



## *FOXBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS*

60 South Street  
Foxborough, Massachusetts 02035  
(508) 543-1655  
Fax (508) 543-4793

Amy A. Berdos, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

April 21, 2020

Dear Foxborough Families,

Today, Governor Baker and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education announced that Massachusetts schools would remain closed through the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. This extended closure is in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and is a step in limiting its potential spread.

The news of this extended closure is one that we all certainly understand and support for the safety of our students and staff, but at the same time brings disappointment. We are disappointed that we will not be able to be face-to-face in classrooms with our students because we miss all of them!

Remote learning will continue through the remainder of the school year, with the last day of school being Wednesday, June 17, 2020. Through the last three weeks of remote learning, we have learned a lot and have continued to adjust learning plans. We will continue to make adjustments moving forward. Later this week, Commissioner Riley from the Department of Education will be releasing additional guidance and recommendations for school districts regarding remote learning plans. This guidance, along with the feedback we continue to collect through surveys and from teachers, students, and parents will further inform our plans moving forward.

Since we suspended the use of Zoom with students, we have been working on a solution for elementary students to video conference with their teachers. The Microsoft Office365 and Teams for Education Video and Audio conferencing platform is being expanded to our elementary students. Implementing this platform for our elementary students will provide the opportunity for live video and audio check-in meetings between teachers and students, which we know is critical for keeping connections with our school community. Microsoft Office365 and Teams for Education is currently used by our middle and high school students and was not previously available at the elementary school level due to elementary students not having email addresses. After significant work these last two weeks, we have the ability to launch Office 365 and Teams at the elementary level. Professional development is being provided to elementary teachers this week. More information for students and parents will be sent out at the end of this week. With Office365 and Teams for Education, students and teachers can communicate and collaborate in a safe learning environment. Additionally, we have been working with WebEx to provide additional video conferencing opportunities for our teachers and students. Please know that providing options for face-to-face connections with our teachers and service providers is critically important to all of us.

We understand that many questions remain with this extended closure to the end of the year. First of all, the question of graduation is at the top of the list. Our hearts go out to our seniors, particularly in

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light of the implications the extended closure has on activities, traditions, and award ceremonies that go along with the senior year. Senior year is the culmination of many years of hard work and the activities that go along with this milestone year is so important for students and families. Graduation, along with other significant events that take place at other grade levels, are being discussed. We will share more information in the coming weeks.

With the Governor's announcement today, we now have needed clarity regarding the remainder of our school year and can move forward with planning. At the same time, we understand that there will continue to be questions that arise. For example, students may ask about collecting their things from school buildings or lockers. Further information will be forthcoming regarding questions like these and others as we continue to get more information each day.

We continue to wish all of our students and families safety and security during this challenging time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy A. Berdos".

Amy A. Berdos, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools