

March 31, 2020

Notice Regarding Special Education Support During Extended Closure

On March 25, 2020, the Governor announced that mandated public health closures for all in-person educational operations for public and private elementary and secondary schools would extend until at least May 4, 2020. We understand that the extended public health closures present even more complex challenges for all families, particularly those families of scholars with disabilities. In response to the extended school closure and in line with updated state and federal guidance, Alma del Mar is shifting from an optional enrichment resource model to a remote learning opportunity model that aims to include, where appropriate and feasible, remote educator-led direct instruction and feedback focused on reinforcing and deepening content knowledge and skills already taught this school year. As part of this model, and to the extent appropriate, Alma del Mar plans to provide remote educator-led specialized instruction in line with scholars' individualized special education goals and needs.

We understand this is a monumental undertaking for the entire school community and that nothing can replace the in-person schooling experience. However, Alma del Mar seeks to ensure scholars receive meaningful and engaging continuous learning opportunities during school closure and ensure scholars with disabilities are provided with meaningful opportunities to work towards their IEP goals consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of the school community. We appreciate your continued patience and understanding in this process.

In line with state recommendations, the Scholar Support Teams at both our Sarah D. Ottiwell Campus and our Frederick Douglass Campus are hard at work creating schedules and reaching out to families to offer remote contact and special education and related service options. While you are not required to participate in these remote opportunities, it is highly recommended that scholars participate in any support offered by their specialist in order to prevent substantial regression in previously learned curriculum and individual need areas (IEP goals).

Please be advised that in line with state recommendations, the district is not advancing the general education curriculum with overall remote learning opportunities; rather, the district is providing all scholars with opportunities for educator-led reinforcement and feedback on previously learned skills and knowledge from earlier in the school year.

However, should the Network choose to advance learning for scholars, the Network will make every effort to provide FAPE to all scholars. Alma del Mar's special education supports and services during the remainder of school closures will focus on providing equal opportunities for scholars with disabilities to engage in reinforcement instruction and feedback as well as opportunities for specialized instruction to meet individualized needs in IEP goal areas.

We understand these are not ideal circumstances and hope to continue to collaborate positively and productively with families around the provision of remote learning opportunities. Scholar Support Staff are happy to connect with you on ideas about ensuring accessible instruction and materials are available to all scholars. Teachers and providers are also available for check-ins, trouble-shooting technological hurdles and answering questions about educational learning opportunity materials and reinforcement assignments.

Please note that this notice is for services temporarily provided while scholars are out of school due to state-ordered public health closures. This does not change your scholar's IEP or impact their "stay put" rights. Your scholar's current IEP is still in place, and regular services will resume when schools reopen. It is our responsibility to do as much as we can to provide services to scholars in light of the unprecedented circumstances.

Please see the enclosed Alma Del Mar Expectations of Scholars and Families for Appropriate Virtual Technology Use.

We are excited about moving our work forward and continuing to support all learners at Alma del Mar! Please reach out with specific questions or concerns.

Best,

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Enclosure: Alma Del Mar Expectations of Scholars and Families for Appropriate Virtual Technology Use

ALMA DEL MAR'S EXPECTATIONS OF SCHOLARS AND FAMILIES
FOR APPROPRIATE VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGY USE

Alma del Mar Charter School is dedicated to providing engaging and effective remote learning opportunities for our scholars. As part of our remote learning opportunities, the Network is offering these opportunities via a virtual platform. Prior to engaging in these virtual opportunities, the Network seeks to clarify expectations around appropriate use of virtual technologies for educational opportunities.

1. The Network strictly prohibits screenshots, pictures, audio/video recording and distribution of any virtual educational experience in order to protect scholar privacy, proactively prevent potential cyberbullying, prevent the distribution of copyrighted materials and comply with Massachusetts law. Please note that in Massachusetts, it is illegal to record another person through any medium without his or her knowledge.
2. Scholars, and where appropriate parents/guardians, agree to engage in virtual educational experiences in a quiet, private area to the extent practicable given the circumstances, in order to minimize background noise and distractions and to protect the integrity of student engagement as well as scholar confidentiality.
3. Parents/guardians and other household members who normally are not privy to day-to-day classroom and group service discussions agree to respect and keep confidential any personal or private information (e.g. disability status) inadvertently discovered about other scholars due to proximity of virtual education.

As a reminder, the Network's Acceptable Use Policy applies to virtual learning, including school-issued devices and networks. This notice is posted on our website.

For questions regarding school policies and procedures, the Network directs parties to www.almadelmar.org. For all additional questions, concerns, or inquiries, parties may contact:

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