March 27, 2020

Dear Colleagues and Families,

We hope you are well. Below you will find several updates on our programming during this COVID19 school closure.

**Food Services:**
We will continue our food services distribution from 10:30 – 12:30 on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. On Mondays, children will pick up 4 meals (2 breakfasts and 2 lunches) to last them through Tuesday. On Wednesdays, they will pick up 4 meals (2 breakfasts and 2 lunches) to last them through Thursday. On Fridays, they will pick up 6 meals (3 breakfasts and 3 lunches) to last through Sunday.

You may have heard that we closed the West Revere (SBA and Whelan) food location. This was to allow for a deep sanitization of the building as an employee there tested positive for COVID19. The employee has not been in the building at all this past week and was not symptomatic the last time they were there. Still, we wanted to make sure there is no chance any virus was present to ensure the safety of our staff and those coming to pick up meals. We are re-considering our food service site plans with the City knowing this situation will get worse. We are considering ways to further reduce the number of employees needing to come daily by limiting the number of food sites. With that in mind, we may leave this site closed after it is cleaned so it will be available and secure should other sites need to close.

**Curricula:**
The Revere Public Schools are committed to ensuring that all students, including students with special needs, have access to remote learning opportunities throughout the school closure. All teachers and related service providers will post resources on the RPS COVID-19 External Learning Opportunities website http://www.reverek12.org/Content2/21338 Please do not hesitate to reach out to your child’s teacher, assistant principal or principal if you need assistance accessing materials.

Commissioner Riley and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released new guidance to schools yesterday. Highlights of this guidance include:

- Students should be working each day on school assignments for a learning period that is roughly half of the number of hours they would have been in school (roughly 3 hours)
- School work might include everything from online video chats, connections between school staff, students, and parents via email, phone, or video chat, assignments that do not require technology to be completed (reading for a certain amount of time, writing essays, exploring the natural environment near home, etc.) All of these activities would be part of the learning period.
- Plans should include assignments that include physical activity and/or art and music instruction.
- Schools should develop a plan for allowing “credit or no credit” to students for the work they complete
- Schools need to ensure plans include accommodation and services for students with Individual Educational Plans, English Learners, and Social and Emotional wellbeing

With this guidance in mind, we are working with teachers and administrators to develop a set of plans by grade band which we hope will help make expectations clear to students, staff, and caregivers. We will be seeking input from the School Committee, high school students, and parents before we finalize these plans. Please watch for information on this early next week. The information will be accompanied with instructions on how you can provide feedback.

We know that families and staff have different levels of expertise in the use of technology. Our goal is to build a system that meets the needs of all and can be customized, to some degree, for individuals. If at any time you feel the curriculum website or assignments are not working for your child, please reach out to your child’s teacher, service provider, or principal so we can work together to solve the problems. We also request that you support your child’s teachers and counselors as they navigate this entirely different instructional process. They are all working very hard to keep your children engaged and progressing.

**Additional Services**

Teachers and therapists will be providing ongoing support and resources for families to access these materials. If you need additional support or assistance accessing these materials please contact your child’s classroom teacher, English learner teachers, special education liaison, or related service provider (OT, PT, Speech or Counseling). Based on what is reasonably appropriate, Revere Public Schools will be providing additional learning opportunities and/or related services to students with special needs and English learners during the school closure. Although we understand that the frequency and duration of student services may not be able to match the IEP service delivery exactly, what is reasonably appropriate will be determined on a case by case basis. Special education teachers, English learner teachers, and therapists will be in touch with families to determine which services and supports are able to be delivered remotely. If you have any questions regarding services for your child, please contact your child’s school, the English learner office through the Parent Information Center at (781-485-8453) or the special education office (781-286-8240).

**Contacting Schools:**

If you have questions or concerns we encourage you to contact your child’s school. Email is being checked by all staff members regularly. This, and other electronic forms of communication (like Dojo at the elementary level), are the best ways to communicate with staff. Staff working from home can still answer phones and direct your calls as needed; but may not be able to do so in real time. If you reach the school’s answering machine, please leave a message to ensure we can respond to your questions or concerns as quickly as possible. For help in Spanish, Arabic, or Portuguese, call 781-485-8453 and leave a message. A translator will call you back.

**Returning to School:**

The Governor’s announcement yesterday indicated that we will be returning to school no earlier than Monday, May 4th. In anticipation of that possibly being extended, we are structuring our plans with the assumption that we may not return to school this spring. We hope very much that this is not the case and we can welcome everyone back in early May. But we feel it is best to plan for the long term and then be able to transition back to our regular school routines as soon as that becomes possible.

This is a new experience and a time of intense emotional turmoil for all of us. We won’t reinvent public education perfectly in the coming weeks. In fact, nothing will ever take the place of students and teachers working together in one space. But we will learn a great deal together and, perhaps, improve our “normal” instructional routines. We still have a lot to sort out like graduation and the curricular pieces described above. With all of us (staff, parents, and students) working together, I am confident that we will create a program that serves student needs – and that is our primary concern. As always, we thank you for your help and support. We appreciate your patience and feedback as we navigate these unpredictable and unsettling times. Please do not hesitate to reach out.