

Dear Holliston Parents/Guardians and Staff:

Three weeks ago yesterday, on March 12th, I cancelled school in Holliston for Friday, March 13th and the week of March 16-20th due to growing public health concerns related to the CoronaVirus. On Sunday, March 15th, Governor Baker cancelled school across Massachusetts through early April. On Monday, March 23rd, we began Week one of our two-week Enhanced Learning Program. This program was designed to meet several objectives:

- To assess the digital readiness of our staff and families for future remote learning;**
- To re-establish connections between students and their teachers;**
- To assess our students social-emotional wellness; and**
- To offer students high-quality learning activities that were aligned with then-current DESE advisories that assigned work should be limited to preventing academic regression by reviewing previously-taught material and reinforcing skills already taught this school year and applying and deepening those skills.**

On Wednesday, March 25th, 8 days ago, Governor Baker announced a further state-wide cancellation of school, this time through Friday, May 1st. On Thursday, March 26th, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) issued their first set of written guidelines regarding Remote Learning. These guidelines encouraged districts to continue to set the social-emotional wellness of their students as their highest priority, but allowed districts to locally determine the appropriateness of teaching new content moving forward.

After considerable discussion, we have concluded that Phase 2 of our Remote Learning Plan will allow teachers to add new content to their remote learning instruction beginning Monday, April 6th. At Placentino and Miller, where skill development in reading, writing and mathematics have always been the core work our teachers do, this focus will continue. At RAMS, teachers will continue to explore curriculum content through the school-wide lens of “Personal, Local, Global” with the emphasis on deeper, applied learning and deep conceptual understanding continuing to drive the work. New content will be introduced judiciously while reinforcing important concepts and skills.

The changes for Holliston High School students will be much more pronounced:

- HHS will be moving forward in curriculum content beginning Monday, April 6th. Teachers have been asked to be alert to the differentiated needs of their class and offer all necessary accommodations;**
- HHS will work on a fixed class schedule beginning at 9:00AM and ending not later than 11:50AM M/T/Th/F where each period will meet twice per week for a class period not to exceed 50 minutes. On the days when the student is not meeting with their teacher, they will be assigned independent work that should require no more than 50 minutes to complete. With this schedule, each student will meet with their Period A teacher for up to 100 minutes per week and have up to 150 minutes of independent work assigned to them.**

- **Students are expected to complete the work assigned to them and teachers will provide students with feedback on their submitted work.**

Additional details can be seen in our comprehensive [Remote Learning Plan](#). You should expect to hear additional details from your school principal by Saturday, April 4th.

In the past three weeks, we have closed school, developed an initial plan for PreK-12 remote instruction, implemented that plan, modified the plan based on feedback and are now preparing to roll-out that revised plan. This has been exhausting work that has required administrators and teachers to put in an extraordinary number of hours to develop and execute these plans. In addition, this work has required a level of flexibility and collaboration between administrators and teachers far beyond the already-high levels Holliston typically sees. Everyone has rolled up their sleeves and pitched in, putting roles and responsibilities to one side, working together to make this happen. I am intensely proud of this work and profoundly proud of the teachers and administrators of the Holliston Public Schools who have worked together to make this happen. I also want to express my personal appreciation to the leadership of the Holliston Federation of Teachers for their flexibility and commitment to ensuring the students of Holliston are well-served through this shutdown.

I thank you for your continued patience and support as the Holliston Public Schools retools and redesigns itself to meet the unique changing needs of our community.

Respectfully,

**Bradford L. Jackson, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools**