

Central Massachusetts Collaborative

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Dr. Susan Farrell, Executive Director
Beverly Tefft, Finance Director
www.cmasscollaborative.org

April 6, 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians and Educational Partners:

CMC staff have been working diligently to engage with students and their families since our buildings closed on March 13, 2020. During the original period of school closure, staff reached out to families to determine the best method of contact and the preferred method for student engagement. Parents and students were offered online instruction, paper packets and could also select a combination of both. School staff began providing reinforcement and enrichment activities to all students either online or through materials and packets delivered to students.

With the extension of the school closure and the new federal requirement to provide FAPE, CMC has expanded its remote learning opportunities for students. Due to Governor Baker's order preventing in-person instruction in order to prevent the spread of the deadly coronavirus, the provision of FAPE may include, as appropriate, special education and related services provided remotely through resources and supports (such as strategies, projects and packets provided to students matched with regular and ongoing communication from special education team members) and services and instruction (such as virtual, online, or telephonic instruction). While we may not be able to provide all services in the same manner as they are typically provided, Central Massachusetts Collaborative will be making every effort to use creative strategies to provide special education and related services as outlined in your child's IEP through distant learning to the extent feasible. Parents and guardians are invited to participate in the development of an individual learning plan for their student(s).

Beginning the week of April 6th, all professional staff are holding regular office hours remotely. These hours are set times when students and families can reach out for direct support.

All professional staff are providing direct instruction through a variety of remote means including but not limited to online learning tools such as google classroom, google hangouts, google meeting, emails contacts, and through offline tools for students not able to access and/or engaging in online learning. Staff reaches out via phone calls and texts to support students and families in more conventional and/or low tech ways with direct voice instruction when possible and with written instruction including the provision of learning materials to homes with manipulatives and paper packets.

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For each student, the child's learning team is carefully reviewing the IEP and working as a team, including the child's parent or guardian, to determine the accommodations and modifications needed for the student to best access remote learning activities. Staff is available to participate in team meetings to discuss student progress and to consult with outside collaterals. (An appropriate release of information consent will still be required when speaking with outside collaterals.)

While we recognize the challenges associated with remote learning, CMC is committed to providing a free and appropriate public education designed to address each student's individual learning needs during this period of school closure.

Sincerely,

Susan Farrell
Executive Director
Central Massachusetts Collaborative.