

Southern Berkshire Regional School District  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING #1,581 - **AMENDED**

**Date:** Thursday, April 30, 2020  
**Time:** 5:30 p.m.  
**Location:** via Zoom - Join Zoom Meeting by computer, Smartphone, or Tablet  
<https://zoom.us/j/97301649376>  
**Call in by phone: 1-929-205-6099**  
**When prompted enter the Meeting ID: 973 0164 9376**

**A g e n d a**

All interested members of the public are invited to attend.

*[The listing of matters is those reasonably anticipated by the Chairman which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.]*

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Standing Reports**
  - a. Approval of School Committee Minutes of meeting #1579 and Special School Committee Meeting #1580 (open session)
  - b. Miscellaneous Correspondence
3. **Student Representative Report**
4. **Student Spotlight**
5. **Public Comment**
6. **New Business**
  - a. Massachusetts Association of School Superintendent Award – B. Regulbuto
  - b. Vote to Participate in the Massachusetts School Choice Program for the 2020-21 School Year
  - c. SBRSD Remote Learning Plan
7. **Unfinished Business**
8. **Business with District Member Towns**
  - a. Update on Regional School District Planning Board
9. **Subcommittee Reports**
  - a. Finance Subcommittee – D. Sears
  - b. Policy Subcommittee – D. Sears
  - c. Building, Grounds & Technology – A. Batacchi
  - d. Curriculum Subcommittee – D. Travis
  - e. Executive Evaluation Subcommittee – D. Travis
  - f. Community Outreach and Input Subcommittee – B. Silvers
  - g. Negotiation Subcommittee – B. Silvers

10. **Chairman's Report**
11. **Superintendent's Report**
12. **Curriculum & Professional Development Coordinator's Report**
13. **Director of Student Services Report**
14. **Business Manager's Report**
  - a. Approval of Warrants: April 3, 2020 and April 17, 2020
  - c. Vote to Accept Grants and Gifts
  - d. Budget Transfers
15. **Future Agenda Items**
  - a. College & Career Planning Initiatives for FY21 and Beyond
  - b. Report of College Submissions

16. **Executive Session**

Pursuant to Purpose 1 of the Open Meeting Law (M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(1)), to consider Open Meeting Law complaints against public officers, namely the members of the School Committee, such complaints having been filed with the District by Jennifer Brown on October 18, 2019; October 24, 2019; and November 5, 2019; and pursuant to Purpose 3 (M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3)) to discuss strategy with respect to litigation, namely an appeal of the Attorney General's Open Meeting Law determination, OML 2020-50, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares; and pursuant to Purpose 7 (M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(7)) to comply with or act under the authority of a Massachusetts General Law by receiving legal advice from counsel protected from disclosure under Massachusetts General Law with the relevant citations of law being M.G.L. c.4, §7(26); M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(1); and M.G.L. c.214, §1B., as an open session will have a detrimental effect on the Committee's litigating position and the committee will reconvene in open session.  
 Roll Call Vote Required.

17. **Further discussion of OML determination if necessary**
18. **Adjourn**

Next School Committee Meetings:  
 May 21, 2020      June 18, 2020

*The SBRSD shall post all School Committee and Subcommittee meetings on its website (<http://www.sbrsd.org/school-committee.html>) in compliance with Open Meeting Law and pursuant to the regulations of the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office 940 CMR 29.03(4). Please visit the SBRSD's website for all meeting information. All approved meeting minutes of the SBRSD school committee are posted on the district's website on the school committee page.*

*Southern Berkshire Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness.*

Southern Berkshire Regional School District  
Per Governor Baker's order suspending certain  
provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. C. 30A sec. 20,  
the meeting was held via an online Zoom  
conference under meeting ID 196 682 608  
Thursday, April 2, 2020  
Meeting #1579

School Committee Members: Art Batacchi, Jane Burke, Dennis Sears, Bonnie Silvers, Jon Bruno, David Travis, Marcella Bush, Danile Kelly, Maryellen Brown, Jeffrey Blaugrund

Administration: Beth Regulbuto, Sandi Hubbard, Amy Lyn, Jesse Carpenter, Judy Houle

Others: George McGurn

1. **Call to Order**

Jane Burke, Chair, called meeting #1579 to order at 6:05 p.m.

Motion to amend the agenda to add the Negotiation Subcommittee report under item 9.  
By: Bonnie Silvers  
Second: Danile Kelly  
Vote: Unanimous

2. **Standing Reports**

a. Approval of School Committee Minutes of meeting #1578

Motion to approve the minutes of school committee meeting #1578 of March 12, 2020

By: Bonnie Silvers  
Second: Jon Bruno  
Discussion: None  
Vote: Unanimous

b. Enrollment

Beth Regulbuto, Superintendent, reported that as of April 1, 2020 enrollment at SBRSD was 683 up by one from last month.

c. Miscellaneous Correspondence - None

3. **Student Representative Report** - None

4. **Student Spotlight** - None

5. **Public Comment** - None

6. **New Business**

a. Update on SBRSD Remote Learning Plan

Beth Regulbuto informed everyone that the Remote Learning Plan had been sent to the school committee, the school community and was also posted on the SBRSD website. The staff will prepare two weeks work and these packets will be distributed to families by the bus company. Packets will also be available for pick-up on Monday between 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. Questions and discussion followed.

- b. **Update on School Committee Self-Evaluation**  
Jane Burke, Chair, reported that following the meeting of February 24<sup>th</sup>, the school committee self-evaluation was completed by nine members. This self-evaluation survey will help with creating operating protocols and address areas of communication and community engagement. Ms. Burke asked the committee what their thoughts were on setting this aside for now with everything going on regarding COVID-19. Consensus was to table this to a later date.

Motion to table review of the School Committee Self-Evaluation till a later date.

By: Dennis Sears

Second: Jeffrey Blaugrund

Vote: Unanimous

- c. **Update on School Committee Handbook**  
Jane Burke informed the committee that she had a short meeting with Bonnie Silvers regarding the creation of the school committee handbook. She asked that those who were interested in helping with the creation of this document contact her.

7. **Unfinished Business** – None

8. **Business with District Member Towns** - None

9. **Subcommittee Reports**

- a. **Finance Subcommittee** – D. Sears

They have not met. Dennis Sears did state that he is involved in FEMA Grant activity to try to get the district some relief of equipment and supplies purchased during this time.

Judy Houle also mentioned that the State has applied for a waiver on USDA student meal reimbursement, so we may be able to be reimbursed for the meals we are providing.

- b. **Policy Subcommittee** – D. Sears – No Report

- c. **Building, Grounds & Technology** – A. Batacchi – No Report

- d. **Curriculum Subcommittee** – D. Travis has asked Dr. Amy Lyn if they could meet remotely to discuss curriculum.

- e. **Executive Evaluation Subcommittee** – D. Travis recommended to the school committee that the Superintendent mid cycle review be eliminated for this year.

Motion to eliminate the Superintendent’s Mid-Cycle Evaluation for this year.

By: David Travis

Second: Bonnie Silvers

Vote: Unanimous

- f. **Community Outreach and Input Subcommittee** – B. Silvers reported that the subcommittee had met to develop a FY21 Budget document similar to last year. This document will explain why we need support of the budget. They will also send a letter to legislature requesting they look at our district differently with regards to transportation and Chapter 70 funding.

- g. **Negotiation Subcommittee** – Bonnie Silvers informed the committee that they had met with the Unit A SBREA representatives to create a MOU on remote learning. The negotiation committee had tentatively agreed to approve the MOU.

10. **Chairman’s Report**

11. **Superintendent’s Report**

- Regional Roundtable had met. It was a productive meeting. They will be meeting again on April 15<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m.
- FY21 budget may have to be 1/12<sup>th</sup> because annual town meetings may be postponed.

- Request that the finance subcommittee meet as soon as convenient to discuss the transportation contract which will need to be renewed.
  - Thanked the Administrative Team for all their hard work.
12. **Curriculum & Professional Development Coordinator's Report**  
Dr. Lyn reported that she has been working on collecting resources and creating professional development opportunities. She will be sending out information to staff shortly.
13. **Director of Student Services Report**  
Sandra Hubbard also thanked all the hard work by the administrative team. Her staff are in contact with parents as needed.
14. **Business Manager's Report**
- a. Approval of Warrants: March 20, 2020  
Motion to approve the warrant report as presented.  
By: Dennis Sears  
Second: Bonnie Silvers  
Discussion: None  
Vote: Unanimous
  - c. Vote to Accept Grants and Gifts – None
  - d. Budget Transfers  
Motion to approve the Budget Transfers as presented (\$53,132.52)  
By: Bonnie Silvers  
Second: Dennis Sears  
Discussion: None  
Vote: Unanimous
15. **Future Agenda Items**
- a. College & Career Planning Initiatives for FY21 and Beyond
  - b. Report of College Submissions
16. **Executive Session at 7:08 p.m.**  
Motion to enter executive session to discuss strategy with regard to collective bargaining (SBREA Unit A Memorandum of Agreement regarding remote learning) and to reconvene in open session.  
By: Dennis Sears  
Second: Bonnie Silvers  
Roll Call Vote: Art Batacchi - Yes, Jane Burke - Yes, Dennis Sears - Yes, Bonnie Silvers - Yes, Jon Bruno - Yes, David Travis - Yes, Marcella Bush - Yes, Danile Kelly - Yes, Maryellen Brown – Yes, Jeffrey Blaugrund - Yes

The school committee reconvened in open session at 8:15 p.m.

Motion to approve and ratify the MOU between SBRSD and the SBREA Unit A regarding remote learning as amended.

By: Bonnie Silvers  
Second: Dennis Sears  
Vote: Unanimous

17. **Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

By: Bonnie Silvers

Second: Jeffrey Blaugrund

Vote: Unanimous

Documents presented at this meeting

- Agenda #1579
- Minutes of meeting #1578
- Enrollment as of April 1, 2020
- Warrant Report
- Budget Transfers

Southern Berkshire Regional School District  
 Per Governor Baker's order suspending certain  
 provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. C. 30A sec. 20,  
 the meeting was held via an online Zoom  
 conference under meeting ID 263 583 422  
 Monday, April 13, 2020  
 Meeting #1580 (Open Session)

School Committee Members: Art Batacchi, Jane Burke, Bonnie Silvers, Jon Bruno, Marcella Bush, Maryellen Brown, Jeffrey Blaugrund

Absent: David Travis, Danile Kelly, Dennis Sears (Mr. Sears joined the meeting at 5:30 p.m.)

Administration: Beth Regulbuto, Amy Lyn, Jesse Carpenter, Judy Houle

Others: Lynette Gagnon

1. **Call to Order**

Jane Burke, Chair, called special school committee meeting #1580 to order at 5:03 p.m.

2. **Public Comment** - None

3. **New Business**

a. Discussion of April Vacation with possible actions

Superintendent Regulbuto informed the school committee that she had spoken with the teachers association regarding working through April vacation (April 21 – 24) and shortening the school year by 4 days. The last day of school will now be June 15<sup>th</sup>. Ninety nine of 100 staff voted to work through April vacation so as not to lose the momentum gained from remote learning.

Motion to approve the continuation of remote learning during April vacation.

By: Bonnie Silvers

Second: Marcella Bush

Discussion ensued.

Lynette asked Ms. Silvers if she would accept the following motion:

Motion to approve the continuation of remote learning from Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup> to Friday, April 24<sup>th</sup> and to change the last day of school from Friday June 19<sup>th</sup> to Monday June 15<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Silvers had a question regarding the last day of school and asked the Superintendent if this was an acceptable date. The Superintendent approved the last day of school as June 15<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Silvers agreed to amend the motion to:

Motion to approve the continuation of remote learning from Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup> to Friday, April 24<sup>th</sup> and to change the last day of school from Friday June 19<sup>th</sup> to Monday June 15<sup>th</sup>.

Marcella Bush seconds the motion.

Vote: Unanimous

4. **Executive Session**

Motion at 5:12 p.m. to enter executive session to discuss strategy with regard to collective bargaining (SBREA Units D & E Memorandum of Agreement regarding school closing) and to reconvene in open session.

By: Bonnie Silvers

Second: Art Batacchi

Roll Call Vote: Art Batacchi - Yes, Jane Burke - Yes, Bonnie Silvers - Yes, Jon Bruno - Yes, Marcella Bush - Yes, Maryellen Brown – Yes, Jeffrey Blaugrund - Yes

Mr. Batacchi recused himself due to a conflict of interest.

Mr. Sears joined the meeting.

The school committee reconvened in open session at 5:32 p.m.

Maryellen Brown, Art Batacchi and David Travis were not in attendance.

Motion to approve and ratify the MOU between SBRSD and the SBREA Units D & E regarding remote learning during the school closure.

By: Bonnie Silvers

Second: Jeffrey Blaugrund

Vote: Unanimous

5. **Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:38 p.m.

By: Jeffrey Blaugrund

Second: Bonnie Silvers

Vote: Unanimous

Documents presented at the meeting:

- Agenda # 1580
- MOUs Unit D and Unit E



6a.



# SOUTHERN BERKSHIRE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

April 27, 2020

**Beth Regulbuto**  
*Superintendent*

Ms. Sofia Giumarro  
249 Konkapot Road  
Southfield, MA 01259

**Jane Burke**  
*School Committee Chair*

Dear Sofia:

**Jonathan Bruno**  
*School Committee Vice Chair*

It is my great pleasure to share that I have selected you to be Southern Berkshire Regional School District's 2019-2020 recipient of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents Certificate of Academic Excellence Award.


