



August 31, 2020

Dear Families,

The first day of school for high school students is September 15th, and we will be sending more information about orientation, supply pickup, and student schedules next week.

**Announcements & Updates:**

- **Chromebooks:** As we approach the first day of school, we want to ensure that all students have working Chromebooks in preparation for remote learning. Students beginning 9th grade this year will receive their Chromebooks in mid-September. **Rising 10th, 11th and 12th graders who need support with their Chromebook should bring their Chromebook to the main office by Friday, September 4th so that the machine can be repaired.** Students will need to leave their machines at the school and pick them up after they have been repaired. The main office is open Monday through Friday, from 9 AM to 3 PM.
- **Health Packets:** The annual health packet was sent out to families in July, and had a due date of August 1, 2020. We know that families may be unable to complete the health forms now due to challenges with getting school physical or immunization appointments right now. Please reach out to our School Nurse, Denise Weaver, by emailing [dweaver@excelacademy.org](mailto:dweaver@excelacademy.org) if you need assistance. We ask that families complete the health paperwork as they are able and return to the school when it is completed.
- **Phone Calls Friday, 9/4:** Advisors will begin reaching out to families by phone on Friday, September 4<sup>th</sup> to discuss our reopening plan and address any questions you may have.

**Excel Academy Charter High School Fall 2020 Reopening Plan FAQs**

**Q: When is the first day of school and how will Excel be starting the school year?**

A: Excel Academy will begin the school year with remote learning. The first day for the High School will be on Tuesday, September 15th, 2020.

**Q: Will students be able to go into the school building? When students will be able to return to school?**

A: Your child's safety is Excel's number one priority. We are following state guidelines, as well as monitoring the rates of cases in our communities in East Boston and Chelsea. During this opening phase, Phase 0, there will be no in-person learning. When it is safe, we hope to offer in-person learning opportunities (such as labs for science classes), which students may opt-in to. Each family will be able to choose for their child to learn remotely all year.

**Q: When will my child know his/her/their class schedule?**

A: Your student's class list, including the course names and his/her/their teachers, will be available on Powerschool in the next couple of weeks. Your child will also soon be receiving an individualized schedule from his/her/their advisor, with Zoom links for each class in the early part of September.

**Q: What will the school day look like for our students?**

A: When we open on September 15th all students will be learning remotely. The schedule below is our tentative plan for academic instruction while we are in phase 0.

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>8:00-10:30 AM</b>	Independent Work Time	Independent Work Time	Independent Work Time	Independent Work Time	Independent Work Time
<b>10:30-10:55 AM</b>	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory
<b>11:00-11:55 AM</b>	Instruction (Live on Zoom)	Instruction (Live on Zoom)	Instruction (Live on Zoom)	Instruction (Live on Zoom)	Instruction (Live on Zoom)
<b>12:00-12:30 PM</b>	Lunch/ Office Hours	Lunch/ Office Hours	Lunch/ Office Hours	Lunch/ Office Hours	Lunch/ Office Hours
<b>12:30-2:25 PM</b>	Instruction (Live on Zoom)	Instruction (Live on Zoom)	Instruction (Live on Zoom)	Instruction (Live on Zoom)	Instruction (Live on Zoom)
<b>2:30-3:00 PM</b>	Office Hours	Office Hours	Office Hours	Office Hours	Office Hours

**Q: How will my child know who his/her/their advisor is? When will they be able to contact them?**

A: The week of September 1st advisors will be reaching out to you and your child, at which point they will share their contact information.

**Q: How will students be able to access academic support throughout the school year, including knowing who they can reach out to when they need help with their schoolwork?**

A: We will be offering more robust online academic support this year than was offered in the spring. Online classes will be scheduled live, so that students are seeing and interacting with their teachers, advisors, and classmates every day. Students will also have access to video recordings that correspond to their assignments. Additionally, teachers will have office hours each morning, during which time they are available to support your child with any assignments or other questions.

**Q: How will students be able to access mental-health support?**

A: The week of September 1st advisors will be reaching out to students to discuss their needs and may refer to counselors if needed. Additionally, our Student Supports Team will remain available to support students with higher-tiered needs for counseling and mental-health support.

**Q: How will students be able to access social opportunities, or ask for support?**

A: We hope that over the next couple of months we are able to provide opportunities for connection through socially-distanced, outdoor activities. While we cannot coordinate those at this point, due to safety risks, we are planning to be able to offer these opportunities as soon as it is safe to do so.

**Q: My child has a Special Education Plan (i.e. an IEP, 504 Plan, etc.); will they continue to receive these services? How can I contact my child's case manager?**

A: The week of September 1st case managers and advisors will reach out to students with special education services, mental health services, or other needs to discuss the plan for continued services and support.

**Q: Do students need to be in uniform for Zoom learning? When will I need to have uniforms for my child? Where can I purchase these uniforms?**

A: Students do not need to be in Excel uniform during remote learning, though we will have general dress expectations for students that we will share closer to the start of the year. It will not require students to wear Excel-branded clothing. If/when we are able to have programming in school we will give additional guidelines at that time. If you'd like to purchase uniforms for your child, you may do so at <https://eahsuniforms.itemorder.com/sale>.

**Q: Will meals still be available for pick up at the school?**

A: Until September 14th, complete school breakfasts and lunches are available on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 AM-12:00 PM at both our Excel High School (401 Bremen Street, East Boston) and Excel Chelsea (180 2nd Street, Chelsea) locations. This program is open to all children, including children who do not attend Excel. Beginning September 15th Excel students will be able to pick up meals across all 4 campuses at different times of the week, and we will send out more details closer to September 15th.

**Q: I need support with P-EBT (Pandemic EBT). Who can I contact?**

A: P-EBT was a program that covered school meals missed in May and June, totaling up to \$399 in benefits. No new additional funds have been added to P-EBT cards this summer, and we do not yet know if Massachusetts will continue this program into the fall. Families should contact the school if they need to update their mailing address so that we can submit the correct address to DTA in the event additional P-EBT funds are released this fall. For all other questions parents should contact the DTA Assistance Line at (877) 382-2363.

**Q: Will the school be offering sports and extracurricular activities during the fall?**

A: Excel will follow the guidelines set forth by the MIAA in conjunction with safe programming for students, based on the rate of cases in our local communities, and share more information about this when a decision is made.

**Q: Will there be MCAS testing? What does this mean for my 10th grade student?**

A: As of August 19, we are still waiting on information from the state regarding the MCAS testing requirements for the 2020-2021 school year. We will be prepared to support all students with any MCAS testing requirements once we receive guidance from the state.

**Q: For seniors, will there still be SAT preparation and support for college applications and other post-secondary plans?**

A: Our College and Post-Secondary Team (CAPS) will continue to provide support as we have in the past, and will be doing so in a highly individualized way. Your student's college and career counselor will be in touch with you to plan the best way to support your child to achieve his/her/their goal for post-graduation.