



Mary E. Skipper, *Superintendent*

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March 25, 2020

Dear Somerville Public Schools Families and Staff,

We are streamlining our district communication and will be sending out these district updates on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Toward the top of each update, we will list any new resources or information. The lower section will include reminders and links to information that we have already shared and which you may be accessing regularly. Each Friday we will also be highlighting some of the great work that our educators and students are doing to help students stay connected to their learning, or to support the community during this health crisis. Our hope is that these small changes will be helpful to you as you continue to adjust to new family schedules.

## NEW INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- **Governor Baker Extends School Closure into Early May:** This afternoon, Governor Baker announced that all schools and non-emergency daycares will remain closed for several more weeks to continue the state's intense efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19. The Governor cited May 4<sup>th</sup> as the earliest possible day that schools might reopen. Governor Baker and MA Commissioner of Education Riley indicated that there would be a letter forthcoming from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to families, as well as guidance to districts as early as tomorrow. We will await that guidance and use it to inform our work as we further develop remote teaching and learning plans, finalize grading for third quarter, roll out new technology devices and supports, create new virtual professional development opportunities, and implement new programs and systems to continue providing students and families with the supports they need. We understand that today's announcement further extending the school closure period presents many challenges for families, and we will do our best to keep you informed and provide you and your students with the support you need in this continuously evolving crisis.
- **Language Support for Technology Questions:** Any SPS parent/student who needs language assistance with technology, please contact 311. A bilingual educator will contact you to assist you. If you are calling from work or a number outside of Somerville, dial (617) 666-3311. You can also email [311updates@somervillema.gov](mailto:311updates@somervillema.gov).
- **Just for Fun:** Take a virtual tour of Mars with NASA's Curiosity Rover: <https://accessmars.withgoogle.com/>

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## CONTINUING PROGRAMS AND IMPORTANT LINKS

### Continuing Programs and Resources

- **Breakfast and Lunch Grab-and-Go Meals** can be picked up Mondays-Fridays, 9:00-11:00 a.m. at the East Somerville Community School, Healey School, West Somerville Neighborhood School, and Winter Hill Community Innovation School. No ID is required. Bring a bag if you are picking up for multiple family members, and please remember to dress appropriately for the weather as we may ask you to stand out in the elements to ensure that we follow social distancing norms.
- **Distribution of free diapers** to families with babies or young children will continue this week, through Friday, March 27, at each of the four school food distribution sites listed above from 9:00-11:00 a.m.

- *Other food-related resources in the city*, visit [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/food-resources](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/food-resources).

#### Curriculum Resources and Tech Support Available Online

- High quality grade-level home learning resources: [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/home-learning](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/home-learning).
- High school online resources: [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/shs](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/shs)
- List of resources from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to help students stay engaged in their learning while at home: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/ed-resources.html>
- WGBH's new online Distance Learning Center: [www.wgbh.org/distance-learning-center](http://www.wgbh.org/distance-learning-center)
- PBS LearningMedia: <https://mass.pbslearningmedia.org>
- If you are having trouble with your device, please submit a request for support using this [Somerville Public Schools Remote Tech Support Contact Form](#).

#### Other Important Links

- Visit [www.somervillema.gov/coronavirus](http://www.somervillema.gov/coronavirus) for the most current information on COVID-19 in Somerville, and to find out about additional resources available in the city.
- Talking to your kids about COVID-19: [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/TalkingAboutCoronavirus](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/TalkingAboutCoronavirus).

Let's all stay safe and continue to be kind to one another. Thank you for your continued partnership.

Sincerely,

Mary Skipper, Superintendent