**School Committee Members**

- Arthur J. Batacchi, Jr.
- Jeffrey Blaugrund
- Jonathan Bruno
- Maryellen Brown
- Jane Burke
- Marcella Bush
- Danile Kelly
- E. Bonnie Silvers
- David Travis

This award was designed by the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents to honor a high school senior who has distinguished herself in the pursuit of excellence during her high school career. You have met the additional selection criteria which includes your three (3) year cumulative average, and your class rank, in addition to the personal selection by the Superintendent of Schools.

Not only do you demonstrate an illustrious track record of academic achievements, but you also possess the qualities of an active learner such as independent and reflective thinking, initiative and creativity. You are dedicated and always present in the District and exhibit an exceptional maturity as a responsible citizen with positive values, quiet commitment, vision, and collaborative skills. You do all of this while maintaining academic excellence at the highest level.

Sophia, you are a wonderful role model, and because of your incredible work ethic and outstanding character, I know you will enjoy a bright future in whatever you choose to do. Congratulations on this award and on all of your many accomplishments.

Sincerely,  
  
Beth Regulbuto, M.Ed., SFO  
Superintendent of Schools

6b.

PROJECTED ENROLLMENT BY SCHOOL/CLASS FOR 2020-21

Grade	Undermountain		Undermountain		School Choice	SC Applications	School Choice
	Enrollment 4/1/20		Projected Enrol 20-21		Openings FY21	Received FY21	Opening Left
Pre-K*	24		?		*		
Early K	17		17		4		
K	29		?		9		
1	30		29		11		
2	28		30		10		
3	35		28		12		
4	41		35		5		
5	43		45		11		
<b>Total</b>	<b>247</b>		<b>184</b>		<b>62</b>		

Grade	South Egremont		South Egremont		School Choice	SC Applications	School Choice
	Enrollment 4/1/20		Projected Enrol 20-21		Openings FY21	Received FY21	Opening Left
EK	0		?		4		
K	9		?		9		
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>				<b>13</b>		

Grade	New Marlborough		New Marlborough		School Choice	SC Applications	School Choice
	Enrollment 4/1/20		Projected Enrol 20-21		Openings FY21	Received FY21	Opening Left
Pre-K*	9		?		*		
Early K	5		?		3		
K	10		?		3		
1	15		10		5		
2	5		15		4		
3	19		5		6		
4	11		19		5		
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>		<b>49</b>		<b>26</b>		

There is no school choice for PK unless requested. Waiver of tuition must be granted by SC.

Grade	Mount Everett		Mount Everett		School Choice	SC Applications	School Choice
	Enrollment 4/1/20		Projected Enrol 20-21		Openings FY21	Received FY21	Opening Left
6	40		43		10		
7	55		40		10		
8	42		55		10		
9	55		42		10		
10	53		55		7		
11	52		53		8		
12	58		52		10		
<b>Total</b>	<b>355</b>		<b>340</b>		<b>65</b>		



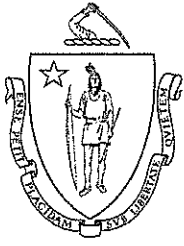
**FY20 WARRANTS REPORT**

April 30, 2020

Payroll Warrants	Date	Voucher #	Total Amount:	General Fund		Other Funds	NOTES
				Amount:	Amount:		
	3/12/2010		\$ 375,982.55	\$ 328,701.29	\$ -	\$ 47,281.26	
	3/26/2020		\$ 371,341.09	\$ 324,721.81	\$ -	\$ 46,619.28	
	4/9/2020		\$ 370,571.55	\$ 318,059.75	\$ -	\$ 52,511.80	
	4/23/2020		\$ 368,337.56	\$ 327,652.50	\$ -	\$ 40,685.06	
			<u>\$ 1,486,232.75</u>	<u>\$ 1,299,135.35</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 187,097.40</u>	
Accounts Payable Warrants							
	4/1/2020	1601	\$ 297,126.30	\$ 277,850.64	\$ -	\$ 19,275.66	BENEFITS
	4/3/2020	1602	\$ 147,101.52	\$ 138,146.61	\$ -	\$ 8,954.91	ROUTINE PAYABLES, CAPITAL PROJECTS, FEDERAL GRANTS, EAGLE FUND
	4/17/2020	1603	\$ 98,895.95	\$ 81,163.10	\$ -	\$ 17,732.85	ROUTINE PAYABLES, SCHOOL LUNCH, CHILD CARE, FEDERAL GRANT
			<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	
			<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	
			<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	
			<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	
			<u>\$ 543,123.77</u>	<u>\$ 497,160.35</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 45,963.42</u>	
Total of all warrants:			<u>\$ 2,029,356.52</u>	<u>\$ 1,796,295.70</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 233,060.82</u>	

Submitted by The Management Solution, Inc.





THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
 OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
 ONE ASHBURTON PLACE  
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02108

MAURA HEALEY  
 ATTORNEY GENERAL

(617) 727-2200  
 (617) 727-4765 TTY  
[www.mass.gov/ago](http://www.mass.gov/ago)

April 28, 2020

OML 2020 – 50

**VIA EMAIL ONLY**

Peter Sumners, Esq.  
 Murphy, Lamere & Murphy, P.C.  
[psumners@mlmlawfirm.com](mailto:psumners@mlmlawfirm.com)

**RE: Open Meeting Law Complaint**

Dear Attorney Sumners:

This office received three complaints from Jennifer Brown on January 7, 2020, alleging that the Southern Berkshire Regional School Committee (the “Committee”) and Committee Chair Jane Burke violated the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §§ 18-25. The complaints were originally filed with the Committee on or about October 18, October 24, and November 5, 2019.<sup>1</sup> The Chair responded on behalf of the Committee by letters dated October 24, November 5, and November 14. The complaints allege that 1) the Committee improperly deliberated via email on October 7; 2) the Committee improperly deliberated outside of a noticed meeting on October 23 when a quorum of the Committee discussed the Complainant’s first Open Meeting Law complaint after the October 23 meeting had been adjourned; and 3) the Committee improperly met in executive session on October 24 to discuss with counsel<sup>2</sup> how to respond to the Complainant’s first Open Meeting Law complaint.

Following our review, we find that the Committee violated the Open Meeting Law by deliberating via email on October 7 and by improperly discussing the public release of the October 7 email in executive session on October 23. We find that the Committee did not violate the Law by convening in executive session to discuss an Open Meeting Law complaint. In reaching this determination, we reviewed the original Open Meeting Law complaints, the Committee’s responses, meeting minutes for the Committee’s October 23 executive session, meeting minutes for the Committee’s October 24 open session, notices for the Committee’s October 23 and 24 meetings, and the Facebook page of Save SBRSD. We also communicated with the Complainant and with counsel for the Committee by phone and email.

<sup>1</sup> Hereinafter, all dates are in 2019, unless otherwise stated.

<sup>2</sup> For the sake of clarity, we refer to you in the third person.

## FACTS

We find the facts as follows. The Committee is a ten-member public body; thus, six members constitute a quorum. On October 7, the Chair sent an email to the entire Committee regarding a media inquiry she received related to a lawsuit filed against the Southern Berkshire Regional School District (the “District”), two District officials, and the Committee. In the October 7 email, the Chair forwarded the media inquiry as well as a response prepared by counsel; stated her thoughts about, among other things, how the Committee should respond to any future inquiries and the need to support the two District officials named in the lawsuit; informed the Committee members that she would keep them apprised of any new developments; and invited Committee members to email or call her. On October 9, Maryellen Brown, a member of the Committee and the mother of the Complainant, forwarded the Chair’s October 7 email to the Complainant. On October 12 the content of the October 7 email was posted to the Facebook page of a group called Save SBRSD. On October 18, the Complainant filed the first Open Meeting Law complaint alleging that the Committee improperly deliberated via email on October 7. The Complainant filed the complaint with the clerk of the School Committee on October 18, and then on October 23 personally served the Chair with a copy of the complaint.

On October 18, the Committee posted notice for two meetings, one to be held on October 23 and one to be held on October 24.<sup>3</sup> The notice for the October 23 meeting included the following two executive session topics:

### **Executive Session**

Pursuant to Pursuant to [sic] M.G.L. c. 30A, s. 21(a) (3) to discuss strategy with respect to litigation as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public body, as declared by the chair.

Roll Call Vote.

### **Executive Session**

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, s. 21(a) (1) to discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual.

Roll Call Vote.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> We note that, although the Committee’s meeting notices include the date on which they were originally posted, they do not include the time they were posted, as is required by the Attorney General’s Open Meeting Law regulations. See 940 CMR 29.03(1)(d).

<sup>4</sup> Although not raised in the complaint, we note that both executive session topics are insufficiently detailed on the meeting notice. Executive session topics must be described, both in the meeting notice and in the announcement made by the chair during open session, in as much detail as possible without compromising the purpose for which the executive session was called. See G.L. c. 30A, § 21(b)(3); OML 2020-47 (noting that, in general, when discussing litigation strategy under Purpose 3, the litigation matter must be identified in both the meeting notice and in the chair’s statement before entering executive session); OML 2013-82 (noting that when discussing a complaint under Purpose 1, the name of the complainant should be included on the meeting notice).

The October 23 meeting was held as scheduled.<sup>5</sup> The minutes of the October 23 executive session have not been released to the public; therefore, we only summarize their content here. During the executive session the Committee discussed litigation strategy with respect to the lawsuit that was the subject of the October 7 email, DeGrenier v. Southern Berkshire Regional School District et al., and a complaint unrelated to the matters at issue in this determination. At the conclusion of its discussions related to the two executive session topics included on its meeting notice, the Committee discussed the unrelated topics of how the October 7 email could have been obtained by a member of the public and posted to a Facebook group called Save SBRSD; that the October 7 email had led to an Open Meeting Law complaint; and the need to keep Committee communications, including emails, confidential. At 6:37 p.m., at the conclusion of this discussion, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

On October 22, at 11:15 a.m., the Committee amended the meeting notice for its October 24 meeting to include two executive session topics, one of which pertained to the Complainant's October 18 complaint.<sup>6</sup> That executive session topic read as follows:

#### **Executive Session**

Pursuant to Purpose 1 of the Open Meeting Law (M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(1)), to consider an Open Meeting Law complaint against a public officer, namely the members of the School Committee, such complaint having been filed with the District by Jennifer Brown on October 18, 2019; and pursuant to Purpose 7 (M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(7)) to comply with or act under the authority of a Massachusetts General Law by receiving legal advice from counsel protected from disclosure under Massachusetts General Law with the relevant citations of law being M.G.L. c.4, §7(26); M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(1); and M.G.L. c.214, §1B. and to reconvene in open session to vote on response to OML complaint.  
Roll Call Vote.

On October 24, the Committee entered into executive session, citing to Purposes 1 and 7, to discuss the October 18 complaint. Following the executive session, the Committee reconvened in open session and voted to “approve advice from counsel regarding the response to the” October 18 complaint. The Chair then read the October 7 email and the Committee’s response to the October 18 complaint aloud.

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<sup>5</sup> It is unclear from the October 23 executive session minutes whether the Committee first convened the meeting in open session and whether the Committee took the necessary procedural steps in open session prior to entering into executive session. We remind the Committee of its obligations in this regard. See G.L. c. 30A, § 21(b).

<sup>6</sup> We note that the Committee’s second executive session topic, under Purpose 2, was insufficiently detailed. Unless disclosure will defeat the purpose for meeting in executive session under Purpose 2, public bodies should identify both in the meeting notice and in the statement by the chair prior to entering executive session the specific nonunion personnel or collective bargaining unit with whom they will be negotiating. See OML 2020-43.

## DISCUSSION

### 1. The Committee Improperly Deliberated Via Email on October 7.

The Open Meeting Law was enacted “to eliminate much of the secrecy surrounding the deliberations and decisions on which public policy is based.” Ghiglione v. School Committee of Southbridge, 376 Mass. 70, 72 (1978). Accordingly, the law requires that all meetings of a public body be properly noticed and open to members of the public, unless an executive session is convened. See G.L. c. 30A, §§ 20(a)-(b), 21. In relevant part, a meeting is defined as “a deliberation by a public body with respect to any matter within the body’s jurisdiction[.]” G.L. c. 30A, § 18. The law defines deliberation as “an oral or written communication through any medium, including electronic mail, between or among a quorum of a public body on any public business within its jurisdiction[.]” Id. The expression of an opinion by one public body member on matters within the body’s jurisdiction to a quorum of a public body is considered a deliberation, even if no other public body member responds. See OML 2016-104; OML 2015-33; OML 2012-73.<sup>7</sup> Here, we find that the Chair engaged in impermissible deliberation outside of an open meeting when she sent an email to the entire Committee regarding the lawsuit filed against the Committee and others, a matter clearly within the Committee’s jurisdiction.

The Committee asserts that by reading the October 7 email aloud at its October 24 meeting it has cured the Open Meeting Law violation. However, the email also should have been listed in the October 24 meeting minutes as a document used at the meeting. See G.L. c. 30A, § 22(a). Therefore, we order the Committee, within 60 days of receipt of this determination, to revise the October 24 meeting minutes to include the October 7 email as a document used at the meeting.

### 2. The Committee’s Discussion on October 23 Related to the October 7 Email Should Not Have Been Held in Executive Session.

