Keith Middle School

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1.**Is Keith Middle School open?**

*No, all buildings remain closed to the public, even the administration building. If there is something you may need, please contact Keith Middle School at 508-997-4511 Ext. 30551 or contact our Family Engagement Center at 508-997-4511 Ext* : 30014 or email us at [FECKeith@newbedfordschools.org](mailto:FECKeith@newbedfordschools.org)

2. **How do I contact someone for additional assistance while schools are remote or hybrid?** Please check the Keith Middle School website: <http://keith.newbedfordschools.org/> for more information as well as our staff directory.

3. **I don’t have internet; can I get no-cost or low-cost internet access during the 20-21 school year?** *New Bedford Public Schools is providing free internet access to qualifying families. Please call our school’s Wraparound Coordinator: Ms. Yalissa Portalatin at 508-997-4511 Ext 30521 or send an email with your child’s name, grade and the best number to reach you at:* [*yportalatin@newbedfordschools.org*](mailto:yportalatin@newbedfordschools.org) *for more information on how to sign up.*

4**. I am not able to pay my phone or internet bill; will my service be shut off during the COVID-19 pandemic?** *Our local cable providers have been working to keep families connected during this time. However, you must take proactive steps with your provider. Learn more about what you need to do here:*

*For Comcast click on* [Xfinity](https://www.xfinity.com/prepare)

*For Verizon click on* [Verizon](https://www.verizon.com/support/covid-19-faqs/#bill)

*For Spectrum click on* [Spectrum](https://www.spectrum.net/support/internet/covid-19-information-spectrum-customers)

*You can also contact PACE (People Acting in Community Endeavors) for assistance.*

[Please click here for more information](http://paceinfo.org/).

5. **Who can I call if I have more questions?***Please call our Family Engagement Specialist Ms. Dias for more questions that are not answered here:*

*Family Engagement Center at 508-997-4511 Ext : 30014 or email us at* [*FECKeith@newbedfordschools.org*](mailto:FECKeith@newbedfordschools.org)

**Staying Safe During This Time:**

1. **What are the symptoms of COVID-19 or Coronavirus?** *People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of reported symptoms – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to COVID-19. 3*

*Symptoms can include:*

*• Fever or chills • Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing • Muscle or body aches • Headache • Nausea or vomiting • Cough • Fatigue • New loss of taste or smell • Sore throat • Congestion or runny nose • Diarrhea*

*\*This list does not include all possible symptoms, and children and youth with COVID-19 may experience any, all, or none of these symptoms.*

2. **Should everyone, including children, be practicing social distancing?** *Yes, individuals of all ages, including children, should be practicing social distancing. Everyone can play a role in keeping our community safe. Carefully consider the necessity of being together. Not being exposed to the virus is the best way not to get sick or to transmit it to others. Please refer to the CDC webpage for more information:* [*(CDC) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprepare%2Fprevention.html)

3. **Can we use the playgrounds and have playdates with other classmates?** *Fresh air and outdoor time are good for everyone, however the social distancing guidance of maintaining a safe separation of at least 6 feet remains critical. Playgrounds and parks in New Bedford are currently open to families who are wearing masks and maintaining a safe distance from others. Families should schedule playdates at their own discretion and should continue to follow CDC guidelines for staying safe during COVID-19. For more information on available parks in New Bedford, click the link below:*

[*New Bedford Parks, Recreation and Beaches*](https://newbedfordma.myrec.com/info/facilities/)

4. **Where can I get resources in the community?** *For more information on resources available in the community please click on your chosen language below:*

[*English*](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BEpHt79eZo9Nbisrz6Lg4hO_PJe0eOpz/view)[*Spanish*](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1u_9SKOJQioskAh6XsvKGGfft5t2ifQ_S/view)[*Portuguese*](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mE3ID617iJL_o1iU4pU1kP81w8Zjo06Y/view)[*K'iche*](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1n0CIGTJFaKGoGItm3uV6KNPQwzsgW9mU/view)

*You can also call the Mass 2-1-1 line. Families can receive information in their native languages by calling this line at any time.*

*You can also contact Keith Middle School at 508-997-4511 Ext. 30551 or contact our Family Engagement Center at :* [*FECKeith@newbedfordschools.org*](mailto:FECKeith@newbedfordschools.org)

5. **What resources exist for homeless students and families during this period?** *Guidance from DESE’s Homeless Education Coordinator includes:*

*- While local offices are currently closed to the public, shelter applications can be done by phone by calling 1-866-584-0653.*

