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Superintendent Thomas Anderson

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New Bedford Public Schools students' return goes smoothly

NBPS completes 4th phase of yearlong learning plan, leading to full return to classrooms

New Bedford Public Schools, after months of being in a hybrid and serving 9,000 students 2-days per week completed its first week of 5-day in-person instruction for all grades during the week ending April 9, which continued at a smooth pace this week. Emphasizing safety as the top priority, Superintendent Thomas Anderson stated, "Since April 5, all our elementary schools have expanded at multiple grade levels and our middle schools and high school were back with 5-day in-person instruction as of the end of last week. We must stick to appropriate distancing, hand sanitizing and mask wearing so we can, hopefully, enjoy the traditional end-of-year activities, including promotional ceremonies, graduation and other events."

At New Bedford High School, ninth graders returned April 5 and 6, with 10-12 graders back as of April 7. With their full return as of April 9, Headmaster Bernadette Coelho noted, "Even as we continue to ensure social distancing, the entire school has an air of excitement, with students and staff greeting each other with smiles and welcomes; it feels like the first day of the school year, though we've seen each other virtually since October."

Ensuring a smooth transition back to classrooms for every student, Superintendent Anderson stated, "Access through equity is critical and we are continuing to improve our system so parents can communicate with school staff in their native languages using a phone line that provides 350 languages, including Creole, K'iche, Russian and Arabic to name a few and has had more than 4,100 calls."

New Bedford Public Schools as of late January had been the largest school district in Massachusetts to retain in-person instruction in a hybrid model since the beginning of the current school year.