The Open Meeting Law requires that all meetings of a public body be conducted in an open session, with some exceptions. See G.L. c. 30A, §§ 20(a), 21(a). Public bodies may enter a closed, executive session for any of ten enumerated purposes, provided that the chair of the public body first announces in open session the purpose, or purposes, for the executive session, “stating all subjects that may be revealed without compromising the purpose for which the executive session was called,” and whether the public body will reconvene in open session. G.L. c. 30A, §§ 21(a), 21(b)(3)-(4); see also District Attorney for the N. Dist. v. Sch. Comm. of Wayland, 455 Mass. 561, 567 (2009) (“[a] precise statement of the reason for convening in executive session is necessary . . . because that is the only notification given the public that a [public body] would conduct business in private, and the only way the public would know if the reason for doing so was proper or improper.”). The exceptions to the general rule that meetings of a public body shall be open are narrowly construed. See McCrea v. Flaherty, 71 Mass. App. Ct. 637, 641 (2008); OML 2014-42.

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<sup>7</sup> Open Meeting Law determinations may be found at the Attorney General’s website, [www.mass.gov/ago/openmeeting](http://www.mass.gov/ago/openmeeting).

The October 24 complaint alleges that immediately following the Committee's October 23 meeting, a quorum of the Committee deliberated regarding the Complainant's October 18 complaint. After review of the October 23 executive session minutes, and discussion with the Complainant, we do not find that the Committee deliberated outside of a meeting on October 23. However, we do find that the discussion the Committee engaged in at the end of its October 23 executive session related to the October 7 email was inappropriate for executive session.

The discussion regarding how the October 7 email came to be posted to Facebook and the need to keep Committee communications confidential did not fall within any of the ten enumerated executive session purposes. See G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a). Although a discussion of an Open Meeting Law complaint filed with the public body is a permissible topic for executive session, we find that the discussion of how the October 7 email was leaked and the need to keep communications confidential was separate from a discussion of the Open Meeting Law complaint, which was on the agenda for, and was discussed at, the Committee's meeting for the following day. Additionally, even if the Committee's discussion had more directly related to the October 18 Open Meeting Law complaint, the discussion would still have been improper as this topic was not included on the notice for the Committee's October 23 meeting, but instead was included on the notice for the Committee's October 24 meeting. We remind the Committee that, even if an executive session is lawfully convened, each topic to be discussed must be individually listed on the meeting notice as well as in the announcement in open session prior to entering executive session, and the Committee's discussions must be restricted to those topics. See OML 2015-54; OML 2013-195; OML 2019-170. Because the Committee's discussion related to the October 7 email and the need to keep Committee communications confidential did not fall within a permissible statutory purpose for executive session, we order the Committee to release to the public the portion of its October 23 meeting minutes that reflect this discussion. See G.L. c. 30A, § 22(f) ("The minutes of any executive session . . . may be withheld from disclosure to the public in their entirety . . . as long as publication may defeat the lawful purposes of the executive session, but no longer; provided, however, that the executive session was held in compliance with section 21."); OML 2014-42; OML 2019-170.

3. The Committee Did Not Violate the Open Meeting Law When It Convened in Executive Session Under Purpose 1 to Discuss an Open Meeting Law Complaint.

Executive session Purpose 1 allows a public body to discuss "the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual." G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(1). We have consistently stated that an Open Meeting Law complaint is by its nature a complaint brought against a public officer, namely, the members of the public body. See OML 2019-163; OML 2019-31; OML 2012-119. Therefore, the Committee did not violate the Law when it convened in executive session under Purpose 1 to discuss the Complainant's Open Meeting Law complaint filed against the Committee and the Chair.

Although we find that the Committee did not violate the Law by convening in executive session under Purpose 1 to discuss the Complainant's Open Meeting Law complaint, we note that the citation to Purpose 7 as an additional basis for convening in executive session was



improper. Purpose 7 allows a public body to convene in executive session “[t]o comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements.” G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7). Here, the notice for the Committee’s October 24 meeting stated that it would convene in executive session “to comply with or act under the authority of a Massachusetts General Law by receiving legal advice from counsel protected from disclosure under Massachusetts General Law with the relevant citations of law being M.G.L. c.4, §7(26); M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(1); and M.G.L. c.214, §1B.” The protection of the attorney-client privilege is not a valid reason for holding a discussion in executive session unless the discussion otherwise falls within one of the ten enumerated executive session purposes. The Supreme Judicial Court has unequivocally held that the Open Meeting Law constitutes “a statutory public waiver of any possible privilege of the public client in meetings of governmental bodies except in the narrow circumstances stated in the statute.” Dist. Atty. for Plymouth Dist. v. Bd. of Selectmen of Middleborough, 395 Mass. 629, 634 (1985). Accord Revere Retirement Bd. v. Attorney General, 93 Mass. App. Ct. 1117 (2018) (Rule 1:28 Decision) (Further Appellate Review denied Sep. 13, 2018). We also find that neither the public records law, G.L. c. 4, § 7(26), nor the statutory right of privacy, G.L. c. 214, § 1B, to which the Committee cited in claiming a Purpose 7 executive session, justified the executive session discussion. However, because the Committee’s discussion of the Open Meeting Law complaint that was filed against it, and its discussion with counsel regarding its response to the complaint, properly fell within executive session Purpose 1, we find no violation of the Open Meeting Law as to the October 24 executive session.

#### CONCLUSION

For the reasons stated above, we find the Committee violated the Open Meeting Law by deliberating via email on October 7 and by improperly holding a discussion in executive session on October 23. We find that the Committee did not violate the Law by convening in executive session to discuss an Open Meeting Law complaint. We order immediate and future compliance with the Open Meeting Law, and caution that similar violations in the future may be considered evidence of intent to violate the Law. 940 CMR 29.02. We also order the Committee, within 60 days of receipt of this determination, to amend the minutes of the October 24 meeting to specifically list the October 7 email as a document used at the meeting. Additionally, we order the Committee to release to the public the portion of its October 23 meeting minutes that reflect the discussion improperly held in executive session. Finally, although not raised in the complaints, we note several concerns with the manner in which the Committee conducted its executive sessions, and we recommend that the Committee review our training video on executive sessions and our checklist for entering into executive session.<sup>8</sup>

We now consider the complaints addressed by this determination to be resolved. This determination does not address any other complaints which may be pending with our office or the Committee. Please feel free to contact our office at (617) 963-2540 if you have any questions.

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<sup>8</sup> The video and checklist can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/open-meeting-law-educational-materials>.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Carnes Flynn  
Assistant Attorney General  
Division of Open Government

cc: Southern Berkshire Regional School Committee c/o Lynette Gagnon (via e-mail:  
lgagnon@sbrsd.org)  
Jennifer Brown (via e-mail: jeniismummy@gmail.com)

**This determination was issued pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, § 23(c). A public body or any member of a body aggrieved by a final order of the Attorney General may obtain judicial review through an action filed in Superior Court pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, § 23(d). The complaint must be filed in Superior Court within twenty-one days of receipt of a final order.**

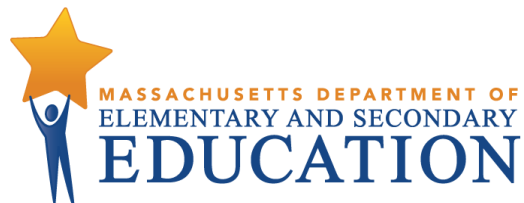


# Strengthening Our Remote Learning Experience

Guidance for Massachusetts districts and schools

**Jeffrey C. Riley**  
Commissioner

April 2020



## Introduction from Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley

Superintendents, Executive Directors, Principals, Educators, and Staff:

It is hard to overstate the societal and educational challenges that confront us as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Let me begin with wishes that you and your loved ones are safe and healthy in these unprecedented times.

When schools closed on March 17, 2020 by executive order, we said that our first priority throughout this crisis would always be the health and wellness of our students and staff.

That first week – what I call “Phase I” – we prioritized student and staff safety, nutrition, and other foundational needs. We helped districts set up over 1,300 meal distribution centers; began work to expand technology and internet access; secured a partnership with WGBH to provide academic programming for all students, particularly those without access to technology; and encouraged districts to continue to pay their hourly staff.

On March 26, in parallel with the Governor’s announcement that school closures were extended until at least May 4, we began “Phase II” with the release of initial guidance on remote learning. That initial guidance was built in close collaboration with stakeholders to provide a strong and aligned coalition for the challenging work that lay ahead. We established guiding principles and broad outlines of our state’s remote learning strategy and addressed the most pressing questions facing districts and schools.

We are gratified that this collaborative effort has been recognized by other state education agencies, some of which have adopted our language, and by independent entities like the [MIT Teaching Systems Lab](#), which gave Massachusetts the second highest score of any state for the strength of our guidance. We recognize, however, that this crisis demands that we continuously improve our guidance in support of our educational community.

We know that the shift to remote learning is challenging. I am impressed and grateful at how quickly districts, schools, educators, and support staff rose to the challenge and launched updated remote learning plans. While much work remains, students are connecting with educators and learning remotely, families are supporting this work, and all of us are adjusting to a new and evolving reality.

Superintendents and principals have had the challenge of responding to those who say there is not enough remote learning and others who say the volume of lessons and assignments is overwhelming. Educators, many of whom are also navigating personal challenges caring for their own children and other loved ones, are doing their best to move learning forward while supporting students’ social emotional needs, often well into the evening hours. And parents and caregivers are navigating the instructional experience with teachers and students, all while balancing their own work and personal responsibilities. As this crisis continues, we must all pull together to reduce the pressure on each of us in our respective roles.

Here at the state level, we have been working to provide relief to schools. We sought and were approved for waivers from the federal government which allow districts to more easily feed our children. We sought and were approved for waivers that allow districts greater flexibility in carrying over dollars to spend next year. We asked for and were granted permission by the Governor to extend license

renewals for 90 days until after the state of emergency ends. And we applied for and received a waiver from the federal government and worked with the state legislature, enabling us to cancel MCAS testing for grades 3-10 this spring.

With these initial weeks and decisions behind us and with the Governor's extension of school closures through the end of the school year, we are publishing a second round of remote learning recommendations to help districts and schools begin "Phase III."

In Phase III, I am looking for districts and schools to continue to enhance and refine their remote learning plans. I know districts and schools are already moving down this path based on their own experiences in these initial weeks, and the hope is that this guidance can both affirm work already underway and provide some additional ideas and strategies.

**This document builds on the [initial guidance released on March 26](#) (*download*), with a deeper focus on two areas:**

- **Further defining the recommended elements of a quality remote learning program, including a focus on teaching the content standards most critical for student success in the next grade level.**
- **Encouraging districts to move all students towards successful engagement in remote learning, with a focus on addressing fundamental needs.**

The first bullet may be the key ingredient in our new guidance. While we are not expecting teachers to cover all grade level standards this year, we are now asking you to go further than before. We think a focus on the prerequisite standards most critical to student success in the next school year will best support our students' learning.

In short order, districts and schools should also expect to see separate guidance around critical operational matters related to closing out the school year remotely.

All of this will help us prepare for our final phase of this work – "Phase IV" – when students and staff will re-enter school. In that phase, we will also need to support students with unfinished learning and prioritize additional supports to help catch them up.

Finally, I want to stress the importance of completing the 2020 Census. With fiscal headwinds likely ahead, we as a community must remind families and our communities how critical being counted is to the future funding of our schools.

As always, thank you for your extraordinary efforts on behalf of our Commonwealth's children and families.

Jeffrey C. Riley  
Commissioner

## Beyond the guidance: How DESE will continue to support remote learning in the Commonwealth

**The release of this updated guidance is just one of many steps we are taking at DESE to enhance remote learning across the Commonwealth.** In the coming weeks, you will see us take the following steps in collaboration with stakeholders:

- **Continuing to listen and learn from stakeholders' experience with remote learning:** We will conduct surveys and interviews with educators, principals, superintendents, families, and students to better understand the day-to-day successes and challenges. We will identify best practices and new supports DESE can provide based on the ongoing experiences of our stakeholders.
- **Continuing to address students' and families' technology needs:** We are collecting data and convening stakeholders to identify the most efficient and effective plan to make necessary technology available to our students and families across the Commonwealth, including devices, internet connectivity, and technical support and training with technology for students and families. We will share additional information in the coming weeks.
- **Best practice sharing and professional development for educators:** We will be organizing opportunities for educators to network and share expertise and resources around remote learning, including engaging projects and tasks that could be provided to students in both online and offline formats. We will also make opt-in, statewide professional development opportunities on online learning available for educators and administrators.
- **Creating an updated guidance document for families:** We will create a more family-friendly version of this guidance.
- **Planning for school re-entry:** As we listen to public health experts, we must confront the possibility that re-entry into school might require social distancing and hygiene measures to ensure the safety of students and staff. We will work with health experts, the education community, and stakeholders to begin preparing for re-entry possibilities and will share more information in the coming weeks.
- **Building out remote learning resources:** We update the DESE homepage (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/>) on a rolling basis with additional resources and links to useful information. We recognize that the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are fast moving, and we will need to continue to issue guidance on various facets of remote learning in the coming weeks and months.

## Overview of guidance

As we prepare to continue remote learning through the end of the school year, this document:

- **Further defines the recommended elements of a quality remote learning program, including a focus on teaching the content standards most critical for student success in the next grade level.**
- **Encourages districts to move all students towards successful engagement in remote learning, with a focus on addressing fundamental needs.**

This is not a comprehensive guide to designing and implementing a remote learning model. Districts and schools in Massachusetts have already established structured remote learning models based on their local needs and guidance that DESE released on March 26, 2020. Instead, the hope is that this guidance can both affirm work already underway and provide some additional ideas and strategies. **We recommend that districts and schools take time to process this guidance and work to enhance their remote programs by early May.**

We deliberately called this document “Strengthening **our** remote learning experience.” While we focus primarily on students’ remote learning experience, we know that the student experience is tightly connected to the educator and family experience, as remote learning has been a paradigm shift for the entire educational community. Therefore, this document also provides recommendations intended to support teachers, staff, and families.

