April 17, 2020

Dear Excel Families,

We know that our communities are being particularly impacted by the Coronavirus outbreak - Chelsea has the highest rate of infection in Massachusetts, and East Boston has the highest rate in Boston. Please know that we will always be here to support you and your students, and particularly during this challenging time.

In our ongoing effort to connect you with the most current information and ways to get assistance, this letter outlines a wide range of community resources. As always you can also feel free to call 857.256.2459 to speak with the Excel Academy Benefits Access Team about health insurance, SNAP, or any other questions.

**Excel Academy Updates  
We will be closed next week for April break (the week of April 20-24th).** **Meal service will still be provided** (see below for details), but students are not expected to complete assignments on Google classroom and teachers will not be available during the typical 12-2 PM window. We will resume teacher check-ins and work posted on Google classroom on Monday, April 27th.

**After April break, teachers will remain available 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.

We have yet to receive further guidance from the state on re-opening, but we will be in touch as soon as more information becomes available. Currently, we will be closed at least until Monday, May 4th.

**National Guard in Chelsea**

The City of Chelsea announced that the Massachusetts National Guard will be helping with the distribution of food and other essential supplies. They are here solely on a humanitarian mission to provide help to the City, at the City's specific request. They may wear a uniform, but they are not the U.S. military. Members of the National Guard will not inquire about immigration status. They are here to help during this emergency.

The City of Chelsea is asking all residents to STAY AT HOME at all hours, unless you must travel for reasons such as essential work, essential food, or essential medication. If you cannot leave your home and do not have any other way to get food, call 311 or 617-466-4209. See here for more information: [www.chelseama.gov/home/news/message-chelsea-residents](https://www.chelseama.gov/home/news/message-chelsea-residents)

**What to do if you are sick?**  
Your doctor is the best person to speak with if you believe you may have been exposed to or may be sick from COVID-19. There is an extensive healthcare network in place, and your doctor is an important part of it. If you are experiencing coronavirus symptoms including **fever, sore throat, cough, runny nose, muscle aches, shortness of breath or loss of smell**, your doctor may advise that you get tested. You may also contact these trusted healthcare organizations in the community.

* **East Boston Neighborhood Health Center (EBNHC):** Call 617-569-5800.
* **Massachusetts General Hospital Chelsea (MGH Chelsea):** Call 617-724-7000.
  + Information in English: [www.massgeneral.org/news/coronavirus](https://www.massgeneral.org/news/coronavirus/)
  + Information in Spanish: [www.massgeneral.org/es/coronavirus](https://www.massgeneral.org/es/coronavirus)

**Testing and treatment for COVID-19 related symptoms is available at EBNHC and MGH Chelsea regardless of immigration status, health insurance, or ability to pay.**

**Local Financial Support and Community Assistance**

There are a number of trusted community groups who are providing direct assistance to families in East Boston and Chelsea:

Chelsea Collaborative: [www.chelseacollab.org/](https://www.chelseacollab.org/)

* The One Chelsea Fund will be providing direct financial support to Chelsea families who have been impacted by COVID-19, and the Chelsea Collaborative is one of the organizations helping get money to families. They are also looking for volunteers to help deliver food and other necessities, for those who have the ability to do so.

Mutual Aid East Boston: [whatsupeastie.com/coronavirusresponse/mutualaideastie/](https://whatsupeastie.com/coronavirusresponse/mutualaideastie/)

* Connecting individuals to existing networks of support in the East Boston community to maximize mutual aid.

United Way: [unitedwaymassbay.org/covid-19/get-help/](https://unitedwaymassbay.org/covid-19/get-help/)

* Individuals who have been financially impacted by the COVID-19 crisis can find assistance through United Way’s 2-1-1 service.

**Food Resources**

**Meal Service at Excel is still available, including the entire week of April vacation.** We are currently serving around 1,000 meals per week and will continue doing so between the hours of 10am and 12pm, Monday through Friday. You can come get a “grab-and-go” package with breakfast and lunch 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).

Additionally, Boston Public Schools and Chelsea Public Schools will offer meals daily at a number of locations.

In East Boston, these sites will be open from 8:30-11:30 AM at numerous sites:

* Paris Street Community Center, 112 Paris Street
* East Boston YMCA, 215 Bremen Street
* Salesian Boys & Girls Club, 150 Byron Street
* East Boston YMCA, 54 Ashley Street
* BCYF Martin Pino Community Center, 86 Boardman Street

In Chelsea, food will be available at the following locations between 11:30 AM-1:00 PM:

* Mary C. Burke Complex Parking Lot, 300 Crescent Avenue
* Williams Middle School Parking Lot, 180 Walnut Street
* Clark Avenue Middle School front entrance, 8 Clark Avenue
* Chelsea High School front entrance, 299 Everett Avenue
* St. Rose School courtyard, 580 Broadway
* View more sites in Chelsea in the COVID-19 Food Resource Guide from Healthy Chelsea: <http://healthychelsea.org/covid-19-food-resource-guide/>

Many other sites throughout Boston are also available - see a full list of meal sites at: [www.bostonpublicschools.org/coronavirus](https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/coronavirus).

**Additional Information**

The Cities of Chelsea and Boston have their own COVID-19 websites that provide additional information about food and health resources:

<https://www.chelseama.gov/coronavirusupdates>

<https://www.boston.gov/news/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-boston>

Finally, I’d like to remind you to visit our webpage specifically dedicated to COVID-19: [www.excelacademy.org/coronavirusupdates/](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 be safe, and thank you as always,

  
CEO, Excel Academy Charter Schools