

Notification from: **Melican Middle School (MMS)**

January 3, 2022

Dear Melican Families –

As we begin 2022, we are thankful for the partnership we have with families. With pandemic guidance and protocols constantly evolving, we understand that this can create some confusion and anxiety. Please reach out to one of us at any time if you need clarification or support. We also recognize that, though the holidays are considered celebratory, they can be challenging for students and families, and we encourage you to reach out if a student needs support.

I want to thank our music staff for organizing our annual holiday send-off for students. Please see the [article](#) in the Community Advocate.

Please view our [Lost and Found](#) items if your child is missing anything. If you received an email from Nicole DeAngelis regarding the Returning Student Registration Form, please complete the form as soon as possible.

Please view our [Before and After School Activities List](#). This is also posted on our website. Staff members add to this list throughout the year. Please also visit our [eBackpack](#) frequently for important community and school information.

YEARBOOK INFORMATION: Please see the information from Christine Mesite, our Yearbook Advisor: [CLICK HERE for the Melican purchase link at Jostens or head over to the Melican homepage to navigate from there.](#) The cost of the yearbook is \$37 until Jan. 28th.

I am including the information from Superintendent Martineau's email below for your reference:

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) have updated their quarantine and isolation protocols. As a result, The Public Schools of Northborough and Southborough, in consultation with the Northborough and Southborough Boards of Health, will be adjusting protocols to align with changes. The changes will be communicated shortly.

COVID-19 Testing: *The Public Schools of Northborough and Southborough are taking the following steps to increase access to COVID-19 testing next week:*

- *District-wide pooled testing on Wednesday, January 5, 2022, and Monday, January 10, 2022. (Testing was not available prior to return due to lab availability);*
- *The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is making home tests available to all District employees on Sunday, January 2, 2022, and;*
- *Families are encouraged to have their children tested for COVID-19 before returning to school on Monday, January 3, 2022, if possible (the District does not have access to rapid tests for students). Please report positive test results to your school nurse and complete this [COVID-19 student form](#).*

High-Quality Masks: *We recommend that students and staff wear [well-fitted, multi-layer masks](#) or double mask for added protection. Much discussion has centered around KN95 masks. Although not required, a well-fitted KN95 mask is an effective barrier.*

Lunch Protocols: *Out of an abundance of caution, we will assess our lunch protocols at each school and make adjustments where possible.*

- *Maximizing social distancing between students at lunch*;*
- *Continuing to use filtration and/or turning up existing air filtration systems to their highest settings, and;*

- Continuing to monitor mask-wearing during lunch, as students are required to stay masked when not actively eating. This means that students are only unmasked for approximately 10-15 minutes, and the air is fully exchanged at least every 15 minutes in all cafeterias.

*Lunch settings at the elementary level and at Trottier Middle School provide six feet of social distance. Lunch desks are in rows and students are facing the same direction. Melican Middle School lunches maximize social distancing but due to space constraints, students are not six feet apart. ARHS will open up a secondary lunch space (Blackbox Theater) and encourage students to eat outside if the weather permits.

Additional Mitigation Efforts:

- HEPPA filters in all educational spaces;
- Open windows in classrooms;
- Shift all parent meetings to remote;
- Conduct all large staff meetings remotely in January;
- Continue to limit student exposure to peers by maximizing distancing and similar seating charts across all settings;
- Suspend all indoor field trips and other large gatherings of students and staff during the month of January;
- Limit spectators at athletic events to parents and siblings;
- Continue to restrict access to buildings to only students, staff, and educationally critical volunteers, and;
- Strongly recommend that all eligible students receive the COVID-19 vaccine and/or booster.

We are working out some details for giving students the option of eating outside when weather permits.

Basketball for the Week:

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
1/3 G: 2:15-3:45 B: 3:45-5:15	1/4 Away Game @ Charlton Boys 4:00 Girls 5:00	1/5 B: 2:15-3:45 G: 3:45-5:15	1/6 Home Game vs Oak Boys 3:45 Girls 4:45 (only parent/sibling fans)	1/7 G: 2:15-3:45 B: 3:45-5:15

One of the District’s mitigating factors is to limit fans at sporting events. Due to the size of our gymnasium, we are inviting only 2 relatives of each player to our January games. There will be **No Student Fans** for now.

Schedule for the Week:

Tuesday (1/4)

2:30 - Ski Club begins. Christine Mesite, club advisor, has emailed families.

Wednesday (1/5)

6:30 p.m. – School Committee

Please reach out with any questions.

Respectfully,

Michelle Karb, Principal and Jennifer Callaghan, Assistant Principal

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