## Building from initial guidance issued in March

### Review of guiding principles

In our March 26, 2020 guidance, we committed to a set of guiding principles focused on the holistic needs of our educational community, with an emphasis on supporting our most vulnerable learners. **These principles must continue to guide our work:**

- **The safety and well-being of students, families, and staff has been and must continue to be our top priority as an educational community.** We are focused not only on physical health, safety, and nutrition, but also on social-emotional and mental health needs, which could intensify during this time.
- **This crisis disproportionately affects our most vulnerable students in terms of their physical and mental health and also academically. Equity needs to be a top consideration in local planning efforts, especially as districts and schools make plans to manage an extended closure.** To support these efforts, DESE has issued further guidance on how best to support special populations, including [students with disabilities](#) and [English learners](#).
- **Maintaining connections between school staff, students, and families is paramount, particularly for the most vulnerable members of our school communities.** These connections will help guide districts and schools in addressing students’ specific needs.

## Features of remote learning

**What is remote learning?** Remote learning takes place when a student and teacher are separated by time and/or physical distance. It is important to note that remote learning in a pandemic is different from remote learning in a non-emergency environment.

In our initial guidance, we noted the following definition and scope of remote learning:

- **Remote learning can encompass a wide variety of learning opportunities.** While technology can be a supportive tool, districts and schools should also consider ways that student learning can continue offline. This could include exploring the natural world, activities to support students' local communities (with appropriate social distancing), and engaging hands-on projects and artistic creations that stem from students' own passions and experiences.
- **Examples of remote learning tools include large group video or audio conference calls, 1:1 phone or video calls, email, work packets, projects, reading lists, online learning platforms, and other resources to effectively engage with students.** These tools could be used to deliver lessons, provide individual student support, provide resources (including instructional material and student assignments), connect students to each other and the teacher, and provide feedback on student work. Districts and schools should ensure all online learning platforms meet confidentiality and student privacy standards.

In our initial guidance, we recommended that students should engage in meaningful and productive learning for approximately **half the length of a regular school day** through a combination of educator-directed learning and student self-directed learning. At the same time, we affirmed that the individual student experience would vary based on factors including student age, individual and family needs, and critical wellness and readiness factors like student and family health, technology, and internet access.

We further specified the following essential components of a remote learning model: the importance of **connections** with educators, access to **academic content** with an emphasis on applying and deepening previously taught skills, and time each day for **exercise** and **enrichment** activities.

## Grading and promotion

Finally, in our initial guidance, we recommended that **academic content be graded as "credit/no credit"** so as to incentivize continuous learning while acknowledging the challenging situation we face. Specific high school guidance on grading and graduation will be forthcoming.

With the extension of remote learning through the end of the school year, **we want to expand on this recommendation to encourage districts and schools to promote students to the next grade level**, an action supported by research.



## Goals and actions for remote learning's next phase

Our initial guidance, particularly the guiding principles, provides clear direction to keep equity at the forefront of our efforts to improve remote learning and to maintain focus on our most vulnerable students. We must continue to work towards an effective and equitable learning experience for all. With this in mind, **we recommend districts and schools focus on the following goal through the end of the school year:**

**Move all students toward consistent engagement in remote learning, with a focus on connectedness and on the content standards most critical for success in the next grade.**

**To do this, we recommend that districts and schools take the following steps:**

**Strengthen the remote learning program for all students.** We recommend that districts and schools focus on the following elements to ensure a strong baseline remote learning program. Please note, the only area where we are materially modifying our initial recommendations is the focus on covering the prerequisite content standards (#2 below):

1. **Prioritize meaningful connections with educators and peers.**
2. **Provide engaging core instruction focused on the prerequisite content standards that are most critical for student success in the next grade.**
3. **Offer opportunities for enrichment, exercise, and play.**
4. **Ensure programming is accessible and secure and communication is streamlined for students and their families.**

**Develop a system for identifying and supporting students not effectively engaged in remote learning.** We recommend that districts and schools:

1. **Collect information to understand each student's level of engagement in remote learning.**
2. **Provide supports to further engage all students, with a focus on meeting foundational student needs.**

**We also encourage districts and schools to:**

**Consider the strategic collaboration, teaming, and differentiated roles that remote learning makes possible.** Rethinking traditional responsibilities and eliminating duplicative work can ease the pressures on educators and make the best use of their unique skills.

The rest of this guide provides concrete recommendations, best practices, and resources to strengthen the remote learning experience and accomplish the work outlined on the previous page of this document. It is organized into two parts:

- **Part 1: Strengthening the remote learning program for all students**
- **Part 2: Developing a system for identifying and supporting students not effectively engaging in remote learning**

Throughout these pages, we will also provide several “working together” tips, quick ideas for making this work manageable for school teams.

## Part 1: Strengthening the remote learning program for all students

In this section, we provide further guidance on elements of a quality remote learning model.

### Strong remote learning programming should\*:

1. **Prioritize meaningful connections with educators and peers**
2. **Provide engaging core instruction focused on the content standards most critical for student success in the next grade**
3. **Offer opportunities for enrichment, exercise, and play**
4. **Ensure programming is accessible and communication is streamlined for students and families**

\*We acknowledge that foundational student wellness and readiness is a critical prerequisite for students to engage in remote learning. This is discussed at length later in this document.

### 1. Prioritize meaningful connections with educators and peers

It is [well-documented](#) that meaningful relationships can insulate children from the effects of trauma and serve as a buffer against toxic stress. **Particularly for students who value their relationships with educators and peers at school, maintaining regular connections that provide an opportunity for supportive two-way interaction is critical.**

A quality remote learning program will ensure that opportunities for connection are woven throughout core instruction and enrichment opportunities. Separate group or individual check-ins focused on students' social-emotional health and well-being are also highly encouraged for all students.

Examples of strategies that facilitate these connections include:

- **Starting blocks of synchronous (“live”) lessons with “morning meeting” or “opening circle” activities** designed to build connection.
- **Synchronous weekly advisory group meetings** led by an advisory teacher or student leader.
- **Regular teacher “office hours”** when students can drop in via computer or phone to get help with assignments and/or check in with their teacher.
- **Individual calls to students from educators and staff** to check on students' well-being or to review feedback on student work.
- **Opt-in, interest-based peer groups**, such as a book club, drawing workshop, sing-along group, etc. led by educators, paraprofessionals, or students.
- **Counselor-facilitated peer support groups** organized around a common need.

## 2. Provide engaging core instruction focused on the content standards most critical for student success in the next grade

### **NEW: Focus on the prerequisite content standards that are critical for success in the next grade**

In our March 26 guidance, we urged districts and schools to focus on reinforcing previously taught content. We are updating this guidance based on further direction from the U.S. Department of Education and in light of schools remaining closed through the end of the school year.

**While we are not asking teachers to cover all standards this year, we are asking educators to go further than reviewing material previously covered.**

**When planning future remote learning lessons, we recommend districts and schools focus on those standards that are the most critical prerequisites for student success in the next grade.** Since many standards will already have been covered prior to the closures, we anticipate that some time would still be spent on reinforcement.

**We have compiled an elementary and a secondary guide to the prerequisite content standards critical for success in the next grade for math, English language arts, science, and history/social studies. This resource is only to be used during school closure due to COVID-19.** These guides are available as separate attachments that accompany this document and will soon be posted on DESE's website.

### **Emphasize student engagement in core instruction**

In a remote learning context, making core instruction engaging for students is more important than ever. There are multiple methods administrators and educators can use to prioritize engagement when creating or curating remote learning content.

**In Appendix A, we have curated a remote learning resource list for English language arts/literacy, math, science, history/social studies, and digital learning as well as resources for English learners, to make this process as easy as possible for educators.**

There are many ways to maximize student engagement through remote learning, including:

- Curriculum that provides **real-world applications for learning**,
- Gamified, **self-paced learning platforms** that provide frequent feedback,
- **Frequent feedback** on student work, with celebrations of progress,
- **Project-based learning** on an engaging, socially relevant topic, with clear links to standards and supports for students. This could be provided via online platforms or mailed packets.

In addition to the resources listed in Appendix A, we will be working to create a repository of project-based learning examples, including digital and non-digital projects.

One of these methods is not necessarily better than the other; school communities should choose strategies that work for their students and staff.

### [Ensure supports and scaffolds for students with disabilities and English learners](#)

Special education and English as a second language (ESL) teachers should ensure appropriate supports and scaffolds are in place for students with disabilities and English learners.

Please click [here](#) for our guidance on special education.

Please click [here](#) for our guidance on English learners.

**Working together:** Consider co-planning and co-teaching opportunities among content teachers, special education teachers, and ESL teachers.

- **Remote learning opens up new possibilities for regular co-planning and co-teaching given various technological formats**, including larger whole class instructional formats and the ability to create breakout groups assigned to specific teachers.

### [Provide a manageable number of lessons and assignments](#)

Administrators and educators should treat time that students are spending on core instructional work as precious, particularly in elementary grades where student attention spans are shorter. We encourage schools and educators to coordinate across each grade level so that students receive a manageable number of lessons and assignments each day.

As stated in the March 26 guidance, the overall student remote learning day is expected to last roughly half as long as a normal school day. **However, academic time on task should appropriately vary by grade level**, with enrichment opportunities filling in the remaining remote learning time.

**Working together:** Consider encouraging educator collaboration and differentiating responsibilities over components of the learning process.

- For example, in a larger school, **one content area teacher could be responsible for planning curriculum and recording remote lessons. Other content area teachers could take responsibility for following up with students in small groups** and providing feedback on student work. Roles could be assigned based on educators' strengths and interests.
- **District leaders could also connect smaller schools to encourage teachers to share curricular resources and duties** (e.g., teachers rotate responsibility for planning curriculum and recording lessons). Reducing the planning load would allow each teacher to spend more time on personalized engagement with their students.

### 3. Offer opportunities for enrichment, exercise, and play

A quality remote learning model also provides students with access to enrichment, exercise, and play-based activities that support their mental and physical health. We recommend that districts and schools offer students a menu of opportunities for enrichment, exercise, and play. **Schools should include suggestions for activities the student can engage in independently at home, as well as opt-in opportunities to participate in structured activities with a teacher and/or peers.** Engagement in either independent or school-provided opportunities should be acceptable.

Examples of **opt-in**, school-provided enrichment opportunities include:

- **Daily physical education class** (e.g., yoga or calisthenics) provided by a physical education teacher synchronously (“live”) and also posted asynchronously (e.g., recorded)
- **Workshops or lessons** provided by specialist teachers in art (drawing, singing, or musical instruments), sports clinics (footwork, skill development), etc.
- **Interest-based workshop lessons** provided by educators or support staff in their own areas of interest or hobbies (e.g. origami, cartoon drawing, speech/debate, etc.)

### 4. Ensure programming is accessible and secure and communication is streamlined

The degree of accessibility and quality of communication from the school to students and families is critical for a quality remote learning program.

#### [Streamline communication to help students and families organize their remote learning](#)

To support students and families in structuring their remote learning, administrators and educators should consider the following:

- **Plan and communicate remote learning content in weekly doses.** Planning and organizing lessons, assignments, and meetings one week at a time instead of day-by-day will allow students and families to plan time for schoolwork within their own daily routines and needs.
- **Send out one communication with assignments and meeting times before the week begins.** Aim to post all assignments and meetings for the week no later than the Friday before the upcoming school week. Unless appropriate based on context, do not send out meeting invitations the day of the meeting.
- **Provide sample daily schedules** to suggest ways that students can organize their time, including an approach for dividing up their work across the days of the week.
- **Provide a weekly checklist** of all assignments. If the checklist will be submitted, be sure to provide an option for students to either: verify they have completed the assignment; note that they will complete the assignment at a later date; or acknowledge they have not completed the assignment and provide a reason.
- **Clearly differentiate between required and optional assignments and meetings.** Ensure there is an easy way for families and students to quickly zero in on the lessons and assignments that are required.
- **Coordinate efforts between districts and schools to align on communication to families** to ensure families are receiving a manageable number of emails and/or calls.

- **Provide an (opt-in) opportunity for families to meet regularly with the teacher/teaching team** to address any issues a student may be having accessing or completing remote learning lessons, meetings, or assignments.
- **To the extent possible, streamline the platforms, web tools, logins, and passwords** used across a school and district.

**It is also critical that districts and schools ensure all technology tools, products, and resources meet legal requirements for student data privacy and security.** Please see **Appendix B** for more information.

### [Prioritize asynchronous \(e.g., recorded\) lessons for remote learning](#)

We generally recommend that schools and educators deliver instructional lessons intended for all students in an **asynchronous format** (e.g., record a video of the lesson as opposed to asking students to tune in at a specific hour to watch it “live”). Benefits of this approach include:

- Freeing up educator time during the school day to provide synchronous (“live”) support to students who may need extra support.
- Accessibility for all students and families who may have conflicting commitments or responsibilities during the school day.
- Ability for students to watch lessons multiple times as needed while completing assignments.

If synchronous (“live”) lessons are preferred based on local needs or preferences, we recommend:

- Offering the lesson in multiple time slots if possible.
- Separately recording and posting the lesson asynchronously (this must be done separately to ensure no students are recorded).

