

# The Public Schools of Dover and Sherborn

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*Commitment to Community  
Equity and Excellence  
Respect and Dignity  
Climate of Care*

March 22, 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians and Caregivers,

Since we made the decision to close all schools in Dover-Sherborn beginning on March 13th, the student services department has been working to identify questions that need to be answered, determine how to maintain connections with students and families and develop resources that will help guide us through this time of disruption. We have been focused on the impact that this disruption to education and services will have for students with disabilities. Our goal will be to help build manageable routines and expectations for learning and structure as families need help.

Your academic teams have been working collaboratively to determine effective ways to remotely support your student while they receive academic enrichment opportunities during the school closure. Many decisions have been made as a result of guidance and conversations with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Below are the main points that I wanted to share as they pertain to students with disabilities:

- Meetings Cancelled - All IEP and 504 Meetings are canceled between March 13<sup>th</sup> until April 3<sup>rd</sup>. We will begin to reschedule these meetings once school reopens on April 6<sup>th</sup>. If your student's IEP or 504 Plan expires during the closure period, the last accepted IEP or 504 Plan will be in place until we reconvene the IEP team.
- Timelines and Testing Paused - All timelines, evaluations and testing will be paused until the school closure has ended. The timeline for any document that is received during the school closure will begin the day we return to school. .
- IEP Grid Services Will Not Be Delivered - During the closure, all staff will be working to provide a variety of supports for students. These may be through connecting over email or telephone, sending videos, or suggested activities to complete at home. You will be hearing from the special education liaison in the coming week as they plan for the appropriate mode of support.
- Transition Back To School - When schools are reopened, we anticipate that there will be students that may need additional support due to the impact that this disruption will cause. We will be working with Special Teams to determine this need once we return to school.
- Out of District Placements -As Special Education Placements were not included in the Executive Order of closure from Governor Baker, students that attend Out of District Day or Residential Programs will continue to attend school if the placement remains open. Transportation will continue to be provided to these students as long as transportation companies remain open. If your child attends an Out of District placement and you have any questions, please contact Audrey Moran, Out of District Coordinator, at [morana@doversherborn.org](mailto:morana@doversherborn.org) or Keri Campbell, Administrative Assistant, at [campbellk@doversherborn.org](mailto:campbellk@doversherborn.org).

- 504 Plans - Students receiving accommodations through 504 Plans may require additional support through their teacher or school counselor. General Education teachers are developing their enrichment opportunities with the consideration of their students requiring accommodations. If students generally require a high level of accommodations through their 504 Plans, their school counselor will make attempts to check in on these students.

The individual needs of students will shift the kinds of things that they would benefit from during the closure. I wanted to share the common roles and responsibilities of each student services member during the closure:

**Special Education Teachers/Special Education Liaisons** will provide guidance on modifications or accommodations necessary to support the suggested learning activities that have been developed for your students' classes. This can be done directly to teachers after reviewing the curriculum that will be expected of students. They will connect with students on their caseload in order to support their learning. These check-ins may need to happen as infrequently as twice a week or more frequently. The state is recommending "being in touch" with students or families.

**Specialists, Psychologists and Counselors** will provide suggested learning activities or resources for students on your caseload. When thinking about the goal areas that they are already supporting, they will try to identify things that your students could be working on during the closure.

**Educational Assistants** will collaborate with teachers, special education liaisons and related service providers to assist in supporting students and families. They will be thinking about ways that the enrichment opportunities may need to be supported or modified.

**Nurses and Guidance Counselors** will be available to students, families and colleagues as necessary. They will provide check-in on those for whom may be at moderate/high risk under these circumstances

Your continued support and respect for all student services staff is tremendously appreciated. This is a stressful time for students, families and staff. I am confident that our collaboration and student centered approach will help students during this chaotic time. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or concerns that arise.

Best wishes,

Katherine McCarthy

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