*- Families must follow shelter quarantine/isolation rules in effect.*

*- Families should not be worrying about housing searches at this time. They may still apply for housing online and work with their case managers by phone.*

*- DHCD will be encouraging housing authorities to temporarily not take action against tenants who have family doubling up.*

*-Housing courts are temporarily suspending eviction proceedings.*

6. **What resources are available for parents coping with stress during this time?** *The CDC has provided the following resources for parents coping with stress:*

[*CDC coping with stress*](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/stress-coping/)

*Here are some additional hotlines:*

*-The Parental Stress Line – “parents helping parents” – available 24/7 in all languages: 1-800-632-8188*

*- SafeLink – Massachusetts statewide domestic violence support and resources – 24/7 helpline: 877-785-2020*

*-National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255*

*-The Disaster Distress Helpline - 1-800-985-5990 – a 24/7, 365-day-a-year national hotline dedicated to providing immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural human-caused disaster. This line is toll-free, multilingual, and confidential. Crisis support is available to all residents in the US and its territories.*

*- You can also text TalkWithUs to 66746 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.*

**At Home or Hybrid Learning and Academics:**

1. **When is the first day of school?** *Keith Middle School will be starting school on Wednesday, September 16th.*

*Cohort A will begin school In-Person*

*Cohorts B and C will begin school Distance-Learning.*

2. **What is a ‘Cohort’?** *A ‘Cohort’ forms groups of students that stay together throughout the school day to minimize exposure to other students across the school environment. This decreases the opportunity for exposure or transmission of COVID-19, facilitates more efficient contact tracing in the event of a positive case, and allows for more targeted testing, quarantining, and isolation of a group of students in the event of a positive case.*

3. **How do I know what cohort my child is in?** *You will receive cohort information from Keith Middle School*

4. **Does my child have to wear a mask to school?** *Face coverings are required for all students and staff in our school.Students will be required to wear a mask if they ride the school bus. Masks should not be removed for sneezing or coughing. Mask breaks will be provided throughout the day when possible and safe.*

5. **If my student has symptoms can they go to school?** *Parents or caregivers should monitor their children for signs of infectious illness and students who are sick should not attend school. It is important to stay home when you are sick until at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever (temperature of 100.4 or higher without the use of fever reducing medicine like Tylenol).*

*Please complete this short checklist each morning and report your child’s information to New Bedford Public Schools in the morning before your child leaves for school.* [*Click Here for Daily Home Screening Checklist*](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/schools-childcare/Daily-Home-Screening-for-Students-Checklist-ACTIVE-rev5A.pdf) *.Anyone who is in close contact (household contact or within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more) of a known COVID-19 case should consult their doctor and stay home for 14 days.*

6. **What are the expectations for students and their learning?** *All students are expected to participate in school beginning on September 16\*. The majority of students will begin school at a distance, and thus be engaged in ‘distance learning’. Distance Learning school work may include working with technology and work that is not technology-based*. *All schools will be providing information on schedules, materials and technology to families the week prior to the start of learning. All students should expect to be doing schoolwork, interacting with school staff (at a distance, in most cases) during regularly scheduled school hours 7:50am-2:35pm*

[School Calendar (2020-2021)](http://www.newbedfordschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_66938/File/20_21/School%20Calendar%202020-2021.pdf)

[School Calendar (2020-2021) K'ICHE](http://www.newbedfordschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_66938/File/20_21/School%20Calendar%202020-2021%20K.pdf)

[School Calendar (2020-2021) PORTUGUESE](http://www.newbedfordschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_66938/File/20_21/School%20Calendar%202020-2021%20P.pdf)

[School Calendar (2020-2021) SPANISH](http://www.newbedfordschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_66938/File/20_21/School%20Calendar%202020-2021%20S.pdf)

1. **If my student starts the year in the Distance Learning Academy, can they join their classmates in school later in the year?** *To assist with scheduling, planning and assignment of teachers, we are asking families to commit to the New Bedford Distance Learning Academy through January 2021. However, exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. There will be up to a two-week transition period for a child to switch from distance to hybrid.*

2**. Where can I access resources for learning at home?** *Teachers will be providing all instruction and work for students. Schools and school staff will be providing schedules and expectations to students and families the week prior to the actual start of learning on September 16th. The District is not publishing work for students (as was done in the spring of 2020). Please contact schools and teachers directly for information on instruction and assignments.*

3. **Where can I get my student’s Remote Learning Packet?** *There are no remote learning packets this year. All learning is being directed by teachers. Students and parents should maintain regular communication with teachers about learning, work, and assignments.*

4. **How will assignments be collected or submitted?** *Work will be submitted directly to teachers in a variety of ways. Various online programs will be used for this; technology is being provided to students in order to facilitate instruction, learning, assessment, and grading.*

5. **Will assignments be graded or count?** *Yes. Students will be graded according to the school district’s guidelines. Students must do the work teachers assign, and should expect regular feedback and grades from teachers*.

