



April 30, 2020

Dear Excel High School Families,

As you know, last week **Governor Baker announced that schools will remain closed through the end of this academic year.** We were sad to hear this news, as I imagine many of you were. We deeply miss being able to see our students and being able to learn and grow together in person. We feel such sadness for our seniors and the missed opportunities to celebrate them and the impacts they have made on our Excel community over the last four years!

We are also grateful that we can continue to provide academic opportunities to students during this closure. Our teachers are working hard to prepare students for the next grade level, for their upcoming AP exams, and to ensure all students have access to meaningful learning opportunities in each of their classes. We have been so impressed with the efforts of our students to stay connected to school and to engage with their teachers, advisors, and college and career counselors. While we know that this closure has presented many challenges to all of us, we know that our students are strong and resilient, and we will get through this together.

As families, we want to make sure you know how to reach us at Excel and know what to expect for your child's education during this uncertain time.

**We have returned from April break.** Teachers are continuing to check-in and post assignments on Google classroom.

**Teachers remain available to all students from 12-2 PM daily, Monday through Friday.** In addition, all advisors are reaching out to contact families or students at least once per week to check in on how they are doing. If your student has problems with his/her Chromebook, please ask your child to contact his/her advisor. Advisors can help with many issues and can get your child in touch with our technology team for more help or a replacement Chromebook if needed.

**Quarter 3 Family Conferences: Before April Break, Excel Academy Charter High School hosted Quarter 3 family conferences virtually.** If you were not able to speak with your child's advisor, an administrator will be reaching out to you, so that you can hold the conference.

**Grading and Work Guidelines in Q4:** Below are the grading policies in place during our closure.

- Students will continue to receive work in all their classes that they can access online while the school is closed.
- Students will be graded for the work they complete during our closure; the lowest grade a student can receive for work is a 70.
- If a student completes less than 25% of assignments in Q4, that student may receive a grade of "incomplete" and be assigned summer school to complete the work with the support of teachers in the building.
- If a student feels they cannot complete work for a particular class in light of other needs during this pandemic, the student should talk to their teacher or adviser. Teachers or advisers can either provide support with the work or excuse the work if that is appropriate.
- Students whose yearly average grade is between 60-70 in a class will also be assigned summer school, in line with Excel's policies. Summer school is a chance to raise their grade and GPA.

- Students whose yearly average grade is below 60 will either need to repeat the course or attend summer school; this will be determined in a meeting with administrators at the end of the year.

**Update on Testing: DESE has cancelled MCAS this spring for grades 3-10.** We are awaiting further guidance from the state on whether they will modify or waive the requirements of the competency determination for high school graduation and will be in touch as soon as we have more information. **AP tests will continue to take place from May 11-26th**, and families who have a student in an AP class should receive a separate letter outlining specific AP test dates and next steps for students. Please reach this letter and reach out to the school if you did not receive it.

**Field Trips:** All field trips this spring have been cancelled. If you had already paid for a field trip this spring, you should have received a refund. If you have not received a refund, please let your student's adviser know, and they can request a refund for you.

**Meal Service:** We are currently serving around 1,000 meals per week and will continue doing so between the hours of 10am and 12pm. You can come get a "grab-and-go" package with breakfast and lunch on **Monday, Wednesday, and Friday** from two sites: Excel Academy - Chelsea and Excel Academy Charter High School. If you need help locating food providers closer to your home, please reach out to Estevan Puerta at 617-466-9384 (Estevan speaks English and Spanish).

**Senior Events:** Now that we know that school will be closed for the year, we are working to plan alternative celebrations for our graduating seniors and are still determining which events we will hold virtually or reschedule for a later date. We will be in contact with senior families directly over the next few weeks to share updated information. Please reach out to your child's advisor if you have any questions.

Finally, I'd like to remind you to visit our webpage specifically dedicated to COVID-19:

<https://www.excelacademy.org/coronavirusupdates/> for the latest details on our preparedness activities, response to this evolving situation, and coordinated family resources (including more information on community resources such as food, internet access, and access to unemployment benefits).

Please continue to be well, and reach out with any questions. To all of our students and families: **We miss you!**

Thank you for all that you do,

Nina

Head of School, High School  
Excel Academy Charter Schools