

New Bedford's Alma Middle Schools will reopen later this spring

"Dear Alma Families,

We hope this letter finds you and your family healthy and well! **We are excited to announce that we are currently planning to bring back all scholars for in-person learning in grades K-8 by early May.** Since the letter we released on March 5th, there are no major changes to our plans for K-5, but we have begun additional planning to bring back our 6-8th grade scholars.

On Tuesday, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education announced that all school districts must offer in-person learning for all K-5th students by April 5, and for all 6-8th grade students by April 28. **Alma plans to apply for a waiver to allow us a few additional days to finalize bus routes, facility setup and staff training.** These updates to our reopening plan are subject to the approval by Alma's Board of Trustees, which will meet on March 26. Please reference your scholars' grade band below for more information on proposed upcoming changes to our learning model.

This will be your final opportunity to opt-into in-person learning this year. Given the state's new requirement for school districts to prioritize in-person learning, we can no longer guarantee your scholar will continue to have a fully dedicated remote teacher if you choose to opt-out of in-person learning. We strongly encourage all families to opt-into in person learning. That said, if you prefer for your scholar to remain in a remote-learning model, you will have that option for the remainder of this school year.

Sixth Grade – Eighth Grade

We are currently preparing to welcome back our 6th, 7th, and 8th grade scholars to in-person learning starting in late April or early May, depending on which campus your scholar attends.

- Ottiwell Campus- Grades 6, 7, and 8: Wednesday, April 28th
- Douglass Campus- Grades 6 and 7: Monday, May 3rd

If you are a 6th-8th grade family, you will receive a survey later today to inform us whether you are opting in or out of in-person learning and if your scholar will need transportation. Please complete our survey promptly so that we can effectively plan for this reopening. We know you will have many questions and we will be holding a Family Zoom Meeting on **Thursday, March 18 at 5 pm.** Please also see the FAQ below for more information, or contact the school if you have a personal question.

Kindergarten – Second Grade

If your scholar is currently learning in-person, they will continue to do so through the end of this school year. If you previously opted out of in-person learning, you will now have the opportunity to opt back into in-person learning beginning April 12th. You have already received a survey regarding your preferred learning model, and should have completed this survey by today. Please click on this link if you still need to complete the survey.

Third Grade – Fifth Grade

As we announced on March 5th, we are currently preparing to welcome back our 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade scholars to in-person learning starting on Monday, April 12th. You have already received a survey regarding your preferred learning model, and should have completed this survey by today. Please click on this link if you still need to complete the survey.

In Service,

Will Gardner

Commonly Asked Questions regarding School Reopening

Will my scholar have the same teachers? What will remote learning look like for Grades 3-8?

Scholars learning in-person will have the same teachers for their core academic subjects as they have had in the remote setting. We will do our very best to keep scholars with their same Crew leader. In Grades 3-8, since all of our staff will be teaching in-person, scholars who remain fully remote will “zoom in” to in-person classes and have some opportunities during the day to check-in with a staff member. Remote learning will look significantly different than our model has this year up until this point.

When will I have to confirm my choice for opting in or out of in-person learning?

All Sixth through Eighth Grade families will be asked to submit their survey response by Friday, March 19th. The survey deadline for families with scholars in grades 3-5 is today, Friday, March 12th.

Will my scholar still receive their special education services?

Yes, all scholars in our special education program will continue to receive their special education services in person with a specialist or other service provider.

What time does school start/end and do scholars learn remotely on Fridays?

Scholar arrival time is any time between 7:50 – 8:30am. Crew begins promptly at 8:30am and scholars are considered tardy at

8:31am. Dismissal is at 2:30pm each day. We have decided that all in-person scholars will be in-person five days a week, Monday through Friday.

Are there changes to the school calendar for this year?

There are no major changes to the school calendar. As previously communicated, April vacation is the week of 4/19 – 4/23, all scholars in grades K-5 will have in-person learning the week following break (4/26 – 4/30). Scholars' final day of school remains as June 24th. Any other schedule updates will be communicated to families as soon as possible.

Will scholars wear their uniform to school?

Yes, all scholars are required to wear their Alma uniform (dark blue polo, khaki pants, black shoes). Our uniform vendor is Superior Logos, located at 13 Brooks Street in New Bedford, and their phone number is 508-717-6776. If you are having trouble getting uniforms, please let your scholar's teacher or our front desk know and we can support you in obtaining a uniform. If purchasing a uniform this year is a hardship, please reach out to Marie Tavares, our Families Helping Families coordinator for support at marietavares@almadelmar.org

Does my scholar have to wear a mask?

Yes, all scholars and staff are required to wear a mask during the school day except during Breakfast, Lunch, and their Outdoor break times. Scholars should bring their own mask to school, and Alma has extras on hand if needed. Please practice having your scholar wear their mask at home.

Will the scholars have co-curriculars and Recess?

Yes, all scholars will have one in-person co-curricular class and at least one outdoor break each day.

Can my scholar take the bus?

Just like in previous years, any scholar who lives 1.5 miles or more from our campus will be eligible for transportation. Our Front Desk team will call eligible families to let them know their bus stop location and times. If you live less than 1.5 miles from the school your scholar will not qualify for transportation and will need a ride to and from school each day.

Can my scholar bring lunch from home?

Yes, scholars may bring their own lunch as well as reusable water bottles from home each day.”

See the full details including PDF documents [here](#).