a sharp increase in the total number student cases for the next two weeks, a potential indication that contacts made over the holiday weekend may have contributed to overall spread to our student population.**

### FRPS New Case Count by Week



Similar to the New Case Count, the Quarantined Students count for FRPS also shows an overall increase beginning in November, with the lowest recorded numbers in the last two weeks of October. Trends look a little different in that Quarantined Students counts were at their highest leading into the Thanksgiving weekend, not following the break.

## FRPS Quarantined Students Count, by Week

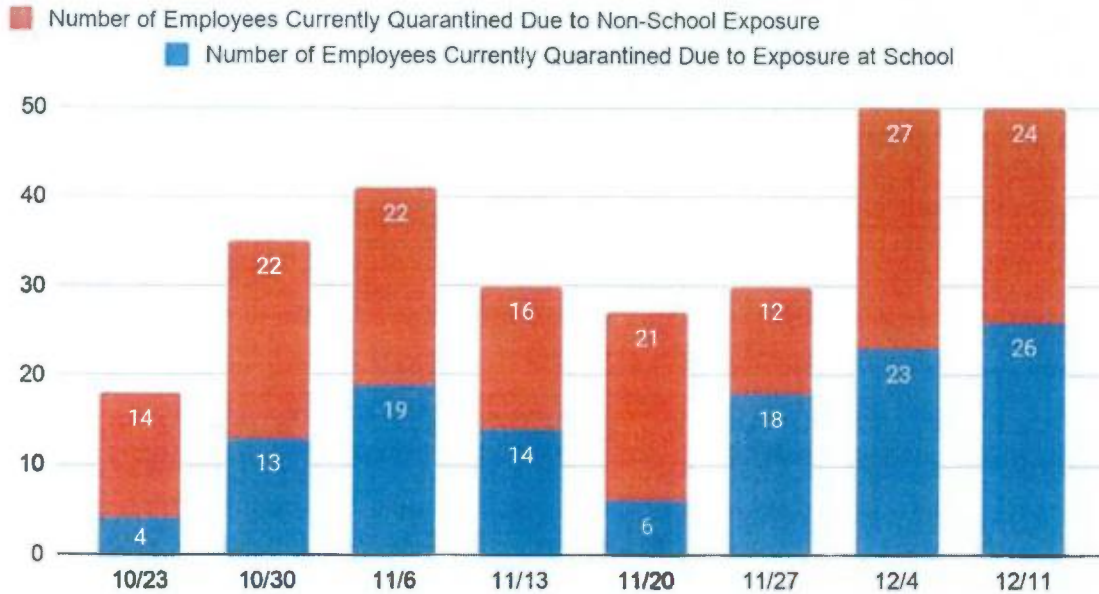


With some dips, the number of newly reported positive COVID-19 cases for employees has increased since FRPS first started tracking data. It is likely that the dip on 11/27 and subsequent sharp increase on 12/4 are the result of lagged reporting of positive cases over the Thanksgiving holiday. This data, coupled with what follows in relation to the FRPS Employee Quarantine Counts, offers some insight to the potential pressure that has put on an already stressed model that had offered students and families the choice of hybrid or fully remote instruction from September 16 - December 4, 2020.

## Number of Employees Newly Reported Positive COVID-19 Status

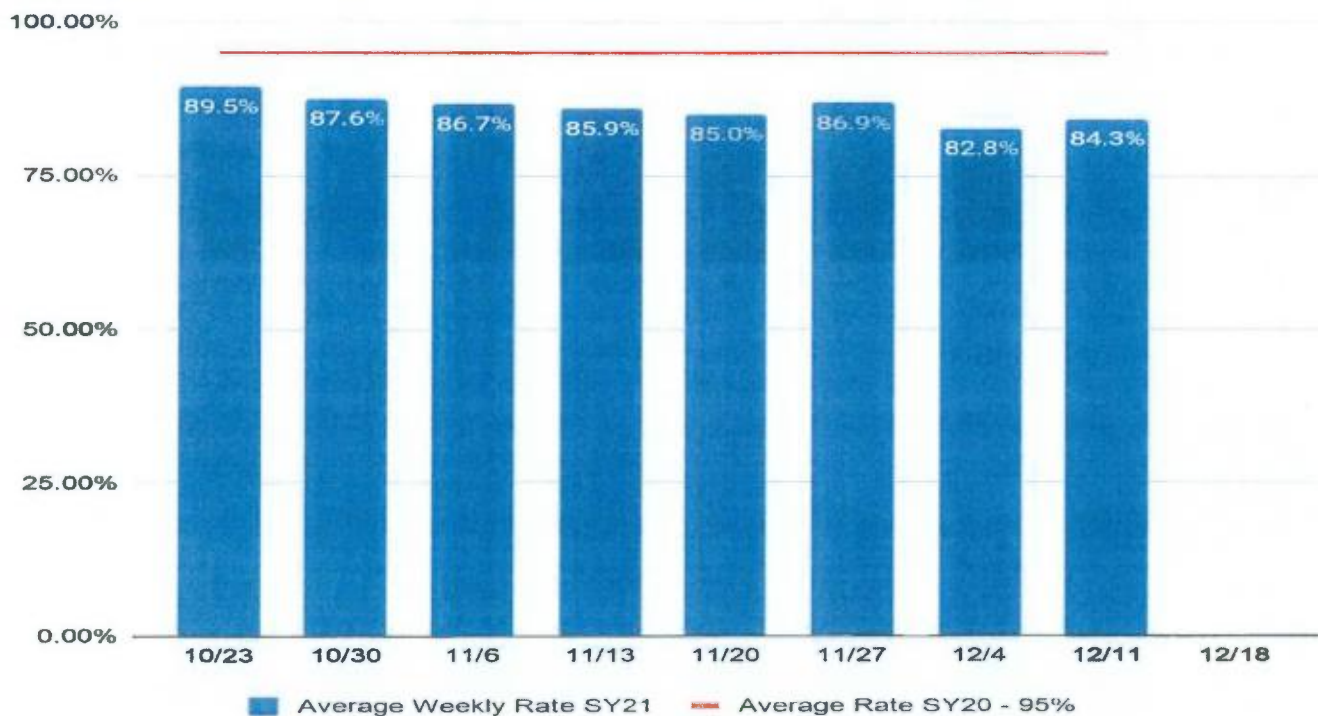


## FRPS Employee Quarantine Counts, by Week



Positive tests and quarantining of employees appears to have had a tremendous impact on the attendance rates of our teachers over the past few months. As shown in the following graph, the attendance rates of classroom teachers, in particular, are low as compared to the same months last year. The red line shows the 95% attendance rate that is traditionally standard for FRPS teachers over the course of the year. The bars show teachers' average attendance rates for the same time period.

## Teachers' Weekly Attendance Rates





When we look at similar data for daily comparisons between the current year and last year, we can examine more closely the impact to day-to-day operations in schools and the impact that teacher attendance has on the student experience. The graph below offers comparison data for the “same” week in 2019 and 2020, and shows more than a 7-10 point difference in teacher attendance for each day. **This point difference translates into 60 or more additional teacher absences each day across the district, and does not account for absences of administrators, paraprofessionals and other building staff that would otherwise be called upon to provide instruction in the absence of teachers.**

