



March 11, 2020

Dear Danvers Public Schools Community,

We wanted to take a moment to provide you an update on steps the District is taking surrounding COVID-19. We have been in daily contact with the Danvers Department of Public Health and Department of Public Works.

The Department of Public Works is ensuring our daily cleaning procedures are utilizing disinfectants on all high traffic surfaces including door knobs, light switches and floors. Disinfectants will be made available for teachers to use on all desks and tables as they feel necessary.

Per the Governor and Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommendation, all international trips for this spring have been postponed. As of Tuesday, March 10th, the Governor with the support of DESE has also recommended cancelling all out of state school trips. We will be reaching out to families over the next week surrounding details and next steps of the cancellation process.

On February 28th, we provided an [update to families](#) outlining our response and ongoing work with various departments across the state and town. Included in the update are helpful links to the [Massachusetts Department of Public Health \(MDPH\)](#) website with up to date information surrounding COVID-19. This site provides a [useful fact sheet](#) in multiple languages to assist you in learning about this virus. The Town of Danvers Department of Public Health has posted an [informational advisory](#) on their website.

Last Friday, the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS) held a conference call with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH). During this call we were able to hear about the steps being taken to address the ongoing situation from all three state departments. As a result of the conference call, DESE has updated their [Emergency Management Planning](#) website.

There has been conversation across the country in regards to long term school closures and COVID-19. Per the guidance of the Governor and DESE, no district will be required to complete more than the 185 regularly scheduled days for this school year, allowing more flexibility to close as necessary. Therefore, if there is an extended closing necessary, the last day of school will be no later than June 24, 2020. DESE will not be considering online learning as an acceptable

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alternative. However, we are exploring ways for students to engage in learning activities for an extended closure. The Governor and DESE provided guidance in regards to the 180 day requirement, which includes the following:

1. All days lost to health, weather, or safety emergencies between the **first day of the school year and March 15** must be made up by rescheduling full school days to ensure a 180-day school year.
2. All days lost to health, weather, or safety emergencies between **March 16 and June 1** must be made up to ensure a 180-day school year or until the district has reached **its previously scheduled 185th day**, whichever comes first. If all five snow days have been used prior to this point, the district is not required to schedule additional school days.
3. Districts will not be expected to make up any days lost to health, weather, or safety emergencies that occur **after June 1**.

DESE has also announced that student attendance data, accountability and chronic absenteeism will be calculated up until March 2, 2020 rather than the end of the school year.


We also wanted to provide you with a resource from Open Circle about how to talk to children about [COVID-19](#). For more information or resources on COVID-19, please visit the [U.S. Department of Education](#) and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

We will continue to consult with DPW, Danvers DPH, MDPH and follow the guidance from the CDC, State Department and World Health Organization to update you as the situation evolves. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to our office.

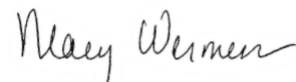
Sincerely,



Lisa Dana



Keith Taverna



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