



# Somerville Public Schools

Education • Inspiration • Excellence

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Dear Somerville Public Schools Families and Staff,

We hope you are doing ok and settling in. As a reminder, all school holidays and breaks will be observed as scheduled; no remote instruction will take place on those days. We also want to remind families that our Grab-and-Go meal distribution will continue during scheduled school holidays and breaks, including this Friday (Good Friday), and the April break (April 20-24). Meals can be picked up every Monday-Friday, 9:00-11:00am at the East Somerville Community School, Healey School, West Somerville Neighborhood School, and the Winter Hill Community Innovation School. Meals are available to any student in the district at these four sites.

## NEW INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

**Somerville Events Canceled through June 30:** Yesterday afternoon, Mayor Curtatone announced that all City-sponsored or permitted public events and large gatherings will be canceled in Somerville through the end of June as the city continues to do everything possible to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 health crisis on our community. (<https://www.somervillema.gov/april7coronavirusupdates>.) We understand what a difficult decision this is, particularly for our seniors at Somerville High School and Full Circle, who will not be able to participate in the traditional graduation ceremonies, other SPS annual spring celebrations, or other large gathering events as they prepare for the next phase of their journeys. Throughout this crisis, we have seen our students and staff demonstrate incredible strength and determination. A Senior Class Task Force at Somerville High School has already been convened to address the specific needs of SHS seniors, and we are committed to doing all we can for the Class of 2020 at SHS, Full Circle, and SCALE. We will be working in earnest with our students and school teams to address this latest challenge, and will share additional information once graduation and other end-of-year celebrations are finalized. At this time, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has not announced any school closure beyond May 4<sup>th</sup>. We will keep you informed should we hear otherwise.

**Social Distancing:** One of the most important things that we can all do right now to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 is to be diligent about following social distancing measures, and ensuring that our kids are following those measures as well. We all can be carriers, and practicing social distancing measures impacts not only our own health, but the health of those around us as well. We can stay connected while staying away, with a phone call, video chat, or through social media. Did you know that you can be an asymptomatic carrier of the virus and inadvertently infect someone else (possibly a friend, family member, or someone you just happen to come into contact with) without even knowing it? That's why it's so important that we **ALL** do our part to combat the spread of this virus by following CDC [social distancing guidelines](#). It could be the difference between life and death for someone.

**An Update on AP Exams:** Due to the COVID-19 health crisis, there will be no in-person AP Exams in 2020. Instead, College Board is creating 45-minute online exams designed to be taken at home between May 11-20. Each subject has a different assigned date and time. This website (<https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/coronavirus-updates>) has the updated schedule, free resources for students to prepare for exams, and more details about the exams. We are asking all students to complete [this survey](#) about their ability to take AP exams this year. Please contact your student's AP teacher or Melanie Kessler at [mkessler@k12.somerville.ma.us](mailto:mkessler@k12.somerville.ma.us) if you have questions.

**Technology Devices for PK-2:** Our order of Kindle Fire 7 tablets have come in. Please look for information on Monday about a distribution plan and schedule.

**Online Platform Safe Practice Guidelines:** We will be sending out safe practice guidelines for students and families related to the use of online platforms. Please look for that information sometime in the next few days.

**Just for Fun:** We just launched a Just for Fun page with links to a variety of fun interactive activities. Visit [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/JustforFun](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/JustforFun) to get started. Here's one to consider for this weekend: Cooped Up Comics Camp from YA graphic novelist and award-winning author Nathan Hale; best for elementary aged students and up: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K111aZPO974>.

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## HIGHLIGHTS

**Ms. Calioro's Counselor's Corner:** Ms. Carlie Calioro from the East Somerville Community School has been staying connected with students through a series of Counselor's Corner videos. Visit her YouTube channel to learn about a Gratitude Activity (video 3), and other great lessons she has been sharing with students: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0s3LrJI-vUQ6kmefuS3eBQ>.

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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, Healey, West Somerville, and Winter Hill schools. No ID required. Bring a bag if you are picking up for multiple family members, and 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.
- **Friday Food Pantry Bags:** Thanks to Food for Free ([www.foodforfree.org](http://www.foodforfree.org)) and Shape Up Somerville, approximately 100 weekend bags will be available for ESCS families in need to pick up on Friday, April 10, between 9:00 and 11:00am. An additional 200 weekend bags of food that the City of Somerville and Food for Free have been donating each week will be distributed among the three remaining meal distribution sites (Healey, Winter Hill, and West Somerville).
- **Other food-related resources in the city,** visit [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/food-resources](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/food-resources).
- **Distribution of Diapers:** Distribution of free diapers and wipes to families with babies or young children will continue on **Wednesdays only from 9:00-11:00a.m.** at each of the four school food distribution sites, through April and while supplies last.
- **Comcast Internet Essentials:** We want to remind families that Comcast is offering two months of free internet service to families in need, through their Internet Essentials program. **If you qualify for the school free/reduced lunch program, you are eligible for this important service.** Information on how to apply and sign up for Internet Essentials from Comcast is available at: <https://internetessentials.com/>
- **Instrument Rentals:** A reminder that Needham Instruments and Acoustic Strings of New England are providing replacement instruments for students whose rental instrument is not accessible. We have not been able to connect with Johnson String Instruments. Please contact Mr. Saunders [rsaunders@k12.somerville.ma.us](mailto:rsaunders@k12.somerville.ma.us) if you have any questions.
- **Somerville Public Library:** The Somerville Public Library offers a treasure trove of digital resources that can be accessed at [www.somervillepubliclibrary.org](http://www.somervillepubliclibrary.org). A library card is needed to gain access to the databases from home. If you need assistance resolving an issue with a library card, or if you're not sure you have an SPL library card and would like to apply for one, email [somrefquestions@minlib.net](mailto:somrefquestions@minlib.net).
- **Virtual Job Fair:** Somerville Public Schools is hosting a Virtual Job Fair on April 15, 10:00am – 12:00pm. Candidates are invited to apply for anticipated positions in our district for the 2020-2021 school year through SchoolSpring at [www.schoolspring.com/jobs/?employer=16902](http://www.schoolspring.com/jobs/?employer=16902), then visit our Virtual Job Fair page at [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/VirtualJobFair](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/VirtualJobFair) to request a meet-and-greet.

Representatives from each school and several departments will be available to talk to applicants briefly. Registration for the event ends April 10<sup>th</sup>.

#### 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](#).
- Language Support for Technology Questions: SPS parents/students who need language assistance with technology should call 311 or email [311updates@somervillema.gov](mailto:311updates@somervillema.gov). A bilingual educator will contact you to assist you. Dial (617) 666-3311 if you are calling from a number outside of Somerville.
- SPS Remote Learning Plan can be accessed at [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/RemoteLearning](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/RemoteLearning)

#### Other Important Links

- Visit [www.somervillema.gov/coronavirus](http://www.somervillema.gov/coronavirus) for the most current information on COVID-19.
- Visit [www.somervillema.gov/coronavirushelp](http://www.somervillema.gov/coronavirushelp) for additional resources and ways to contribute during the COVID-19 crisis.
- Talking to your kids about COVID-19: [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/TalkingAboutCoronavirus](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/TalkingAboutCoronavirus).

Have a good rest of the week. We look forward to being in touch again on Monday.

Respectfully,

Mary Skipper, Superintendent