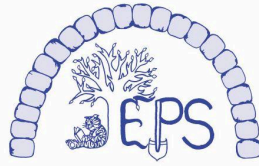


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Dr. Lisha Cabral  
**Superintendent**

Christine Pruitt  
**Assistant Superintendent**

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**EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Marilyn Gordon  
**Director of Business**

David Twombly  
**Director of Operations**

Theresa Skinner  
**Director of Special Services**

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March 19, 2020

Dear Families:

I hope you, your children and extended family are all well during this extraordinary time. It is important that as a community we support one another throughout a very challenging period. As the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak magnifies, we are working to balance the need for physical distancing while also maintaining social connections. This situation is presenting challenges, but also some opportunities to work together in alternative ways. We are working to adjust our typical ways of communicating and supporting you and your children.

Teachers and related services staff have been asked to be available during work days, check email daily, and respond to any messages. In addition, all teachers and staff are expected to check in with their students at least weekly. Staff have been working to compile several resources for families and many staff members have connected directly with students and parents. A number of extended learning opportunities will be posted on the district website as of Monday March 23, 2020. We are encouraging our staff to use email and video conferencing tools such as Google Hangout, Zoom, or other apps to connect with students and families.

I also want to update you on current guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) specific to Special Education. Please note that this is a rapidly changing situation and guidance may change.

At this point in time, districts are being encouraged to provide extended learning opportunities for students. Special Education services are not currently being provided and compensatory hours will not accrue during this closure. Please see guidance below:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/news/news.aspx?id=25959>

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/covid19.html>

With respect to IEP meetings, we are strongly being urged by DESE to continue holding our IEP meetings remotely. As of now, our mandated timelines to hold meetings have not been adjusted. If you have an upcoming IEP meeting, the Team Chairs and Coordinators will be reaching out to you with one of the following options:

- A video conference meeting (Google Hangout)
- A phone conference meeting
- Reschedule a face to face meeting (which will be challenging if the closure is extended)

Starting next week (3/23/20-3/27/20), we will be running IEP meetings remotely. If you have any issue/concern that impacts your attendance at a particular meeting, please contact the Special Education Coordinator or Team Chairperson to find an alternative date/time.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is still working through a number of situations that are yet to be clarified. The district will continue to hold any IEP meetings that we can (annual reviews, some reevaluations) remotely. If there are evaluations that have not yet been completed, those evaluations will need to be postponed. We will work to hold the annual meetings, even if evaluations are not completed, prior to the expiration of the IEP. At this time, no new initial evaluations will take place.

We are maintaining contact with our out of district programs. At this time, all day placements that are attended by Easton students have closed. Residential programs have remained open with the option for parents to take their children home. Out of an abundance of caution, there are increasing restrictions in many residential placements that will limit visitation and movement of people in and out of programs. Out of district programs have been in direct contact with families to provide updates.

Please see the Easton Public Schools website for more detailed information on a number of topics related to COVID-19.

<http://www.easton.k12.ma.us/>

In addition, the Town of Easton has a number of updates as well. Please see their website:

<https://www.easton.ma.us/newslist.php>

Your support and collaboration during this time is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions specific to your child's IEP, please contact your child's teacher, the Team Chairperson or Special Education Coordinator via email. Building administration and Central Office staff are also available via email.

Please stay safe and follow all precautions throughout this time.

Best regards,

Theresa Skinner  
Director of Special Services  
Easton Public Schools