## **Part 2: Developing a system for identifying and supporting students not effectively engaged in remote learning**

Across our communities, many students are effectively engaging in the core remote learning program. But what about students who aren’t being reached? What about students who only engage intermittently? What about those who need additional mental health or other foundational supports?

We can only move all students toward consistent engagement in the core remote learning program by identifying and addressing the specific barriers students are facing. This requires a system for collecting information about student and family needs, piloting potential supports, and assessing their impact. While such work is time-intensive, we have a moral obligation to do all we can to reach and engage all of our children.

**One option to consider is using a tiered support model, through which districts and schools regularly review student needs to 1) inform the program provided to all students and 2) develop targeted supports where needed, both for specific student groups and individual students.** For more information about using a tiered support model in remote learning, please see **Appendix C**.

Below are some recommendations and examples districts and schools may find useful regardless of the system they choose to adopt.

## 1. Collect information to understand each student’s level of engagement in remote learning

Because of the specific and diverse challenges students are facing, some of this information will likely need to be collected through individual calls with families. Other information could be collected from teachers or monitored through student work.

**Working together:** We recognize that collecting this level of personalized information about student needs takes time and effort. Enlisting a variety of staff can lighten the workload.

- **With appropriate training, schools could assign a variety of staff members (teachers, paraprofessionals, and student support staff, including counselors and others) to a small group of students.** This would allow for frequent outreach and routine points of connection while reducing the student caseload for educators.
- **Think creatively when assigning staff to reach out to families and students.** So long as effective training is provided that emphasizes the supportive nature of outreach, support staff who may have built positive relationships with students could be especially effective in reaching certain families.

**All members of the outreach team should be clear that the purpose of collecting this information is for support,** not compliance. Students should never be shamed or disciplined for lack of engagement. Instead, the purpose of the calls is to understand the needs that are preventing the student from engaging in schoolwork, with the goal of ultimately providing support to meet those needs. In addition, staff should receive training and a sample script to use when contacting families (please see **Appendix D** for an example script). Staff should be available to place calls in a family’s home language if needed.

Below is a sample process for collecting information and providing follow up support.

### Plan and prepare:

- **Collect and review existing information:** Gather existing information from teachers to understand current student engagement and potential student needs (e.g. teacher reports being in contact with a student about a recent assignment or knows that a student lacks internet access). It can be helpful to collect this information in a central and secure location.
- **Identify students/families for targeted outreach:** Identify students who are not engaging regularly and flag the need for additional information to find out why.
- **Assign staff to each student/family:** Split up responsibility for individual student/family contact across the school leadership team, student support team members, guidance counselors, teachers, paraprofessionals and/or other staff.

### Connect and follow up:

- **Connect with students/families to identify barriers to engagement:** Call each student/family to identify barriers preventing students from engaging in core lessons and assignments.
- **Determine next steps** to support each student, potentially in consultation with the student support team and/or administrator. This could include making the baseline remote learning program more accessible to all students based on trends, a follow up call from a school counselor, or connecting the family with other resources.

- **Follow up** with each student and family over the next few days/week. If appropriate, set a goal with the student for increasing engagement in remote learning and celebrate successes, even if small.

## 2. Provide supports to further engage all students, with a focus on meeting foundational student needs

Collecting data is essential; however, the most important thing is how districts and schools respond to this information. With that in mind, districts and schools should consider the questions below when reviewing progress:

- **What are the biggest trends as to why students are not engaging?** (e.g. foundational needs, academic skill gaps, communication challenges, social emotional connection needs, etc.)
- **How might we improve the baseline remote learning programming provided to all students based on these trends?** (What additional supports should be built into the core program?)
- **How can we best address the foundational needs of students who are currently disengaged?**
- **Are there specific student groups** (e.g., gender, age, race/ethnicity, etc.) **who are disproportionately disengaged?**

### Focus on foundational wellness and readiness for all students

We must continue to prioritize the **foundational wellness and readiness for all students to engage in remote learning**. Supports to address individual student needs may include:

- **Direct 1:1 support provided by school staff**, for example:
  - Support from a school counselor for a student experiencing mental health challenges.
  - Hands-on technology support from a teacher or paraprofessional for a student or family member navigating new technologies or programs.
- **Referral to a community agency or district-wide program, for example:**
  - Support to address household challenges such as food insecurity.
  - Help obtaining technology, including devices and internet access.

Districts should provide school staff with resource lists that they can use to connect families to community organizations and other groups that can provide support. Examples of such lists include:

- Greater Boston: [Wellness Idea Bank](#)
- Merrimack Valley: [Lawrence Resource Guide](#)

Some wellness and readiness gaps may present fundamental barriers to student participation in remote learning with no simple solutions. This could include students who need to work to generate family income or students who need to care for younger siblings or a sick family member. School personnel should reach out frequently to check in on students facing these structural challenges and gently support possible entry points to a more robust connection to school.



## Conclusion

We know how hard educators, administrators, students, and families are working to get remote learning right. The recommendations in this document build on our initial guidance with a focus on two areas: enhancing existing remote learning and engaging all students.

We are asking that districts and schools refine their remote learning models by early May to prioritize connectedness, shift to teaching the content standards most critical for student success, build in time for enrichment, and make programming accessible for students and families.

We are also asking districts and schools to focus on engagement, both for students who are currently disengaged and for those who are only partially engaged. We know this means first and foremost a strong focus on meeting foundational student needs.

Through the upcoming actions we note at the beginning of this document, DESE is committed to partnering with districts, schools, educators, families and students as we strengthen remote learning across the Commonwealth. Thank you again for all of your efforts on behalf of our students.

## Appendix A: Resource list for remote teaching and learning during COVID-19

A note about resources:

If schools, districts, and educators are currently using a particular curriculum, they should first see what resources they have set up to support remote learning.

### ELA/Literacy

Grade(s)	Resource name	Description	Link
K-2	Heggerty	Free videos and lesson plans to support development of phonemic awareness in English and Spanish.	<a href="#">Heggerty</a>
K-5	Flyleaf Publishing Decodable Text	A library of digital decodable texts organized by a <a href="#">Phonics Scope and Sequence</a> , ideal for reading practice either independently or with an adult.	<a href="#">Flyleaf</a>
K-8	Wit & Wisdom	Free access to the Wit & Wisdom curricular materials and daily video lessons delivered by Great Minds teachers.	<a href="#">Great Minds</a>
3-12	CommonLit	A free resource of texts, tasks, and tools for grades 3-12.	<a href="#">CommonLit</a>
PreK-5	CKLA	A comprehensive preschool–grade 5 program for teaching skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking, Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) also builds students’ knowledge and vocabulary.	<a href="#">CKLA</a>
K-2	EVERFI’s WORD Force	One of 100+ of EVERFI’s interactive, game-based lessons, WORD Force: A Literacy Adventure for K-2 Students helps students develop budding literacy skills through 15 skill-building literacy games.	<a href="#">EVERFI</a>
K-8	EL Education	Remote learning guidance and necessary implementation resources for conversion of EL Education, the comprehensive, standards-aligned core literacy curriculum centered on real world content.	<a href="#">EL Education</a>

## Math

Grade	Resource name	Description	Link
K-12	Khan Academy	Free diagnostic tools, video tutorials, practice problems, and teacher monitoring dashboard facilitated through gamified platforms. Content is organized by grade level, course title, or specific curriculum programs: Eureka (grades 3-8), Illustrative Mathematics (grades 6-8), AP courses, and SAT prep.	<a href="#">Khan Academy</a>
K-12	Eureka Math (EngageNY) - Great Minds	Free access to the Eureka Math (EngageNY) curricular materials and daily video lessons delivered by Great Minds teachers.	<a href="#">Great Minds</a>
K-8	ST Math	Free access to ST Math, a visual instructional program that teaches concepts visually as students solve mathematical problems. Without language barriers, the problem is accessible to all students, regardless of skill level or language background.	<a href="#">ST Math</a>
K-5	ZEARN Math	Free access to the ZEARN Math curricular materials including digital lessons with on-screen teachers and supportive remediation.	<a href="#">ZEARN Math</a>
6-12	Illustrative Math	Free access to <a href="#">Illustrative Math</a> (IM) 6-8 and 9-12, including student and teacher materials (available with free registration). The materials can also be accessed through three IM certified partners <a href="#">LearnZillion</a> (instructional videos), <a href="#">Kendall Hunt</a> (Google Classroom interface; Spanish-language materials), and <a href="#">McGraw-Hill</a> .	<a href="#">Kendall Hunt</a> <a href="#">LearnZillion</a> <a href="#">McGraw-Hill</a>
6-12	Carnegie Learning	Carnegie Learning provides free access to lesson videos, student practice, and MATHia software for adaptive, student-centered learning.	<a href="#">Carnegie Learning</a>

## Science, Technology, and Engineering

Grade	Resource name	Description	Link
K-12	National Science Teaching Association	Collection of lessons and resources that can be sorted by standard. Each day, they share a sensemaking task teachers and families can use to engage students in authentic, relevant science learning.	<a href="#">NSTA Daily Do</a> and <a href="#">NSTA/NGSS Classroom Resources</a>
1-12	Next Generation Science	Collection of open-source NGSS-aligned units reviewed by Achieve.	<a href="#">Quality Examples of NGSS Units</a>
3-12	Concord Consortium	A library of simulations, models, and lessons. Educators can create a class and assign resources to students.	<a href="#">Concord Consortium</a>
K-5	Mystery Science	An elementary curriculum of NGSS-aligned units and lessons (temporarily free)	<a href="#">Mystery Science</a>

## History/Social Studies

Grade	Resource name	Description	Link
K-5	KidCitizen	Interactive episodes in which children explore civics concepts via primary sources and a KidCitizen Editor tool for teachers to create their own interactive learning experiences	<a href="#">KidCitizen</a>
K-12	C3 Teachers	Inquiry units sortable by topic and grade level created using the Inquiry Design Model from the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework. Each unit is framed around one compelling question and several supporting questions with accompanying primary source activities and tasks.	<a href="#">C3 Inquires</a>
6-12	Facing History	Collection of educator resources covering a range of history topics with a focus on addressing racism, antisemitism, and prejudice. There is a weekly updated page on coronavirus-related resources.	<a href="#">Facing History</a>
6-12	Stanford History Education Group (SHEG)	Reading Like a Historian offers primary source investigations lessons on world and U.S. history. Civic Online Reasoning offers lessons for evaluating online content.	<a href="#">Stanford History Education Group</a>

6-12	iCivics	Engaging civics content for grades k-12 in the form of games, lesson plans, and complete units.	<a href="#">iCivics</a>
K-12	Teaching Tolerance	Learning plans, lessons, student texts based around the social justice domains of identity, diversity, justice, and action on a range of subjects including digital literacy, geography, and history. Resources are searchable by grade band and topic.	<a href="#">Teaching Tolerance</a>

## English Learners

In order to maximize learning opportunities for English learners and ensure equitable access to academic content, educators are encouraged to a) explore various grade-appropriate delivery methods, b) offer daily activities to enhance oral language and literacy as well as comprehension, c) consider culturally relevant text and content to facilitate connection, d) engage parents as collaborative partners and problem solvers in a language that they understand, and e) be cognizant of the amplified social emotional needs of many English learners and their families, particularly newcomers.

Below is a list of the three sites that provide support for English learners. However, educators are encouraged to review the previously published [Guidance on Remote Learning for English Learners](#) for further support.

Grade	Resource Name	Description	Link
2-12	Listenwise	Curated podcasts and lessons on engaging topics, plus comprehension quizzes and a variety of accessibility features and embedded supports for English learners. They have made their premium service free for schools during this crisis. Easily integrated with Google Classroom. <b>(LISTENING)</b>	<a href="#">Listenwise</a>
K-12	NewsELA	Engaging texts across content areas (including current events) and text sets, standards-aligned skills practice and assessments, great embedded English learner supports, and ability to adjust the Lexile level of a text. Teachers can easily adapt assessments and writing tasks for each text and easily integrate with Google Classroom. <b>(READING / WRITING)</b>	<a href="#">NewsELA</a>
K-12	Flipgrid	Allows teachers to post prompts and students to respond orally through voice recording. Teachers and students can have a virtual discussion by responding to one another, and teachers can give students feedback on their recordings. <b>(LISTENING / SPEAKING)</b>	<a href="#">Flipgrid</a>

## Digital Literacy and Computer Science

Grade	Resource name	Description	Link
K-12	<a href="#">Code.org</a>	Provides resources that help students learn about computer science. Offerings include: <a href="#">Computer Science Fundamentals</a> for K–5 and <a href="#">CS Express</a> , <a href="#">CS Discoveries</a> , and <a href="#">CS Principles</a> for middle and high school. Curriculum in over 25 languages.	<a href="#">Code.org</a>
K-12	Common Sense Media: <a href="#">Digital Citizenship</a>	Ready-to-teach lessons to help students take ownership of their digital lives. Curriculum in English and Spanish.	<a href="#">Digital Citizenship</a>

## Appendix B: Information and resources on student data privacy and security

School districts should be sure the technology tools, products, and resources that they use meet legal requirements for student data privacy and security. This section provides a brief overview of key laws in this area. Districts should also refer to their own technology standards and guidelines and consult with their legal counsel for specific advice.

### COPPA

The Federal Trade Commission has provided helpful [guidance](#) for schools and districts relating to the federal Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), 15 U.S.C., §6501 *et seq*; [16 CFR Part 312](#).

