



WESTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Honoring Tradition, Inspiring Excellence, Shaping the Future

EMILY J. PARKS
Superintendent of Schools

APRIL 17 UPDATE FOR FAMILIES

April 17, 2020

Dear Westwood Families:

Late last week, the Massachusetts Commissioner of Education, Jeff Riley, announced that he has cancelled this spring's administration of MCAS testing (and MCAS-Alt) in grades 3-10. This decision provides some welcome relief for both students and teachers. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education has not yet determined whether to modify or waive the requirements of the competency determination for high school graduation. Luckily, this decision is not pertinent to Westwood as all of our seniors have already met this standard.

We know that this period of time is presenting some unique parenting challenges. I want to alert you to some upcoming presentations and community resources:

- On **April 21 from 7-8pm**, Jon Mattleman, Massachusetts' Clinical Director of Minding Your Mind, is offering a free webinar for parents and caregivers, "[Teens, Tweens, and Quarantine](#)," that will focus on the impact of COVID-19 on that age group. Some of you may have seen the presentation, "The Secret Life of a Massachusetts Teen," that Mr. Mattleman did last November for Westwood parents.
- Westwood Youth and Family Services is offering a program, "Parenting in Uncertain Times," on **April 28 from 12-1pm**. We will provide more information soon about how to register for the event and submit questions to the panelists.
- To support the well-being of our families, Westwood offers access to the INTERFACE Mental Health Referral Helpline, administered by William James College. This is a free, confidential mental health outpatient referral service for children, adults, and families where callers are matched with licensed mental health providers. For more information, please visit <https://interface.williamjames.edu/>.

We are all waiting for an update from the Governor about the duration of the school closure. We anticipate hearing something soon. As always, please let your building principal know if there is anything that the District can do to support your family.

I will leave you with three things that have lifted my spirits this week: an [article in the Boston Globe](#) about the Westwood High School Student Council's *Socially Distant but Not Socially Isolated* campaign, a [video created by the faculty at Martha Jones](#) that was featured on WCVB-Ch. 5, and a slide show of the [Downey School's faculty car parade](#). They are all good reminders that our sense of community in Westwood is alive and well! I hope everyone has a good weekend.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Emily J. Parks".

Emily Parks
Superintendent