



Office of the Superintendent

Dr. Brenda Cassellius, Superintendent

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Dear Henderson School Community,

It is so clear that the Henderson School has created a strong community and how much you care about each other and all of the students, families, and staff. The tragic events of this week have shaken us all but you have shown incredible resilience and your care for the entire community has been remarkable. Thank you for being there for Principal Lampron and for supporting each other. I spoke with Ms. Lampron last night and she is taking the time she needs to heal and recuperate and she is grateful to the whole community for pulling together for our students.

I am personally grateful for the entire staff who came to school on Thursday and convened to develop a plan so that we can ensure a sound safety plan, with clear steps so that students and parents can be sure we have taken every step to restore a positive learning environment. I especially want to especially thank Sam Podbelski for his calm and steady leadership, and the entire administrative team for their input and collaboration throughout these past few days.

I received tough feedback regarding the meeting on Thursday night. I understand and acknowledge the frustration that was expressed and I thank you for being honest with us and voicing your disappointment. We were and are still gathering factual information and did not want to convey any incomplete or inaccurate information last night. We are working together to investigate the many issues that you raised on the call and will report out final information as soon as we can. I promised at the meeting to be in regular communication with all of you regularly about implementation of the plan and actions being taken.

The other question we heard loud and clear was what will be different when students return to school. We are taking several steps together following two meetings this morning with the Parent Teacher Organization and a group of student leaders.

School Leadership

While Ms. Lampron recovers at home, I have asked Gene Roundtree, Secondary School Superintendent and former Head of School at Snowden International to report to the Henderson every day and work with Mr. Podbelski, Ms. Gailunas, Ms. Parker and the leadership



team on daily operations and instruction. Gene is an experienced educator and administrator and will be present at the school for the foreseeable future to ensure all safety plans are implemented swiftly and that supports are in place.

Safety Procedures

We are instituting new protocols for arrival and dismissal. Additional safety staff from Boston Public Schools will be on hand and Henderson school teachers and staff will be outside, present to facilitate the orderly arrival and dismissal of students each day. This will include greeting students as they arrive via bus or on foot, connecting with them quickly and ensuring they are moving into the building and to their homerooms. Members of the Boston Police Department will also be visibly present in the area and available if needed. My Deputy Superintendent Sam DePina and the BPS Office of Safety Services will review plans with the school's leadership and share any additional adjustments with you. We'll also have coverage at Ashmont Station at the start and close of the school day.

Support for Students

We are adding counseling capacity in partnership with the district's Social Emotional Learning and Wellness teams to provide access to trained staff who will be on site to support students. We are actively seeking additional support from our partners at Playworks who focus on bringing fun to learning and structured activities to provide positive opportunities for children to play and interact with one another positively.

Support for Families

We are working on putting in place family engagement strategies to provide two-way communication that shares important information with you in a timely manner and creates the process through which you can communicate back to us.

Finally, we will provide additional training in Crisis prevention and Intervention Training (CPI) and CPR training. The nursing team has requested additional support and we are providing support to our nurse team as well.

Return to School

We are planning for the return of students on **Monday, November 8 for Grades 2 - 6 as well as students in the transition program** and on **Tuesday, November 9 for Grades 7 - 12**. The staggered return to the school will allow for us to focus on students and provide them with the age appropriate support and space for a successful reentry.

I want to thank everyone who joined us for the community meeting. I know we are all processing the events this week differently and with different lenses. Regardless, we his community is strong and will ensure this difficult test of its unity. I have full faith and confidence in this Henderson team and know with the right support, we will heal and move forward together stronger.

I want to thank you for your commitment and partnership. I especially want to thank you for your patience and grace as we work together to ensure the safety of our community and restore the positive learning environment the Henderson Inclusion School is known for.

In unity,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brenda Cassellius".

Brenda Cassellius
Superintendent