**COPPA limits the gathering of personal information from children under the age of 13 on the internet.** The FTC’s guidance includes:

Schools or school districts should decide whether a particular site’s or service’s privacy and information practices are appropriate, rather than delegating that decision to the teacher. Also, the school or district should give parents a notice of the websites and online services whose collection they have consented to on behalf of the parent. In deciding which online technologies to use with students, a school should be careful to understand how an operator will collect, use, and disclose personal information from its students. Among the questions that a school should ask potential operators are:

- What types of personal information will you collect from students?
- How do you use this personal information?
- Do you use or share the information for commercial purposes not related to the provision of the online services requested by the school? For instance, do you use students’ personal information in connection with generating targeted advertising or building user profiles for commercial purposes not related to the provision of the online service? If so, the school cannot consent on behalf of the parent.
- Do you let the school review and, if desired, have the company delete the personal information collected from their students? If not, the school cannot consent on behalf of the parent.
- What measures do you take to protect the security, confidentiality, and integrity of the personal information that you collect?
- What are your data retention and deletion policies for children’s personal information?

Please see <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/blogs/business-blog/2020/04/coppa-guidance-ed-tech-companies-schools-during-coronavirus> for more details.

### FERPA

The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) applies to schools that receive federal education funds. This law **requires schools to protect the privacy of personally identifiable information about students contained in education records and gives parents and students rights, including inspection and review of education records**. The FERPA statute is found at 20 U.S.C., §1232g. The FERPA regulations are found at [34 CFR Part 99](#). The Massachusetts Student Records Regulations, [603 CMR 23.00](#), are consistent with the FERPA statute and regulations. The U.S Department of Education’s Student Privacy Policy Office has posted information on [FERPA and Virtual Learning](#) at <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/?src=fpc>

## PPRA

Districts must ensure that education service providers comply with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U.S.C. §1232h; [34 CFR Part 98](#). **The PPRA protects student privacy by, among other things, restricting the administration of surveys that ask personal questions and restricting the collection of personally identifiable information about students for marketing purposes.** Data collected about students must adhere to the requirements of the PPRA. Information about the PPRA is at: <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/content/ppra>.

## Additional Resources

- [Massachusetts Student Privacy Alliance](#): The Massachusetts Student Privacy Alliance (MSPA) is a collaboration of Massachusetts school districts that share common concerns about student privacy. The alliance offers a searchable database of student data privacy agreement (DPA) information from across the state.
- [TEC Student Data Privacy Alliance](#): **The Education Cooperative (TEC) Student Data Privacy Alliance** has developed a successful collaborative model to provide member schools and districts with administrative and legal support to negotiate privacy terms with software vendors. See: [TEC SDPA Flyer](#). The Education Cooperative is a member of the Massachusetts Student Privacy Alliance and posts their data privacy agreements (DPAs) there. When a district joins, they can sign onto any of TEC's agreements (over 450) with one document. If there isn't a DPA for a vendor, TEC can negotiate one on behalf of the district.
- The Massachusetts Attorney General's Office on April 10, 2020, issued a [memo on video conferencing safety](#). The memo has broad guidelines for any video conferencing platform and specific recommendations about Zoom.

This information is provided as of April 24, 2020.



## Appendix C: Using a tiered support model to increase student engagement in remote learning

### Overview of the tiered support model

Most educators are familiar with the concept of a [tiered support model](#) (also sometimes referred to as a “response to intervention” model). We believe this model is well-suited to the remote learning context and can provide concrete steps that schools and districts can take to strengthen remote learning for all students.

Within a traditional school context, **the goal of a tiered support model is to support all students to access the school’s core instructional program and master grade-level standards.**

The baseline instructional program and supports offered to all students are commonly referred to as “**Tier 1.**” Examples of traditional Tier 1 instruction and programming may include effective whole class and small group classroom instruction, universal free breakfast in the classroom, and classroom or school-wide positive behavior intervention systems. Special education and English learner services and scaffolds are also considered Tier 1 support for these student populations.

Some students may struggle to meet grade level standards within the core Tier 1 program. In this case, small groups of students facing common skill gaps may be offered additional, targeted support. Supports offered to help these small groups successfully meet grade level standards are referred to as “**Tier 2**” support.

If students struggle to meet grade level standards even with Tier 2 supports, or if the presence of an exceptional need necessitates it, a more personalized support plan is created targeted to an individual student’s needs. This is referred to as “**Tier 3**” support.

**Critical to the successful implementation of a tiered support model is collecting information to identify the barriers preventing students from meeting grade level standards.** Once gaps are identified, the school can then organize and deploy Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions to effectively support each student to access Tier 1 content. School teams meet frequently to review data, identify gaps, formulate support plans, deploy plans, and then revisit student performance to determine if the support plan is working or needs to be revised.

**The traditional tiered support model will not look exactly the same in a remote learning context, as students are likely to need very different supports in this context than in the traditional school environment.** However, this framework can support forward-looking enhancements to remote learning and in how to engage as many students as possible.

### Adopting a tiered support model for remote learning

The tiered support model begins with the data collection efforts outlined earlier in this document. Once school staff have gathered information on the needs of students, they should review this information to understand whether barriers are faced by larger or smaller numbers of students in the school community.

Typically, about 85 percent of students should be well-served by Tier 1 instruction and supports (supports available to all students). In the current emergency remote learning context, it is likely that the Tier 1 program is effectively engaging fewer than 85 percent of students, and in that case, it is important for schools and districts to work to address common barriers within the overall remote learning program.

For instance, if only 3-5 percent of students do not have computer access, then a district may employ small group support to provide those students with access to curricular resources. However, if more than 20 percent of students do not have computers, then the school or district should develop a Tier 1 strategy to address the need. For example, district or school-wide systems could be created for mailing packets home or distributing computers.

In addition to strengthening the overall Tier 1 program, districts and schools can set up specific Tier 2 and 3 supports for students based on their individual needs. Below are some examples of Tier 2 and 3 supports districts and schools could consider in a remote learning context:

**To address social emotional needs:**

- Run regular virtual social emotional groups where students can connect with peers and support staff (e.g. a counselor, social worker, paraprofessional, aide, etc.).
- Set up a phone call buddy system where students are matched up to support each other with academics or to connect.
- Have a teacher or staff member communicate with families (or families and students together) who need Tier 2 or 3 support for a quick check in at the beginning of the week to set goals for work completion and engagement. Celebrate student progress toward goals with a call or text at the end of each week.
- Set up an advisory system where each student is assigned to an adult in the school, including ancillary staff beyond core teaching staff to decrease the student-staff ratio.

**To address academic needs:**

- Provide regular feedback on student work, identifying multiple positives and one area for growth. Loop back on that area for growth in the next assignment to note progress and celebrate successes, even if small.
- Schedule synchronous and asynchronous gradual release “workshops” to help students navigate remote learning assignments through an “I do, we do, you do” model
- Teach strategies that help students persevere through a task (e.g., breaking down elements in a task, chunking a complex reading, using color-coded highlighting to navigate important elements in a text or word problem).
- Schedule regular “study halls” for students to complete assignments at the same time while on a group phone call or video conference platform with their teacher.

## Appendix D: Sample script for outreach to families to identify barriers to student engagement

Hi [Family Name],

This is \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ school. I wanted to check in on [child's name] and your family. Do you have a minute to talk? I know things are hectic right now.

[Family responds]

If able to talk now: How is your family holding up? I know you are managing a lot.

[Family responds]

I want to make sure that [child's name] is able to practice the skills he's learned this year, even though we aren't able to have our regular school day. I've noticed that he turned in a few assignments and had some difficulty completing them. Can you tell me a little more about how he's doing right now and if there are other ways we could provide support to help him?

[Family responds; staff member takes notes]

[Staff member repeats back/summarizes what the family shared]

Does that sound right?

[Family responds]

**If possible/needed:** [Staff member makes additional suggestions and family and staff member discuss together]: I wonder if we could try [suggestion]...

[Staff member takes notes]

**If quick solutions are not apparent or require the expertise of another staff member or other resources:** Thanks for sharing with me. I want to share this information with [principal, school support team] so we can find a solution for you. Is that okay?

Thanks for your time. I'm glad we had a chance to connect so we can support [child's name]. I'm going to call you back soon. Is there anything I can do to support you between now and then?

[Family responds]

## SBRSD's Remote Learning Plan Update- FAQ

This document was created in response to the questions posed by various members of the School Committee. We understand you are eager to hear from us about how the implementation of the remote learning plan is progressing. Our responses serve almost like a FAQ document. The team completed the questions both individually and together as a group (appropriately social distanced of course). We tried to answer as many of the questions as we could, and we fully anticipate doing this again in the near future as more information and guidance is received and as the process becomes more and more refined. Often there will be more detailed work done in the Sub-committees and at the Administrative level, so we kept these responses to the School Committee level. We are sending this ahead of the meeting for your review, and the Administrative Team will be doing a PowerPoint presentation with the items we want to highlight at the meeting. Both this document and the PowerPoint will be posted to the website for the public to view after the April 30<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting.

### **Is it possible to establish a common protocol (platform, norms) for meetings district or school-wide (Zoom vs. Alt)?**

Of course, anything is possible, but my short answer is that teachers need flexibility in order to do their best work with students. There are clear norms and expectations that are outlined in the Employee Handbook in the District's Acceptable Use Policy which is also part of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that we have with the Faculty and Staff for this period of Remote Learning. Google Classroom and Zoom do tend to be the most commonly used platforms, but there are many resources available to supplement and support students and instruction at home. Also, to ensure that the issues around equitable accessibility are addressed, all assignments can be done via paper and pencil as well.

### **What are the implications of budget shortfalls on planning for next year?**

We worked really hard to present a budget for FY21 that was both fiscally responsible and supportive of the District's Strategy for Continuous Improvement. The FY21 budget was based on the Governor's budget presented at the end of January. As of now, the advice is to wait for the House Ways and Means budget, and to expect vast changes in the figures from the state. The latest revenue projections are significantly less than anticipated, and many believe the HW&M Committee is waiting for more information before releasing their budget and looking to see if there might be federal aid available to fill the anticipated shortfall. It is likely that the District will be working with a 1/12 budget as it is unlikely that town

meetings will be able to be held prior to July 1 and the start of the next fiscal year. Towns could be facing the same reality. Ultimately, the goal will be to get a local budget passed as soon as we are able to. Some suggestions we are looking into include: Saving as much money as possible for use next year, setting up a Transportation Reserve Account, prepaying allowable expenses such as tuitions in an effort to keep next year's costs down, and thinking about using more E&D if you have it. Other things to keep in mind are that you only get reimbursed for transportation expenses that you pay and those represent expenses for transporting kids to and from school only. Using buses to deliver food or packets of work are classified elsewhere and those expenses are not reimbursable. Much more information is needed, but the Finance Subcommittee should convene to discuss developing a contingency budget based on the HW&M budget and the fiscal stress as a result of the pandemic.

**Do we have any funds for running a more robust summer school program for more students? (remote if necessary).**

Based on my response from above, the current FY21 budget did not have a more robust summer school program built into it. Per the Commissioner, there are two potential sources of funding available to Massachusetts - \$215m in Title I type funding from the federal government for K-12 Districts for which a process would need to be developed to distribute these monies, and \$50.8m in the Governor's Emergency Relief Fund which is available to K-12 and Higher Education. The Commissioner has said repeatedly that he would like to recommend that some of the \$215m be used to fund summer programming – this is the extent of the details on this for now. We anticipate more information in the coming weeks.

**How are support services being delivered for special education students?**

Special Education Liaisons are collaborating with teachers, service providers, and families to write Individual Remote Learning Plans, in an effort to continue to offer access to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The Individual Remote Learning Plans outline how and when individual or small group supports will be offered, through collaboration with other faculty and staff members and families. While Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) cannot be fully implemented as written during the school closure, faculty and staff are working diligently at reaching out to students and families to arrange ways to provide supports to access the curriculum and related services (Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech/Language Therapy, Counseling services, etc.) necessary to fully access their educational programs.

**What are the Director of Student Services' biggest concerns?**

A plan for outreach, based on the DESE guidance document, Strengthening Remote Learning, to families/students who are not accessing remote learning, which includes identifying key staff members to communicate in ways that families can access. Additionally, we are considering all ways our students and staff can safely return to school (once cleared to do so). Our nurses are participating in discussions and will offer their expertise and medical input based on guidance from the Department of Public Health. Planning ideas are already being discussed, but it is too soon to know when our doors will open or what it will look like. However, all are taking their time to carefully consider the information available and nurses will consult with administration to make an informed plan.

**How are we addressing student social-emotional health at this time?**

District mental health professionals, along with other county and state organizations, have provided some valuable insight and resources to meet the social emotional needs and learning (SEL) of our students and families at this very challenging time. Administration is using their thoughtful guidance to make important decisions regarding supports and events to assist in alleviating some of the anxiety and stress related to the current national emergency. In addition, community resources, online activities and references from reputable sources, and strategic practices will be placed on the district website and updated, as warranted. Please see the resource guide attached.

**How are we identifying and addressing needs of students who are traumatized by the pandemic?**

In addition to their caseloads, school counselors and other contracted mental health providers are available to assist families and students by contacting them through their school email addresses or by leaving messages on their office voicemails, which are checked regularly. Regular outreach to students and families, who have accessed counseling services over time, is being conducted by school counselors, as well.

