



Southbridge Public Schools

132 Torrey Road, Southbridge MA 01550

Telephone: (508) 764-5450

April 21, 2020

Dear Families,

I hope you are enjoying a restful April vacation week. As you may know, today Governor Charlie Baker extended the closure of schools to the end of the 2019 - 2020 school year, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. While this is a highly unusual time for students and families, I would like to let you know that we will continue to keep you updated with any related information as it becomes available.

You may have questions about many aspects of this extended closure. I encourage you to contact us by email at help@southbridgepublic.org or ayuda@southbridgepublic.org. You can also call 774-318-1696 with any questions. You can use these contact methods to ask questions about school and academics, about our schedule, or even to get information about community resources to help support your family at this unusual time.

Academic Enrichment

We continue to provide academic enrichment packets by grade level. You can find these packets on our website, www.southbridgepublic.org. There is also a video available on our website and social media channels in which teacher Ms. Luna shows you how to find educational materials online. Additionally, Each packet includes a letter [in English](#) and [in Spanish](#) that provides you with helpful suggestions about learning from home during the closure.

We are also happy to share that our educational enrichment material is available at several locations in the community. You can find these packets at Big Bunny market during their business hours. You can ask at the service desk for the packets. The packets are also available at Colonial Copy, 22 Central Street. Colonial Copy is currently open Monday, Tuesday, and Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

As always, the educational packets are also available at our meal sites, when they are open from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday. Our meal sites are at Eastford Road School, Charlton Street School, West Street School, and Brookside Terrace.

Please note that these packets are intended to provide enough educational material to last until at least May 8. We will provide additional material after May 8. While the packets contain a large number of pages, students should be spending no more than three hours each day working on school-related learning activities. We recognize that trying to support your children while they learn at home is incredibly difficult and we hope that the work packets will help to provide you with some direction and structure

Massachusetts Annual State Testing

As we previously announced, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has canceled MCAS testing for this spring. We expect to resume normal testing next year.

Report Cards and Grades

For elementary schools, second-trimester grades have closed. Report cards will reflect grades as they have in the past - there is no change. Final grades will be determined based on the first and second trimesters. We will move to credit or no credit system for the last trimester.

For Southbridge Middle School, Southbridge High School, and Southbridge Academy, third-quarter grades will be given as credit or no credit. The school shut down happened well before the end of the third-quarter interrupting the normal course of instruction. In response, it was determined that the most equitable way to provide students with feedback without unfairly causing academic harm was to simply indicate if a student would receive credit or not receive credit. Credit was awarded to students who were present in school for the majority of the quarter and completed academic assignments satisfactorily (a passing grade).

With the closing of schools until the end of this school year, students who received a passing grade in two out of the three quarters (including a score of credit in quarter-three) will receive credit for the year in each course. |

Report Card Distribution

Grades have closed for the second-trimester in the Elementary School and for the third quarter, in the Middle, High School and Academy. Report Cards will be generated but we do not have a way to distribute them to parents because we typically send them home with students. We cannot mass mail the report cards because we have limited access to mail and staff is working remotely from their homes. We recognize the importance of report cards and we are examining the use of email and other methods to allow parents to receive digital copies of report cards. Please look for future communications about this topic.

Meals During April Vacation and on Patriots' Day

April vacation runs from Tuesday, April 21 to Friday, April 24 and our meal sites operate on their normal schedule during this week.

Preventive Measures

Preventive measures, such as washing your hands, remain the best line of defense for individuals and communities. If you are not able to wash your hands, use hand sanitizer. Cover any cough or sneeze with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands). Follow the guidance of Governor Baker and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health by staying home for all non-essential activities. Per the recommendation of the Centers for Disease Control, you should cover your nose and mouth with a mask or other material if you do go outside your home.

Our official communications channels are your best source of information. These include the district website, automated phone calls, and emails received from school and district leadership.

For more information on the coronavirus, please see the attached fact sheet from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health both [in English](#) and [in Spanish](#).

The State of Massachusetts also provides detailed information about the current outbreak of Covid-19, or the coronavirus on the Mass.gov website ([mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov))

You can also get updates and information about Covid-19 from the Centers for Disease Control website ([CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)).

Regards,

Jeffrey A. Villar, Ph.D.
Receiver/Superintendent
Southbridge Public School