



Norwell Middle School

Derek Sulc, Principal - derek.sulc@norwellschools.org

Sean McInnis, Assistant Principal - sean.mcinnis@norwellschools.org

Norwell Middle School • Norwell Public Schools • 328 Main Street • Norwell, MA 02061 • v:781.659.8814 • f:781.659.8822 • norwellschools.org/nms

September 4, 2020

Dear NMS Students and Parents/Guardians,

As I am sure you know, this has been an extremely busy summer. There has been a significant amount of work done to prepare for the **first day of school scheduled for Wednesday, September 16, 2020** and there is still a lot more to be done. This past Tuesday, September 1, the faculty returned to work and have been making sure things are ready. They have begun adapting their curriculum and instruction to be delivered in a hybrid model, setting up their classrooms to ensure safe distancing practices can be met, discussing updated procedures for safety, and reviewing best practices to support the social-emotional and academic development of students. As we continue to work to make sure everything is ready, I wanted to provide some information and updates:

Student Cohort and Schedule

- Through your Aspen account, you currently can view which cohort students are in. Students were assigned to either a Blue cohort or a Gold cohort. This information is listed in the Group field on the Family tab in Parent/Guardian portal account and in the Cohort field on the My Info / Demographics tab in the Student portal account.
- Student schedules are now available in Aspen.
- In order to divide students into two cohorts, meet social distancing safety guidelines, and keep classes at 12 students or fewer, there was a great deal of time balancing cohorts, classes, and student schedules. The delicacy of this schedule will not allow us to alter cohorts, teams, or assigned courses as there is not enough flexibility to balance changes.
- Most student's schedules have a period with a newly created class called Clipper Time. This class with the student's team teachers is a time in which students can attend their elective class or Band and/or Chorus, receive support from Counselors, and/or receive literacy support from the Literacy Specialist. Students might also use this time to complete assignments, make-up missed assessments due to absences, or read quietly.
- Students will not be assigned a Homeroom, so there will not be one listed on the schedule. When students arrive to school they will go to their first period class where attendance and other typical homeroom activities will occur.

Covid-19 NMS Handbook Insert

At the Norwell School Committee meeting on Thursday, September 3, the [insert providing important updates to the NMS Student-Parent Handbook](#) was approved. The procedures outlined in the Handbook insert supersede any procedures listed in the NMS Handbook. Please review this important information regarding procedures related to health protocols, mask procedures, attendance, arrival and dismissal procedures, social distancing, assigned seating, cafeteria procedures, and forgotten items. In addition, the complete NMS Student-Parent Handbook will be available on the website next week. An email with

directions to sign-off on having read the handbook will also be sent next week.

The district has also posted [Health and Safety Requirements](#) on the NPS website.

Updated District School Calendar, NMS Blue / Gold cohort calendar, and Weekly Schedule

The Norwell School Committee approved an update to the [District School Calendar](#).

Based on this calendar, a [NMS Blue / Gold cohort calendar](#) is available on the NMS website. Included on this calendar are All Remote Days that are scheduled throughout the year to accommodate for early release days. On these All Remote Days, both Blue and Gold cohorts will sign into conferences with their teachers and classmates from both the blue and gold cohort.

Parent / Guardian Zoom Meeting

On Wednesday, September 9 at 5:15pm, I will have a [one-hour parent meeting via Zoom](#) to share additional information regarding our reopening plans. If you are unable to attend at this time, the meeting will be recorded and made available to you.

6th Grade / Students New to Norwell - Orientation and School tour

During the day on Wednesday, September 9, there will be set times for 6th grade students and students new to Norwell to visit the school and have a brief school tour. An agenda and times to sign-up for will be sent in a separate email. We are looking to schedule a time for [7th grade students and 8th grade students](#) who are returning to the middle school to either visit or meet virtually to learn about some of the new procedures for the upcoming year.

6th Grade iPad Pickup

As a reminder, 6th grade students and students new to Norwell can pick up a new iPad at the middle school on Tuesday, September 8 from 1:00pm to 4:00pm or Wednesday, September 9 from 9:00am to 12:00pm.

Optional Norwell Technology Fee

For the upcoming school year, Norwell Public Schools will continue to offer an optional Technology Fee Program for iPad repairs and replacements. The program is geared toward quick and efficient student iPad replacement by swapping out a damaged iPad within a 24 hour period. There is more information including how to enroll in this program on the [District Website](#). If you currently have a damaged iPad and need to swap the iPad now so you have a fully functioning iPad for the first day of school, please contact the Norwell Technology Department at tech.support@norwellschools.org

Bus Information

Routes are being developed to accommodate students who requested a bus on the August survey. Bus route information should be available in Aspen by the middle of next week. The bus fee will remain at \$250 and will be due by a date to be determined, likely early October in order to remain a rider.

Supply Lists

Updated [supply lists for the 2020-2021 school year](#) are available on the NMS website.

First Day of School, Wednesday, September 16, 2020

The first day of school will be a Blue Day where all students in the Blue Cohort will attend school in the building. Students in the Gold Cohort will be expected to complete some assignments provided by their teacher as well as attend remote meetings as part of their orientation to the new school year. On September 17th, students in the Gold Cohort will attend classes in the building while students in the Blue Cohort will be expected to attend our remote orientation sessions as well as complete assignments provided the previous day in school.

Summer Reading

Summer reading requirements are available on the [Library page](#) on the middle school website. The site shows you the *required* reading, but I encourage you to *read as much as you can*. If you would like to borrow a copy of the 8th grade required book, *Trouble* by Gary D. Schmidt, please email jennifer.burke@norwellschools.org to arrange a time to pick one up from the school.

Math Practice

While not required, we also recommend that students practice their math skills. The following websites are engaging ways to review. On some of these sites, students already have accounts that they used during last school year or you will need to create a new account. Parent guidance and direction is recommended.

www.ixl.com/

<https://www.freckle.com/math/>

www.coolmath.org

www.khanacademy.org/math/

www.mathisfun.com

www.purplemath.com/modules/index.htm

Norwell Scholastic Arts Society (NSAS)

The Norwell Scholastic Arts Society would like to affirm our dedication to enriching the arts in Norwell public schools by supporting our students and faculty in all of their creative endeavors. Such extraordinary times challenge us to become our best selves and we are here to encourage you. If you would like to become involved with our organization, support our mission or have a special request, please contact us at grants@norwellarts.org

Thank you,

Derek J. Sulc, NMS Principal