6. **Will students receive progress reports and report cards?** *Students will receive progress reports and report cards as scheduled throughout the school year. Middle school progress reports and report cards will be distributed quarterly.*

7. **What will Benchmark Assessments look like this year?** *All Benchmark Assessments will be administered online.*

8. **Can all families borrow laptops?** *Distribution of Laptops or Chromebooks is being organized at the school level. You will receive notification by email, robo call and updates in our school website with dates and times to pick up a laptop.Please reach out to KMS directly if you have not received notification by September 11th*

*Main Office phone 508-997-4511 Ext 30551*

9. **I don’t feel prepared to educate my kids at home. What do I do?**

*a. Teachers are still directing students’ learning. Please be sure to help your student stay in contact with their teachers and school and please reach out directly to the school with questions about learning.*

*b. Set a structure or a routine your child/children can follow each day. This will help to reduce anxiety and will help them focus on their task at hand.*

*c. Don’t be afraid to be adaptable, flexible, and willing to make mistakes. Focus on self-care. It’s like the oxygen mask in the plane analogy – make sure yours is functioning before helping others*.

10**. How do I help my child with their work if I don’t understand the instructions?** *It’s ok to admit you don’t know. First, reach out to your child’s teacher to ask for assistance. Teachers will be using the Class Dojo app to communicate with families and you will receive instructions on how to create an account and navigate the app.*

11. **How will the school community provide information about our readiness to reopen schools?***The district will continue to be in close contact with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and we will act in concert with the Governor’s guidance. We are also in regular contact with neighboring school districts to ensure regional response with regard to readiness. KMS will continue to use current communication channels including the website, automated phone calls, email, social media,personalized phone calls and more to share updates often. To update your contact information to ensure you are staying up to date, please go to* [*http://keith.newbedfordschools.org/*](http://keith.newbedfordschools.org/) *, scroll down and click on the blue box that says Help us Keep you informed or* [*Click Here to Update Your Contact Information*](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/23HGNZN)

**Special Education**

1. **How can I help my child/children with special needs during this time?** *Our staff will be contacting families to discuss plans to review and create individualized Covid-19 Special Education Learning Plans for your child. The plan will describe how and when the district obtained parental input regarding the proposed differences in provision of special education services. It will also describe how the accommodations, modifications, and services outlined in the student’s IEP will be provided differently than those outlined in the current IEP. These plans will be temporary and will not alter or amend the student’s current IEP.*

2**. How are we supporting students on individual education plans (IEPs) while school is remote or hybrid?** *Remote Learning Opportunities: New Bedford Public Schools is committed to providing your child with services and supports to the extent practicable. However, how the district provides special education services may look different during this period. Distance learning provides students with opportunities to demonstrate learning outside of the traditional classroom setting, giving them the opportunity to engage in both synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences on a daily basis. We will be making every effort to use creative strategies to provide special education services to every extent feasible. In addition, our therapists will be offering “tele-health” sessions for those students who receive related services. Remote Learning Plans*. *Your child is entitled to receive accommodations and services set forth on his/her IEP consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities. In order to assure that your child receives the appropriate services and accommodations, the district will be contacting you to solicit your participation in formulating a Special Education Learning Plan for your child in a good faith effort to provide your child with a free and appropriate public education. Your child’s IEP will be a guiding document for the plan, as the IEP was not written for remote implementation without the ability for staff and students to engage in person. Therefore, services in the plan will look different than if your child were receiving services and supports in school. The COVID-19 Special Education Learning Plan is intended to be temporary for the period of school closure and does not alter or amend the student’s current IEP. IEP Meetings The district will continue to conduct virtual Team meetings as much as possible, unless the entire Team agrees that an in-person meeting is required to make a decision. If this is required, Team members must adhere to school safety and health protocols. In addition, the district will continue to prioritize Team meetings and complete those that were unable to be completed due to school closure.*

