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Dear SPS Families and Staff,

As you are aware, yesterday afternoon Governor Baker announced that all Massachusetts schools would remain closed and remote learning would continue for the remainder of the school year. The last day of school for Somerville Public Schools students will be Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>. We will continue to provide remote learning instruction and to evolve our district Remote Learning Plan as we prepare for the rest of the academic year.

We know the last several weeks have been incredibly difficult, and as we do all we can as a community to minimize the spread of COVID-19, new challenges will emerge. We will continue to address challenges head-on, and to work diligently and creatively to ensure that we provide families with the supports they need, and keep our students engaged in their learning and connected to their school communities.

Thank you for your resilience, your compassion, and your commitment to our students and to the Somerville community.

## NEW INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

**P-EBT Program:** All Massachusetts families with children who were receiving free and reduced-price school meals will be receiving food support through the federal Pandemic-EBT program. The MA P-EBT program is operated by the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) in collaboration with the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. P-EBT is a separate program that functions like SNAP. Benefit amounts are based on a daily student rate. Learn more about this important program at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/pandemic-ebt-p-ebt>. The USDA approved the MA plan on April 17<sup>th</sup>. Eligible families should expect to receive their P-EBT benefits soon.

- For families on SNAP, P-EBT benefits will be issued on their normal SNAP EBT card.
- Families not already receiving SNAP will get a special P-EBT Food Card in the mail for each child that can be used to purchase food at local grocers.
- Eligible families include those approved for National School Lunch Program free or reduced-price meals, including all children in *Community Eligibility Provision* (CEP) schools or school districts.

**Somerville Cares Relief Fund:** Last week, Somerville Mayor Curtatone and United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley announced the launch of the Somerville Cares Fund to support the essential needs of Somerville community members most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more about this fund and how you might be able to support members of the Somerville community by donating to the fund at <https://www.somervillema.gov/news/somerville-cares-covid-19-relief-fund> and by watching this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDY7z7cQoY&feature=youtu.be>.

**Census Reminder:** The 2020 U.S. Census count is under way! If you have not yet done so, we urge you to be sure you are counted in this important effort. The census determines the amount of federal funding Somerville will receive to support a wide range of services for families including roads, schools, hospitals, food access, and more. The COVID-19 health crisis has highlighted just how critical these services are in our community. Completing the census online is quick and easy, at [www.my2020census.gov](http://www.my2020census.gov). It's a safe, secure, and confidential process. Please make sure you are counted; it's a quick and easy way to support your family and your community.

**April Vacation Virtual Camps and Activities:** Visit <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/2020-april-break-virtual-camps-and-activities> for a list of interactive virtual activities available to families this week.

**Just for Fun:** [GrubStreet's Young Adult Writers Program](#) has several free virtual creative writing classes for high school students on Saturday this spring. For more fun, interactive activities, visit [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/JustforFun](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/JustforFun).

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## LIST OF RESOURCES, CONTINUING PROGRAMS AND IMPORTANT LINKS

### Curriculum Resources and Tech Support Available Online

- High quality grade-level home learning resources from multiple sources: [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/home-learning](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/home-learning)
- 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)

### Continuing Programs and Resources

- **Breakfast and Lunch Grab-and-Go Meals** 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.
- **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 to families with babies or young children will continue on **Wednesdays 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/>

### Other Important Links & Information

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

Respectfully,

Mary Skipper, Superintendent