



## The Public Schools of Brookline

Town Hall

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**Ben Lummis**

Interim Superintendent

March 30, 2020

Dear Brookline Families and Students,

I write to you in an unprecedented time during a pandemic that has not yet hit its peak and continues to bring uncertainty to all corners of our lives and families. Among the many concerns we all share right now is how best to support our students while schools are not in session.

As the Public Schools of Brookline launched our remote learning plan last week, we continued to plan for a longer closure. Following the Governor's announcement that schools are to remain closed until May 4, Commissioner of Education, Jeffrey Riley released new [guidance](#) to schools from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) encouraging districts to plan for a more robust approach to student learning.

With a strong foundation already in place, PSB is working to complete version 2.0 of our remote learning model this week. We are customizing the [Department of Education's guidelines](#) to meet the needs of our students and Brookline's community standards. Our goals during this closure remain:

- Ensure all students participate in learning that is made accessible to them
- Continue to provide virtual meetings to keep students connected to their teachers, peers, and school community
- Minimize skill and learning regression, and as possible, introduce new learning in ways that all students can access
- Provide both teacher-directed learning experiences and student self-directed learning opportunities that can happen off line and at home

This week we will provide clearer guidance and direction including sample schedules for teachers and students to follow, more time on learning for students, and greater access to arts, music, wellness education, special education supports, and related services. These adjustments will then begin to roll out to the community starting on April 6. As we proceed, the learning experiences that teachers and our schools are providing will continue to become more organized.

Please remember that PSB's remote learning operations cannot replace a student's experience in their classroom with their teachers, support staff, and peers. PSB will work to establish better consistency across schools while still maintaining the variety and creativity that is one of Brookline's hallmarks. No software, video, or virtual learning will compare to the vibrant and creative teaching in our classrooms.

### **A Word about Student and Community Health**

Please remind your students, especially middle school and high school students, to keep a safe physical distance from all peers. So far, Brookline is doing well in limiting community spread, but community members continue to report social gatherings among children and teenagers both inside and outside. We

want our young people to be safe, and in order to do that they must keep a safe physical distance from each other.

Thank you for your continued support of our educators, staff, and leaders. They are also struggling with the unknown and uncertainty that you and your family face. We are all doing our level best to support you, our families, and our students. Unfortunately, we are in a challenging situation that requires all of us to come together and help students continue learning during the extended closure.

Your principal and teachers will continue to reach out to you and your students to keep you informed as we navigate these unprecedented circumstances.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BL', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ben Lummis  
Interim Superintendent