**What kind of interactions is the Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development having with teachers?**

My interactions with teachers and staff have been positive. I continue to be impressed with their willingness to adjust and adapt their teaching. Some of my interactions include:

- Sending out emails to teachers with resources for PD and remote learning, answering questions, and offering my support.
- Reaching out to various individuals with information relevant to their specific roles, for example our Title I Coordinator and FastBridge Coordinators.
- Attending faculty and staff Zoom meetings for the elementary schools (I have plans to be on upcoming Zoom meetings with the MS and HS in the coming week).
- Calling elementary staff by phone for check-ins during the early weeks before we started Zoom, and on a follow up basis as needed.
- Surveying the Faculty and Staff on PD.

### **How are you vetting the online resources?**

I have been inundated with potential resources. I look for three things when I am vetting resources for families:

- Quality – Is this a resource most people would value?
- Accessibility – Is it free? Will most people be able to access this without experiencing frustration?
- Reliability – Will this be available for a reasonable amount of time?

Similarly, I consider the following for professional development resources:

- Quality – Does this offer high quality professional learning in an area that is aligned with our District Improvement Plan? Is this being offered by a DESE approved provider?
- Accessibility – Can teachers access this? What might need to be put into place if we decide we want access to this resource?
- Customization – What do *individuals* want to learn about that I can support them in customizing so the district can issue PDPs? What *partnerships* can we develop to design a series of PD aligned with our DIP moving forward. How do we use this event to motivate changes in our curriculum and approach to teaching and learning?

### **Are you aware of what teachers are choosing and what their biggest challenges have been?**

I have a big picture of what teachers are doing, but we have not required teachers to report the details of their choices to us. I understand there are varying levels of quality, but that is not different than any school at any point in time. What stands out above all is everyone's effort to put forward their best effort.

Some teachers reach out with their challenges, and others either do not feel they need additional assistance or get that assistance elsewhere and do not necessarily come to me personally. I have let teachers know I am available and willing to help anyone who requests that. The biggest concern I have heard from teachers is the desire to ensure all students have opportunities to continue learning and engaging with peers and teachers.

**Is there any Professional Development happening, or are we just staying afloat?**

Teachers and Paras are engaging in PD when they are able to do so. Many individuals have let me know that they are using EdWeb and CES, and a couple have tried Sanford Harmony. A few folks have asked about some individualized PD. I am always willing to work with people to find or design something that meets DESE's standards so the district can issue PDPs. A PD survey went out this week to faculty and staff and will be further discussed with the Curriculum Subcommittee.

**How are we providing staff development for this new form of project-based learning?**

Project-based learning is a powerful practice that requires ample time for curriculum development. It is true that staff development in this area is important to effective implementation. Under the current circumstances, it is not possible to address this in any kind of systematic way. There are some teachers who have experience with PBL, but the reality is we will need to build this capacity over time. I have been talking with Maria Rundle and the hope is we will move forward with an opportunity for professional learning and curriculum writing with Flying Cloud as early as this summer.

**Any interesting/surprising implications for next year's curricula?**

I am eager to form a committee to engage in this work of curriculum, instruction, and professional development. It is important for our district to have a strategic approach to writing, revising, and improving curriculum. Woven into this approach should be a coherent plan for professional development that meets the needs of our faculty.

**Any shared projects that are working. Are there any teachers who are collaborating on cross-curricular projects? If yes, what are they?**

I have heard discussions of collaborative efforts. There have been some virtual field trips that have had cross-discipline aspects, some special area teachers have reached out with ideas, and grade level teams continue to work together. Teachers are working hard to meet the demands of remote learning. It is important to remember that teachers have never before been expected to deliver instruction in this manner.



This is an area for potential development, but we also need to keep in mind that collaboration is difficult under these conditions.

**Are we working different aspects of this pandemic into the curriculum?**

The Guidance Department and School Counselors are addressing concerns about the pandemic. Teachers and staff respond to students' questions if they arise. Perhaps in the future when this crisis is over, we can work on adding pandemics into the curriculum.

**What are the greatest leadership challenges from the Principals point of view?**

There are many competing priorities to manage. We agree there are two areas that stand out:

1. Ensuring equitable delivery of educational support for all students. This can sometimes feel like an impossible task with all the diverse needs. There is nothing we can put in a packet that replaces the face-to-face experience of being in the classroom. This is true for online learning as well.
2. Providing the most effective support possible to our dedicated faculty and staff. Everyone has gone above and beyond to reach out to their students, adapt to remote learning, and consult with concerned families. Just the simple act of acquiring the supplies they need to do their job has become a far greater challenge than ever before. The pandemic is happening in the lives of our faculty and staff too. They have their own families who also need their support. It's a lot for everyone to manage. We do everything we can to let people know how appreciated they are and to encourage them.

**How much of the regular flow of staff meetings, department meetings, and supervision of teacher quality are continuing virtually?**

A series of small group virtual faculty meetings take place every other week. Faculty and Paraprofessionals are participating in these meetings. Meetings with department heads, curriculum leaders, and committees are also continuing to take place online as needed. In addition to online Zoom meetings, we are having individual conversations with faculty and staff regularly through email and in person when they come in to prepare packets.

We are aware the quality of assignments is varied. Faculty members have different levels of comfort with online and remote learning. We noticed the packets improved the second time as faculty were able to better gauge what to include based on feedback from the first set of packets. We expect the quality to continue to improve as we are now moving from "enrichment only" to covering the state mandated "power standards."

**What is working really well?**

We are most impressed with the way all faculty and staff have gone beyond expectations to reach out to students and families. They have continued to make their relationships with students the top priority. Their communication efforts with families have been outstanding. They reach out multiple times when they do not hear from students. They have made strong efforts to put things together in paper form so we can address the equity issue for people who do not have internet access. This was a daunting process, and everyone has adjusted very well.

**What are the participation rates of families?**

Many of our families have embraced remote learning. We estimate that about 70% of our packets were returned with student work. Lending laptops to families and books from the school have aided in ensuring more students can participate in remote learning.

A small number of students and families have not participated at all. This concerns us, and we have continued to reach out to parents of students who have not engaged. We have not heard back from everyone, but we continue to reach out. Sometimes family complications have prevented engagement.

For the large majority, families have been responsive and supportive. Many meet us on the road on delivery days. There have been posters and cheers. We are hearing from families that they recognize the importance of the relationships between students and teachers.

**How do you think your teachers are coping? How is morale with your teams?**

Overall, most people are coping well. They are willing to do whatever it takes to support their students and each other. As we get new information it can be a challenge. It was a bit deflating when we heard we could not return to school.

People are finding ways to stay connected with families and each other to boost morale through social media. We think it's important everyone keeps in touch.

**How is the "3 hours a day" guideline working out? Are there any accountability structures in place, or is it mostly a trust system?**

No one is working just 3 hours a day. Most people are working many hours beyond that. It is not unusual for teachers to meet with students and families outside of their designated 3 hours due to the availability of families. Many teachers are working

more hours now than ever would have been required of them during the typical school year.

Some of the systems for accountability include:

- Communication logs
- Weekly summaries
- Bi-weekly faculty meetings on Zoom
- Family Inventory

**How are seniors doing? Are they completing their course work?**

This is a difficult time for seniors. It is disappointing and some students are in a grieving process. For the most part they are completing their coursework. There are some issues interfering with students doing their best, but the guidance department, counselors, teachers, paraprofessionals and service providers are working hard to support students. There have been situations where teachers have volunteered to bring things to students to help them so they can graduate on time.

**What is being done to create a graduation experience?**

Now that we know we are not returning to school this year; we are turning our attention to how best we can celebrate our seniors and give them a memorable graduation experience. We recognize the importance of recognizing the life event on the day it was scheduled to happen – so we will do so. Our hope is to find a way within the law to give students an in person experience if not now, some day down the road. We will survey the student body in early May to incorporate their thoughts on how best to celebrate their K-12 career at SBRSD.

**Are there any plans for culminating projects for seniors to take place?**

As mentioned above, now that the decision has been made to remain closed for the school year we will begin the discussions on how best to address and share end of the year activities and culminating projects for seniors.

Category	Topics	Resources
<b>COVID-19</b>	General Family and Educator Resources	<a href="#">Care for Caregivers: Tips for Families and Educators</a> <a href="https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus">https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus</a> <a href="https://www.mass.gov/news/berkshire-district-attorneys-office-covid-19-resource-guide">https://www.mass.gov/news/berkshire-district-attorneys-office-covid-19-resource-guide</a> <a href="http://www.starstoolkit.org/helpful-documents">http://www.starstoolkit.org/helpful-documents</a>
<b>Talking with Students about Covid-19</b>	General Tips	<a href="https://childmind.org/">https://childmind.org/</a> <a href="#">National Child Traumatic Stress Network Guide</a> <a href="#">Helping Children Cope with Changes Resulting From Covid-19</a> <a href="#">Advice for Parents/Caregivers for Supporting Children</a> <a href="#">Talking with Students about Masks</a> <a href="#">NY Times Talking to Teens and Tweens</a>
	Social Stories	<a href="#">Autism Society of NC Germ Social Story</a> <a href="#">Autism Speaks Flu Social Story</a>

<b>Mental Health Supports</b>	Articles and Tips	<a href="#">CNN-Mental Health and Wellness</a> <a href="https://hbr.org/2020/03/that-discomfort-youre-feeling-is-grief">https://hbr.org/2020/03/that-discomfort-youre-feeling-is-grief</a> <a href="#">STARS Tool Kit Parent and Family Resources</a> <a href="https://news.virginia.edu/content/how-protect-your-mental-health-during-quarantine">https://news.virginia.edu/content/how-protect-your-mental-health-during-quarantine</a> <a href="#">MHA National- Helping Children Cope with Tragedy-Related Anxiety</a> <a href="#">World Health Organization Mental Health Considerations</a> <a href="#">Great Barrington Mental Health Awareness Kit</a>
	Mindfulness + MH Intervention Websites/ Apps	<a href="https://www.mindful.org/free-mindfulness-resources-for-calm-during-covid-outbreak/">https://www.mindful.org/free-mindfulness-resources-for-calm-during-covid-outbreak/</a> <a href="https://www.commonsensemedia.org/lists/apps-to-help-with-mental-health">https://www.commonsensemedia.org/lists/apps-to-help-with-mental-health</a> <a href="https://www.calm.com/">https://www.calm.com/</a> <a href="https://www.gonoodle.com/">https://www.gonoodle.com/</a> <a href="https://www.secondstep.org/covid19support">https://www.secondstep.org/covid19support</a> <a href="#">Support/intervention strategies, workbooks and videos- Canada National Mental Health</a> <a href="https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/">https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/</a>

<p><b>Crisis Support</b></p>	<p>Help Lines</p>	<p><b><i>NAMI Warmline:</i></b> Western Mass RLC Peer Support Line (888) 407-4515 Monday-Thursday 7pm-9pm and Friday-Sunday 7pm-10pm- Non-crisis, emotional and preventive care support over the phone. <a href="https://www.nami.org/Press-Media/In-The-News/2019/It-s-not-a-hotline-it-s-a-warmline-It-gives-mental-health-help-before-a-crisis-heats-up">https://www.nami.org/Press-Media/In-The-News/2019/It-s-not-a-hotline-it-s-a-warmline-It-gives-mental-health-help-before-a-crisis-heats-up</a></p> <p><b><i>National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:</i></b> Call (800) 273-TALK (8255)- If you or someone you know is in crisis—whether they are considering suicide or not—please call the toll-free Lifeline to speak with a trained crisis counselor 24/7</p> <p><b><i>SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline:</i></b> Call (800) 985-5990. Press 2 for Spanish language support [En Español]: <a href="https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline">https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline</a></p> <p><b><i>The Crisis Text Line</i></b> is accessible by texting “HOME” to 741741. Assistance is available via text 24/7. Additional information can be found at: <a href="https://www.crisistextline.org/">https://www.crisistextline.org/</a></p> <p><b><i>National Safe Space:</i></b> Text “Safe” to 4Help (44357) <a href="http://www.nationalsafeplace.org">www.nationalsafeplace.org</a></p> <p><b><i>The Parental Stress Line:</i></b> “parents helping parents” – available 24/7 in all languages: 1-800-632-8188</p> <p><b><u>SafeLink</u></b> - Massachusetts statewide domestic violence support and resources: 24/7 helpline: 877-785-2020</p>
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**Community  
Supports**

**Housing:** Berkshire County Regional Housing staff are working remotely during this time to address the needs of those who are homeless or have housing instability. Anyone with housing concerns should reach out to them at (413) 499-1630.

**DCF:** Staff members are checking in with children and families over the phone and via email during this time. The Department of Children and Families can be reached at (413) 236-1800.

**Berkshire Health Systems** Helpline can be reached at (855) 262-5465.

**Mass211** has set up a line to support residents throughout the ongoing response to COVID-19. Massachusetts' residents can call 2-1-1 at any time for real-time COVID-19 information, resources and referrals in multiple languages. Massachusetts Department of Public Health: <http://bit.ly/COVID211>

**18 Degrees:** (413) 448-8281 or [18degreesma.org](http://18degreesma.org). Their offices are located on West Street, Pittsfield.

**Multicultural BRIDGE**, Main Street in Lee, is reaching out to connect people with resources. If you need support with food for your family or other essential supplies, please contact by email [adminsupport@multiculturalbridge.org](mailto:adminsupport@multiculturalbridge.org).

