



LEARNING PREP SCHOOL

1507 WASHINGTON STREET, WEST NEWTON, MA 02465
617.965.0764 | LEARNINGPREP.ORG

March 12, 2020

Dear LPS families and other interested parties,

On March 6th, Commissioner Riley and the Department of Public Health held a conference call with superintendents, charter school leaders, leaders of private schools, school nurse leaders, and others, with resources and directions to follow in the event of possible school closure with respect to COVID-19. Communication on this serious and complex issue continue to be forthcoming from DESE and DPH.

As you would expect, we have been focused on the breadth and depth of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and it's actual and potential impact on everyone, including LPS. In fact, just last weekend we had our facilities thoroughly deep cleaned and we will be conducting those cleanings on a regular basis and will do so until the crisis is no longer a threat.

Unfortunately, the rapidly escalating spread of COVID-19 has placed many elements of our society at risk. This includes schools here in Massachusetts; indeed, it includes LPS. Given the fact that our students reside in many communities, the vulnerability of being in contact with presumptive contaminated people is exponentially greater than it is for many other schools. Specifically, we have families who have children attending public schools that are taking appropriate measures to mitigate the spread of the virus, including closing. After a review of information from multiple sources, as well as numerous discussions, we have concluded, albeit reluctantly, that effective tomorrow, Friday, March 13, 2020, LPS will be closed through Friday, March 20, 2020. Tentatively, the school will reopen on Monday, March 23, 2020, however, that reopening is contingent on circumstances attendant to the virus, a situation we will be monitoring daily. Certainly, we will be communicating prior to March 20th to inform you whether or not we will be returning to school on March 23rd. During school closings, the following offices will remain operational: Business, Admissions, Development and Facilities.

We have been planning for this eventuality for some time and we are determined that while school is closed, we will continue to engage our students in teaching and learning. Obviously, this effort cannot be as intense or extensive as it would be in our normal school setting. We have developed a remote learning plan that is designed to advance this work, including the role and responsibility of your child's building Principal, teachers, related service staff and counselors, attendant to this effort. Each of the aforementioned staff will be in periodic contact with your child throughout the duration of our school closing. Please be advised that school staff and administrators will not be at LPS during the closing, therefore, if you need to contact them at their respective email address, we ask that you do so only during the days and hours that school would normally be in session. Thank you, in advance, for respecting this request. Please see the attached EMS and HS remote learning plans which will begin Monday, March 16, 2020.

As we all know, the situation, with respect to COVID-19, continues to unfold, no longer by the day, but almost by the hour. What is most important to us, and we assume to you, is the health and wellbeing of our students, staff and families. Any and all protocols that we advance are centered on that premise.

We respectfully suggest to you that if you have any reason to believe that your child may have a serious respiratory illness, please visit your physician. Further, if any family member has been quarantined, given exposure to COVID-19, please inform Gretchen Petersen at gpetersen@learningprep.org, immediately.

In closing, we want to share a reminder to our staff and families about the importance of washing one's hands and other personal hygiene as recommended by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). We are also including the following link that you may find helpful when speaking to your children about COVID-19
<http://riversidetraumacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Managing-Reactions-to-the-Coronavirus.pdf>.

It goes without saying that no one has all of the answers to the complexities of COVID-19, indeed, we don't even know all of the questions. No one does! We are convinced, however, that open communication, relational trust, and mutual respect establishes the right formula to guide our LPS community through this crisis.

Sincerely,

Ted Sharp and Gretchen Petersen



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Dear parents and guardians of elementary & middle school students;

Thank you for your understanding and patience throughout this process. Today your student came home with a rather large packet. Included in this packet are various classwork/review sheets for students to complete. Some teachers decided to send work home in paper form only, some decided to send some paper-based work and may follow up with electronic work, and some decided to only send electronic work (both which will come at a later date).

