



*News from Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley & the  
MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education*

## **On the Desktop - April 21, 2020**

### **Schools to Remain Closed Through End of School Year**

Dear Superintendents, Charter School Leaders, Assistant Superintendents, Collaborative Leaders, and Private School Leaders,

Earlier today, Governor Baker announced that public and private schools (not including residential special education schools) will [stay closed through the end of the school year](#). This is a necessary step to keep everyone as healthy as possible. Remote learning is even more important now, and we will issue additional guidance to public schools later this week.

I know that we still have further to go to make remote learning work smoothly for all students, and we are working with various stakeholders to help get public school students the technological resources they need. We want to help you make remote learning as easy and successful as possible.

I view our response to COVID-19 as having four phases:

1. The initial school closures, with a focus on students' and families' immediate needs, such as safety and food;
2. The initial remote learning recommendations, when we did not know how long schools would be closed;
3. The remote learning update that will come later this week, knowing that we will not return to school this school year; and
4. Re-opening school, a process that we hope will happen in the coming months.

Today's announcement gives us additional time to go deeper on the implementation of phase 3, while also giving time to plan for phase 4 and consider what that will look like. When we have more information on how we will safely reopen schools, we will share it. For now, I hope everyone will be sensitive to the range of emotions that may surface among families, students, and teachers and continue to help students with remote learning.

I appreciate all that you are doing to support learning and the well-being of your community during these unprecedented times.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Riley  
Commissioner