

Dear NECC Families,

The spring and summer of 2020 have been unprecedented for everyone. As schools were closed and learning for your children took a new path, your support and understanding as we navigated the uncertainties of COVID-19 was instrumental to our success. We thank you for being there with us and for us.

As you are aware, MA DESE has tasked all schools with developing a Fall Reopening Plan for the 20-21 school year. NECC's Residential Program remained open during all of the school closure period and the IIP Program reopened on July 7th. Both programs are providing an In-Person Learning Model.

Our plan for providing an In-Person Learning Model is based on the premise that the students we serve fit the DESE category of High Need and learn best with in-person instruction, with appropriate health and safety guidelines in place. Our in-person plan is based on guidance from the CDC, DESE, EEC, and in consultation with the Southborough Board of Health, MA Department of Public Health, and our consulting Primary Care Physician, Dr. Anna Bottar.

Throughout the spring and summer NECC's residential program has provided in-person instruction at each residence. Classroom materials were moved to the residences and teachers continued to have full access to all ACE curriculum. Data on IEP objectives has been and will be reported on progress reports at the appropriate intervals. Residential students will begin a transition back to the school building in September, and each team has an individualized start date and school schedule. In order to maintain required social distancing, not all residential teams will be in the school at the same time. Teams will receive in-person instruction in the school building 2-3 times a week and in the residence the remaining days of the week. Initial school hours will be reduced to allow a period of adjustment to a new routine, but we hope to increase those hours to a full day over time.

The reopening of the IIP on July 7th has gone well, staff and students are happy to be back at school. Following their summer vacation, IIP students will return to the new school year on August 31 following the same protocols as are currently in place. We are encouraged that even more IIP families are opting for in-person instruction in the new school year. In order to maintain required social distancing alternative spaces in the school have been repurposed to allow for increased space. Cohorts have been established based on class assignments to limit exposure.

While we do not believe that a Remote Learning Plan is ideal for our student population, we understand that a family in the IIP may want to choose that model for their child due to concerns with in-person instruction. Our remote learning plan includes two technology platforms: Zoom for synchronous live and recorded sessions and parent conferences, and SeeSaw for the posting of student-specific instructional activities and materials related to IEP objectives and general enrichment. Each student will have an individualized plan that includes daily assignments and a schedule of synchronous sessions.

A plan overview and details of our Health and Safety Plan can be found on www.necc.org/covid-19-updates or by clicking [here](#).

We hope that the new school year will begin our journey back to full in-person instruction as it looked pre-COVID, but we know that State and Federal guidance can change at any time and that we would need to adapt to that guidance. It is an uncertain time for all educators; however, one thing is certain, your children make all our efforts worthwhile.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Best Regards,

Cathy Welch, Executive Director-Southborough