**Elizabeth Freeman Domestic Violence Prevention:** (866) 401-2425

**Berkshire Immigrant Center:** (413) 445-4881

**ROOTS Teen Center:** Call Executive Director Paula Bauxbaum (413) 663-0250 for connections to meals and resources. Updates are provided on the FB page and [www.rootsteencenter.com](http://www.rootsteencenter.com)

<p><b>Community Supports</b></p>		<p><i>Brien Center</i> mental health support: (413) 499-0412. Services are being provided over the phone.</p> <p><i>Elder Services</i> Support: (413) 499-0524</p> <p><i>Solider On</i> Veterans Support: (413) 236-5644</p> <p><i>The Beacon Recovery Community Center</i>: Substance Use &amp; Recovery Meetings, a nbcc program, is holding virtual meetings. Contact the Coalition at (413) 663-7588 for more information and to receive log in credentials.</p>
<p><b>Academic and At Home Activities</b></p>		<p>*Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics: <a href="#">Kids' Zone</a></p> <p>Department of Energy: <a href="#">Games and Activities</a>; <a href="#">Virtual Field Trips to National Energy Labs</a></p> <p>Environmental Protection Agency: <a href="#">Games, Quizzes, and Videos about the Environment</a></p> <p>The Library of Congress: <a href="#">Presentations and Activities to Help Students Learn about History</a></p> <p>NASA: <a href="#">Interactive Lessons about Space, Earth, Solar System and Universe</a>; <a href="#">Lessons from Astronauts about Living in Space</a>; <a href="#">STEM Activities for Students of All Ages</a></p> <p>The Kennedy Center: <a href="#">Lunch Doodles with Mo Willems</a>; <a href="#">Tour the Kennedy Center with The Pigeon</a></p> <p>The Smithsonian: <a href="#">Free Smithsonian STEM Games and Simulations</a>; <a href="#">Meet the Animals of the National Zoo</a>; <a href="#">3D Exhibits and Virtual Tours</a>; <a href="#">Smithsonian Magazine Ten Museums You Can Virtually Visit</a>; <a href="#">The Museum of Natural History Virtual Tour</a>; <a href="#">Digital Smithsonian American Art Museum</a>; <a href="#">Distance Learning Resources</a></p> <p>NOAA: <a href="#">Use Real-Time Ocean Data to Explore the Environment</a></p> <p>USGS: <a href="#">Learn from Home About Physical science, Geography and Maps</a></p> <p>*Above Activities List taken from: <a href="https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus">https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus</a></p> <p><b>Parent Activity Guide for Children:</b>  <a href="https://berkshires.macaronikid.com/guides/5e73b82bbcd3e5c4552aac7/stuck-home-with-the-kids-weve-got-a-survival-guide-for-you">https://berkshires.macaronikid.com/guides/5e73b82bbcd3e5c4552aac7/stuck-home-with-the-kids-weve-got-a-survival-guide-for-you</a></p>

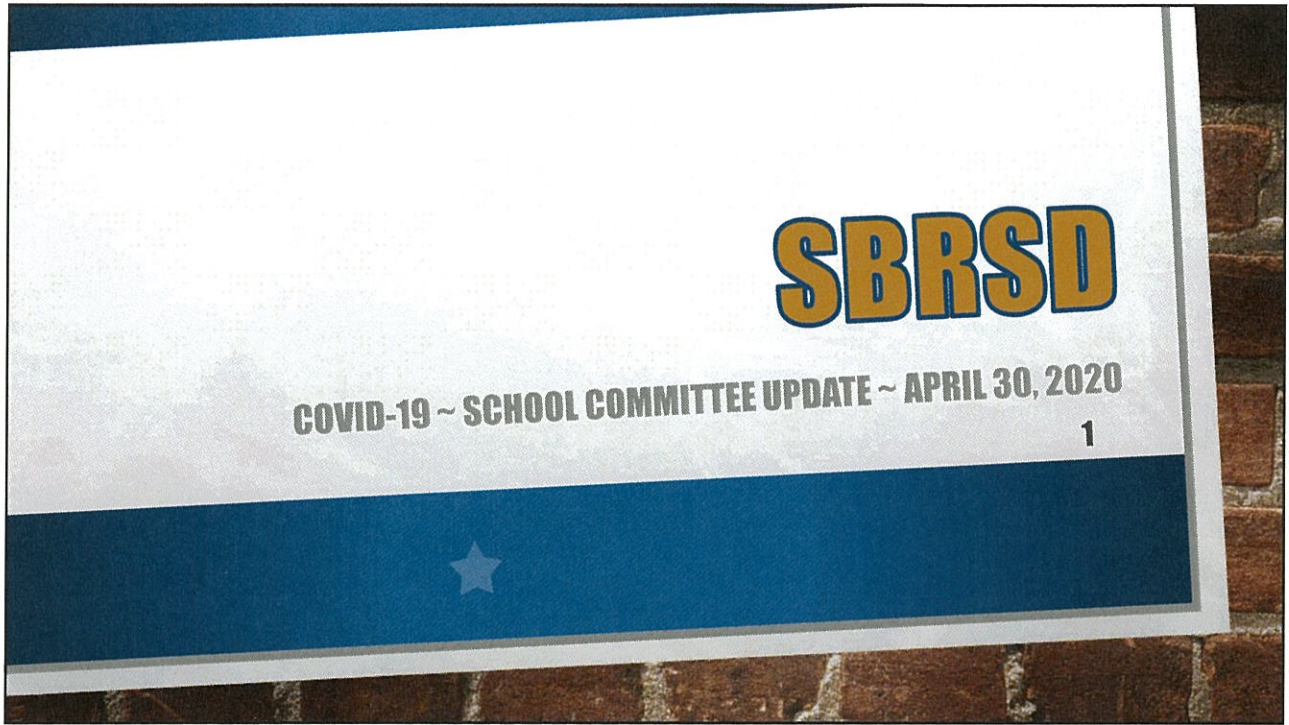


<b>Social Activities</b>	General Info and Virtual Fitness	<p><a href="#">How to Prevent Loneliness in a Time of Social Distancing</a></p> <p><a href="#">YMCA-Berkshires Stay Home Resources</a></p>
	Community Engagement	<p><b><a href="#">Railroad Street Youth Project:</a></b> Hosting virtual Netflix watch parties and virtual book clubs. Their Youth Operational Board (YOB) is taking members, ages 14 to 25. Their Intergenerational YOB meetings are open to all ages. Virtual apprenticeships are starting 5/1. Browse their facebook page and website for more information <a href="https://rsyp.org/">https://rsyp.org/</a>.</p>
<b>Food Distribution</b>		<p><a href="https://www.foodbankwma.org/">https://www.foodbankwma.org/</a></p> <p><b><i>Nourishing Neighbors:</i></b> a south county meal program providing 500 meals from local restaurants weekly. Meals are available for all community members in the southern Berkshires needing extra support at this time.</p> <p>WHERE: Berkshire So Regional Community Center, drive thru*. 15 Crissey Road, Gt. Barrington. <b>**If you're not able to drive</b>, please contact <a href="mailto:meals@berkshiresouth.org">meals@berkshiresouth.org</a> and they will deliver to you. The deadline to request <u>delivery</u> every week is Tuesday at 10am. If you do not have e-mail access, please call the senior center at 413-528-1881 and they will schedule delivery for you. Food will be delivered to you curbside. For questions email <a href="mailto:meals@berkshiresouth.org">meals@berkshiresouth.org</a>.</p> <p>WHEN: Wednesdays, 1-3PM (For any updates or changes, follow Berkshire South's facebook page)</p> <p><b><i>GRAB &amp; GO MEALS:</i></b> SBRSD is offering meals free to all families with children 18 &amp; under. Please contact Food Services Director Jeremy Wells at <a href="mailto:meals@sbrsd.org">meals@sbrsd.org</a> or 844-236-9720 or 413-248-0727.</p> <p>PICK UP: Pick up is from 11 am to 1 pm, Monday through Friday at the Undermountain Entrance</p>

Key:

[Geared Towards Younger Children](#)

[Geared Towards Adolescents](#)



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## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

- First few weeks centered on student and staff safety, meals, and other foundational needs
- The next weeks brought the state's release of initial guidance on remote learning guiding principles and broad outlines of the state's remote learning strategy
- SBRSD worked on our remote learning plan and began to prepare and engage students in enrichment activities
- Currently we are continuing to enhance and refine the remote learning plan with a focus on teaching the content standards most critical for student success in the next grade level while trying to ensure consistent engagement in remote learning

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## FAMILY & STUDENT PARTICIPATION

- Combination of packets and online work
- Telepractice, teletherapy and small group virtual sessions
- Secondary had 70% of packets returned via paper and pencil, some completed all work online
- Elementary had no more than 6 students missing work
- Participation is steadily improving
- Per latest advisory from DESE packets will have a focus on core content

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## SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SUPPORTS

- Resource list (community, area, online, school-based, etc.)—Please see attached to director of student services report
- School mental health professionals are meeting with students and available to assist
- DESE strengthening remote learning guide—outreach to families/students who are not engaged in remote learning/identifying one staff member to help them access supports, one step at a time
- Based on the above DESE document and social emotional learning standards—supports are incorporated into assignments and instruction
- Administration always available to follow up

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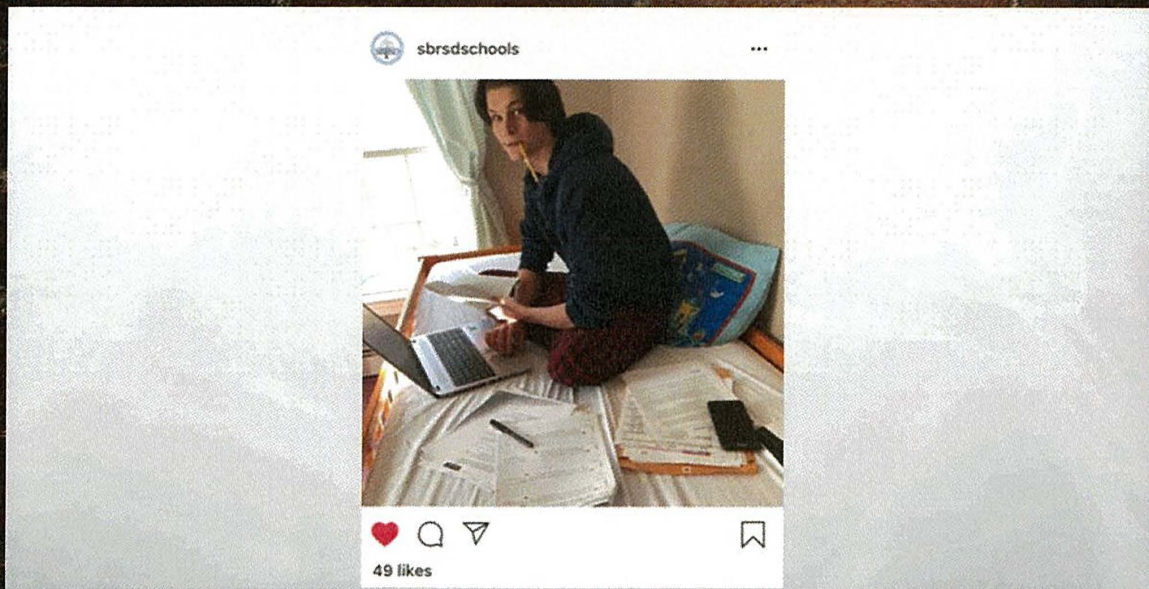
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# COMMUNICATION WITH FACULTY & STAFF

- ✓ Weekly Summaries
- ✓ Communication Logs
- ✓ Bi-Monthly Faculty Meetings in Small Groups through Zoom
- ✓ Individual Check-Ins with Coordinators, Department Heads, and Committees
- ✓ Regular Email Updates

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8

**LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS**

*Quality  
Accessibility  
Reliability*

Synchronous Learning	Asynchronous Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Zoom sessions</li><li>• Teleconferencing</li><li>• Google Meet</li><li>• Packet work - <i>When shared in live sessions such as Zoom or Google Meet</i></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Video recordings of lessons</li><li>• Posts in Google Classroom: <i>Discussion Board, Lesson Assignments, Flip Grid</i></li><li>• Packet work</li></ul>

**Challenge:**  
Resources with the intent to market a product.

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<p><b>PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FACULTY</b></p> <p><i>Quality Accessibility Customization</i></p>	<p><a href="#"><u>EdWeb</u></a> Searchable database of webinars with assessments</p> <p><a href="#"><u>Sanford Harmony</u></a> Asynchronous courses Webinars focused on SEL &amp; Engaging Instruction</p> <p><a href="#"><u>Corwin/Sage Publishing</u></a> Webinars on a wide range of topics</p> <p><a href="#"><u>Collaborative for Educational Service</u></a> Synchronous Zoom Series</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>12</b></p>
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12

## FACULTY & STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DATA

- About 65% responded to the survey
- About 35% participated in PD (55% of survey respondents)
- Zoom sessions with the collaborative for educational services (CES) are most common [synchronous learning]
- Those who have participated report a high degree of satisfaction
- Comments indicate people are experiencing a lack of time for PD

13

13

## MORALE

14

14



"Your heart is slightly bigger than the average human heart, but that's because you're a teacher."



## LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES

- Ensuring faculty and staff feel supported and encouraged.
- Finding ways to connect with the few students and families who have not responded.

15

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16



17

## NEXT YEAR'S BUDGET

**1/12<sup>th</sup> budget**

**Wait for house ways and means committee**

18

## NEXT STEPS

- Year end celebrations and graduation
- Planning for when and how students and staff will re-enter school.
  - *a special focus on how to support students with unfinished learning*
  - *prioritize additional supports to help catch them up.*

19