



Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School

10 New Bond Street Worcester, MA 01606

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www.akfcs.org

May 8, 2020

Good afternoon Abby Kelley Families;

As we recently heard from Governor Baker, schools will not reopen for the remainder of the 2019/2020 school year. Commissioner Riley, from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has provided school districts throughout the state, guidance regarding transitioning to the latest remote learning recommendations, Phase 3. We have been working to determine what these recommendations mean for Abby Kelley specifically, grade by grade. Generally speaking, we look at these recommendations to refine our work flows for staff and students to assure our delivery to the students is effective and their return of work (where appropriate) is equally effective. We intend to use these guidelines as a means to evaluate what we have in place and modify as needed.

Our Principals and Curriculum Coordinators are working with teachers on adjusting to the latest recommendations and some of you may have already heard from your student's teacher(s) regarding modifications to the Distance Learning Process you have come to know. Any change or adjustment is meant to improve what we are doing, as we have come to better understand Distance Learning.

We have added to our website the latest communications from DESE, I am sharing them with you for your reference. It will be your student's Principal and teachers who will be communicating any refinements to our District Learning plans, again grade by grade.

Explanation of remote learning? Remote learning takes place when a student and teacher are separated by time and/or physical distance. It is important to note that remote learning in a pandemic is different from remote learning in a non-emergency environment.

DESE's initial guidance, regarding remote learning:

- **Remote learning can encompass a wide variety of learning opportunities.** While technology can be a supportive tool, districts and schools should also consider ways that student learning can continue offline. This could include exploring the natural world, activities to support students' local communities (with appropriate social distancing), and engaging hands-on projects and artistic creations that stem from students' own passions and experiences.
- Examples of remote learning tools include large group video or audio conference calls, 1:1 phone or video calls, email, work packets, projects, reading lists, online learning platforms, and other resources to effectively engage with students.

Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness and all students have equal access to the general education program and the full range of any occupational/vocational education programs offered by the district.



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Phase 3 began in May 2020. DESE identified content standards that are prerequisites for student success in the next grade level. Since most standards will already have been taught prior to the closures, we anticipate that significant time would still be spent on reinforcement as opposed to advancing new concepts.

The key changes for Phase 3 are:

- Further defining the recommended elements of a quality remote learning program, including a focus on teaching the content standards most critical for student success in the next grade level.
- Encouraging districts to move all students towards successful engagement in remote learning, with a focus on addressing fundamental needs.

The goals are to **strengthen the remote learning program for all students:**

1. Prioritize meaningful connections with educators and peers.
2. Provide engaging core instruction focused on the prerequisite content standards that are most critical for student success in the next grade.
3. Offer opportunities for enrichment, exercise, and play.
4. Ensure programming is accessible and secure and communication is streamlined for students and their families.

AKF grading is in alignment with the Commissioner's guidance and is developmentally appropriate for each school. For example, at the high school, grading will continue as is. No final exams. Final grade will be computed using the 3 quarters and mid year exam.

As a district we continue to work using these recommendations as guidance. Our teachers have been and will continue to deliver curriculum remotely. There are a wide array of approaches that are being implemented from google classroom, email, Zoom, Google, just to name a few. Within the next week or so, we are focusing on the prerequisite content standards identified by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Those standards have been shared with all staff as part of Phase 3 Remote Learning.

On behalf of the Abby Kelley Faculty and Staff, we THANK YOU for all you are doing to keep your student(s) on track with school work, motivated to join class meetings, all while managing your work lives from home or while still reporting to work. We have all been asked to manage more than we ever in a climate of daily challenge and change; we all notice, we all appreciate that we are all in this together.

I wish each of you a good afternoon, enjoy the weekend. Stay safe. Stay Strong.

Brian Haas
AKF Executive Director

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