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Dear Somerville Public Schools Families,

Information Regarding Remote Learning during School Closures

As we enter the second phase of the extended school closure, we look forward to providing students with remote learning experiences in a more structured and consistent way. As you know, Governor Baker closed all Massachusetts schools through at least May 4, 2020 in an effort to help contain the spread of COVID-19. Following the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's guidance, we have developed a comprehensive Remote Learning Plan (www.somerville.k12.ma.us/RemoteLearning) that will guide our work for the remainder of the closure period.

The remote learning will be aimed primarily at reinforcing and strengthening concepts that students were taught prior to the unexpected school closure. Students are expected to participate in these opportunities to the extent possible, and will be graded on their work. Our goal is to provide students with a variety of remote learning opportunities that will keep them engaged in their learning and connected with their teachers and classmates.

These remote learning experiences may involve one or more of the following: mailing or emailing assignments to be completed; online, pre-recorded, or virtual lessons; and/or video conferencing and telephone calls. Teachers will connect with their students regarding their specific remote learning plans. Please reach out to your child's teacher or school principal if you are concerned about your child not being able to access or participate in any of these opportunities.

Because we expect at least some of the remote learning to be conducted by virtual, telephonic, or other means, the Somerville Public Schools reminds the school community about the importance of protecting the participants' privacy and of maintaining a safe, respectful environment conducive to learning. Thus, the school district expects all participants (including but not limited to students, teachers, parents, guardians, and other staff) to adhere to the following expectations in virtual, telephonic, online or electronic sessions (collectively referred to as "remote sessions," regardless of technology used):

- Participants will not share the links to the remote sessions with others, or otherwise invite or allow others to participate in the remote services, without the school district's express consent.
- Participants agree to participate in remote sessions in a quiet, private area free of distraction, to the extent practicable, to provide an environment conducive to learning and to protect the students' and other participants' privacy.
- To the extent virtual technologies are used, participants acknowledge other participants in the remote sessions will see whatever is visible by the participants' webcam or other device, including but not limited to themselves, their children, and portions of their homes. Likewise, participants acknowledge that they will see whatever is broadcasted by other participants. Accordingly, participants are encouraged to participate in remote sessions in appropriate locations and to safeguard information they would not wish to be shared.
- Participants understand that certain information that may be protected under, among other laws, FERPA, the IDEA, HIPPA, and the Massachusetts Student Records regulations, might be disclosed in the course of remote sessions. Participants agree not to share any confidential student record

information for any other students with third parties or others not participating in the specific remote session.

- Participants agree to behave in a manner conducive to learning, to the extent possible. Pertinent district policies and rules, including but not limited to those prohibiting cyberbullying and any acceptable use policies, apply during remote sessions. Students and family members shall refrain from sharing inappropriate visuals or using inappropriate language during remote sessions. The school district reserves the right to remove from any remote session any participant who violates these rules or is not acting appropriately. The school district also reserves the right to suspend students from remote sessions and to impose additional consequences when school resumes, if a student commits disciplinary offenses during or in connection with the remote sessions.
- In addition, recording the remote sessions, however provided (*e.g.*, by video conference, pre-recorded lesson, phone call), without consent, may be prohibited by state and federal law, including the Massachusetts wiretapping law and FERPA. Participants agree not to record in any way (*e.g.*, video or audio recording, screenshots, or photographs) the remote sessions unless otherwise agreed to in advance and in writing by all applicable parties. This prohibition applies to remote sessions provided individually and in a group setting.

Your participation, or that of your child, in any remote sessions arranged by the Somerville Public Schools means you agree to the terms set forth in this letter and will not hold the Somerville Public Schools liable for release of any student or personal information. In addition, the Somerville Public Schools understands that you have consented to your child using the technology used to access remote sessions.

If your child is eligible for special education or English language learner services, you will receive additional information from your child's service provider(s) regarding your child's access to the remote learning opportunities and special education services during the school closures. You may also receive information regarding electronic communication and remote Team meetings, as appropriate.

We look forward to helping your child stay engaged in their learning, and continue to grow and develop during this challenging time. Thank you for your partnership in this important work.

Sincerely,

Mary E. Skipper, Superintendent