**English Learner Education:**

1. **How are we supporting English Learner students during this time?***Keith Middle School has an English language acquisition program: Sheltered English Immersion. Your child is entitled to receive English as a Second Language instruction and language support to access all content areas. These services are provided by the content area teachers and ESL teachers working in collaboration. So, their collective delivery of instructional activities for EL students are aligned.*

2. **What are the expectations for EL students?** *Schools are supporting EL students through Remote Learning. It may include: large group video, audio conference calls, 1:1 phone or video calls, and other resources to engage with students. While technology can be a supportive tool EL students, educators have also considered ways that your child learning can be offline:*

*•* ***Journals:*** *Teachers give students specific instructions on how to keep a journal of things they observe daily. Students can write or draw pictures depending on their English language proficiency level. Teachers encourage students who can write in their native language to write in their language.*

*•* ***Double Entry Journals****: Teachers ask students to read a book on a given topic. In one column, students write what they know about the topic before they start reading the book. In the other column, they write what they learned.*

*•* ***Reading Logs:*** *Teachers ask students to read books that interest them and then write a report. Then teachers make specific assignments as reading activities that align with the expectations outlined in the English standards for the grade level. Students could have flexibility in writing in English, writing in their own language, creating posters or diagrams etc.*

*•* ***Role Play:*** *Teachers ask students to set up specific role play scenarios in their home. They can invite siblings and even parents to be part of the role play (while ensuring that this is optional and families have a choice as to whether they 13 participate, especially if using videoconferencing). Students “explain the experience” and what they learned, what worked and did not work.*

*•* ***Turn on the Subtitles****: Teachers recommend a television program that is appropriate for their students’ age and learning level. Teachers ask students to watch the program with closed captioning. Students will hear the words, see the people speaking, and see the text all at the same time. Ask students to “record” what they heard and discuss with their teachers.*

3. **How do I help my child do homework if I don’t read English?**

*a. Have your child teach you something. Ask them to with their own words, write the instructions or directions for you (in any language used at home). This can be a motivational boost for students as having a skill their parent doesn’t have can make them feel empowered.*

*b. Work along with your child, whether it is catching up on your emails, or reading something for work, having a parent close by makes homework feel less like punishment.*

**Transportation**

1. **What safety measures are in place for students?**

• Limiting capacity to one student per bench seat (two siblings may sit on the same bench). Each bus will have a maximum capacity of 24 students.

• Touchless hand sanitizing stations are being installed.

• All riders in grades Pre-K to 12 MUST wear a mask

• All bus drivers and monitors MUST wear a mask

2. **How do I register my student for transportation?** For students that had a bus pass last year and are eligible for school bus transportation in accordance to the current New Bedford School Committee Transportation Policy there will be a link on the NBPS website [newbedfordschools.org](http://newbedfordschools.org) on the transportation tab or [Click here for transportation request](http://www.newbedfordschools.org/depts_programs/transportation)

**Facilities**

1. **What safety measures are in place for students when they are in school?**

*• Hand Sanitizer stands and Hand Pumps will be available at all designated entrances into the school and at each classroom.*

*• Disinfecting wipes will be available at all school entrances and in each classroom.*

*• Once students arrive, Custodians will disinfect hand surfaces (i.e. door knobs, stairwell railings, elevator buttons, etc.)*

*• Restrooms will be disinfected every 2 hours throughout the day.*

*• At the end of each school day, the entire school will be disinfected.*

*• Sneeze guard shields are placed at all high traffic desk areas and cafeterias.*

*• Custodians received training on the proper techniques and approved chemicals to properly disinfect a school.*

*• District purchased numerous atomizing sprayers to support the disinfecting program. For more information please visit NBPS website* [*newbedfordschools.org*](http://newbedfordschools.org) *and click on Fall Reopening Plan or* [*Click Here for Fall Reopening Plan*](http://www.newbedfordschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_66938/File/ReOpening/Facilities%20Health%20Trans%20Reopening%20Meeting.pdf.)

**Food Services**

1. **What safety measures are in place for students when they are eating lunch?** Schools will be using disposable wares, advance ordering, and individually wrapped servings. Students will be eating in the cafeteria at a distance of 6 feet in all cases. Plexiglass has been set up on the tables to minimize contact. Students will be eating in the classroom when needed.

2. **How can I pick up meals?** *Grab n’ Go meal distribution will be available for pick up at KMS:*

*Monday, Wednesday and Friday*

*11am-11:45am*

*Students will be provided meals to cover Lunch that day and Breakfast the next day.*

**Information on Events, Activities, and Athletics Coming Soon!**