The first three pages of this packet contain important information that you should keep in a safe place at home

1. This letter
2. "Directions to access various websites" We pulled together all familiar web sites that the students use in school and put them in one document with instructions on how to log in for easy access.
3. "Screen names and passwords" This document is personalized to your student and has their name on top with their individual passwords to various websites the students are familiar with from class.

Almost every family responded that their student would have access to a device and internet at home. Each student at LPS has an LPS email account. Elementary and middle school students are not often using these email accounts as staff are airdropping things to their ipads the majority of the time. Your student may need help logging in to their email account and checking their email, although they have done this in computer class as practice. Your student may also need help opening attachments or re-attaching a document to send back to their teacher once completed. Please have your student check their LPS email account daily. In terms of work completion, we understand that every student works at a different pace and we are expecting a concerted effort towards work completion. Please contact your student's teachers with questions.

Regarding counseling support; due to the confidential nature of counseling, conducting virtual sessions over email does not provide the amount of privacy necessary. As an alternative, counselors will reach out to students via their LPS student accounts to "check in" on a weekly basis. Any emails that students send to their counselors will be responded to within 24 hours. If your child needs immediate assistance contact their outside provider or your local crisis provider. We hope that providing some counselor access will help your children feel connected until we can resume our normal school schedule and individual counseling sessions.

DESE has informed us that they are making plans for MCAS and that information will be forthcoming. Once we have it we will be communicating it to our families. We appreciate your help with this. Do not hesitate to reach out to your student's teacher(s), counselor or myself with questions.

Sincerely,

Amy Davis

Elementary & Middle School Principal



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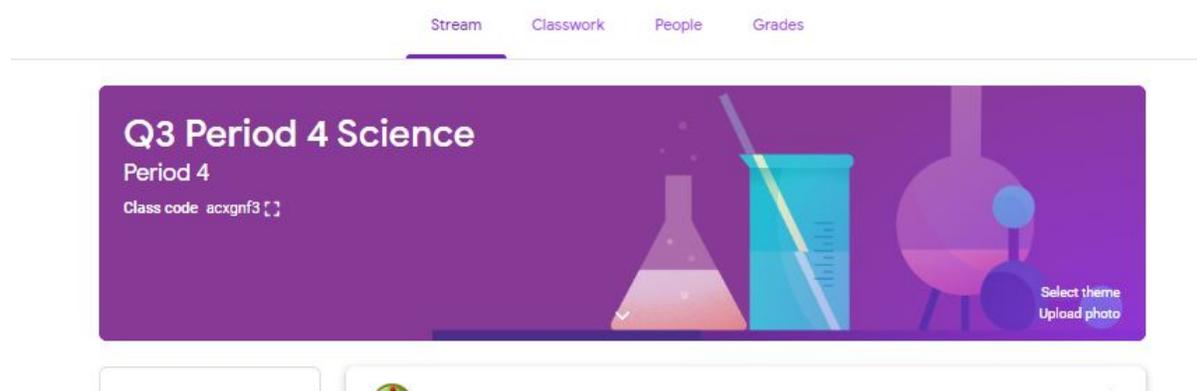
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Dear Parents/ Guardians,

In preparation for remote learning, our staff prepared assignments to be posted on Google Classroom. Initial lessons will be review material and are designed to be completed independently. We ask that you partner with us by asking your child to complete their work daily for continuity and structure.

Tip: When your child opens Google Classroom, it opens to a feed that can be challenging to navigate. If they click on "Classwork" the work is presented in a way that is easier to follow (see graphic below). Please contact the teacher via email with questions. In addition, I can be reached at jthorell@learningprep.org



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Please do not hesitate to reach out to Meredith Sullivan (msullivan@learningprep.org) with any questions or concerns regarding counseling.

Additionally, we have been in touch with DESE regarding the upcoming MCAS testing and have been informed that information is forthcoming. As we receive the information, we will promptly communicate it to families.

I will miss seeing your children each day and hope that we will all be back together soon to resume normal school functioning. Please reach out to me directly with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Thorell, HS Principal
jthorell@learningprep.org