

Dear Perkins Families:

This week we have recognized all of our amazing staff as part of Teacher Appreciation Week. To show our appreciation to YOU, the Perkins parents, the members of the Perkins Educational Leadership Team have recorded a video with messages of thanks. The video can be found on the [parents page on our website](#).

Also, below please find this Friday's edition of the COVID-19 Update which was sent to staff a short time ago. You will see that it is highly focused on a large number of programmatic questions and thought it was worth sharing with you as well.

With Gratitude,

Ed

Dear Perkins Community,

We have recognized ALL of our incredibly talented and dedicated Educational Programs staff this week for their countless contributions to our students and families. Whether you show gratitude for our valued staff during special recognition weeks (like Teacher Appreciation Week or Nurses Week) or if you take a moment at any other time of the year, we share in that spirit of appreciation for these dedicated members of the Perkins community whose commitment to our students and families have helped us face not only the challenges of the pandemic, but the everyday challenges that we sometimes take for granted. Thank you so much for all you do and for your continued support as we move through the final months of the school year.

As always, we appreciate your questions and comments. Please contact any member of the COVID-19 Task Force (listed below) via email with your comments/questions.

COVID-19 Response Leaders  
Ed Bosso and Brenna Child

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**COVID-19 UPDATE, May 7, 2021**

Since it's been a few weeks since our last update, we received quite a few questions this time around. We've done our best to provide answers here, however, we will defer some answers to a later date (indicated below); and some questions will be handled on a case-by-case basis (indicated below).

**As we await guidance from public health and other authorities, decisions will be made at a later date regarding the following campus-related questions:**

- When can day students and Lower School have access to the cottages?
- Will Secondary students be permitted to participate in on-campus community college classes in the fall?
- Can Lower School and the Early Learning Center return to Potter and Glover for lunches in September?
- Will students be able to eat together in the dining rooms (including combining day and residential students in Secondary)?
- Can Lower School and Deafblind students come to the Howe Building for transition classes and have access to areas such as the snack bar, pool and gym?
- Can we resume after-school programming?

**Consult with your Education Director/Assistant Education Director on a case-by-case basis to make decisions on the following issues:**

- Can we bring back off-campus work experiences?
- Can Lower School staff assist with wake-ups of Secondary students in the Secondary cottages as they did pre-pandemic?
- When will Deafblind students be able to access the Howe Building and Grousbeck Center?
- When can we start using cars again?

### **COVID-19 Protocols Remain in Place**

Although a large percentage of Perkins staff and many of our students (ages 16 and up) have been vaccinated, we will continue to adhere to our current COVID-19 protocols, including wearing masks and PPE (note: gaiters and bandanas are NOT considered appropriate PPE), practicing good hand hygiene, and maintaining social distancing. All guests arriving on campus must adhere to mask requirements, including when outside, and Perkins staff working outside must also wear masks.

Following are the questions we received pertaining to COVID-19 protocols:

- **Will this year's prom be an in-person event?**
  - No, our prom will be a virtual event. DESE's guidance recommends that schools do not hold in-person proms and instead substitute alternative celebrations for seniors, so we will follow that guidance.

- **Are multiple programs allowed to use outdoor spaces (i.e., playgrounds, pond, track) at the same time if they maintain social distancing?**
  - For the track and the pond, yes, however, not on playgrounds. Please remember that staff are responsible for sanitation after using playground equipment.
- **Can Deafblind residential staff come into the Hilton building to pick up students?**
  - Work with program leaders and staff to enter the Hilton building to pick up students, if necessary; continue to use appropriate PPE and follow protocols.
- **Can Deafblind teachers go into the residences?**
  - Deafblind teachers should work with staff to enter the residences, if necessary; continue to use appropriate PPE and follow protocols.
- **Will PPE guidelines change among vaccinated staff and students?**
  - There is no change in our PPE protocols for the foreseeable future.
- **Are we still required to wear masks when outdoors even among vaccinated staff?**
  - Yes, staff and students should continue to wear a mask anywhere outside on campus; we will continue to monitor guidance for any future changes to this guidance.
- **Should we continue disinfecting surfaces, manipulatives, chairs, toilets and door handles?**
  - Yes, for the foreseeable future, please continue to follow all required protocols and cleaning routines that have been recommended since the pandemic began.
- **What quarantine period does Perkins require for fully vaccinated individuals (staff or students) who are identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19?**
  - Perkins requires a 5-day quarantine period for fully vaccinated individuals (staff or students) who are identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19.
- **Can we allow residential log binders in Deafblind to go between school and the cottages?**
  - Yes, log binders may go between school and the cottages. Feel free to wipe them down if you'd like, but it's not necessary. Research has shown that COVID-19 transmission from touching this type of surface is very low.

## COVID-19 Vaccines in Massachusetts

To find a vaccination location, go to [VaxFinder on mass.gov](#) to pre-register for an appointment and receive status updates; other options include [CVS](#), [Walgreens](#) and health care providers.

Important reminder for staff: Once you are fully vaccinated, send your vaccination documentation to [Linda Christensen](#) via email.

## Staff COVID-19 Surveillance Testing

We are currently continuing our bi-weekly schedule of onsite surveillance testing. Upcoming sessions are scheduled on Thursday, May 13 and Thursday, May 27.

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Helpful Links: COVID-19 General

- [State of Massachusetts Restrictions](#)
- [Stop the Spread](#) (free testing)
- [CIC Health testing site](#) (fee-based testing)
- [Find a COVID-19 Test](#)

Helpful Links: COVID-19 Vaccine

- [Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People \(CDC\)](#)
- [Facts about the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine \(CDC\)](#)
- [Getting ready for your COVID-19 Vaccine \(CDC\)](#)
- [Myths and Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines \(CDC\)](#)
- [Key Things to Know about the U.S. COVID-19 Vaccination Program \(CDC\)](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions about the COVID-19 Vaccination \(CDC\)](#)
- [Massachusetts COVID-19 Vaccination Program \(Mass.gov\)](#)
- [Other Vaccination Sites \(Mass.gov\)](#)

COVID-19 Task Force Members

- Communications, Perrin McCormick, Sheryl Bird
- Educational Programs
  - Grace Cohen Pratt (ELC/LS)
  - Sue Shannon (Sec)
  - Kristian Coderre (Sec)
  - Megan Schmittel (DB)
  - Cristy Lonardo (DB)
  - Patrick Ryan (Sec)
- Facilities, Jose Fabian-Taveras
- Health Services, Kate Maher
- Human Resources, Michele Crews
- Legal, Louise McCarthy
- Perkins International, Lisa Jacobs

- Perkins Solutions, Mary-Gayle Sweeney
- Project Support and Coordination, Scott MacDowell
- Security, David Apprille