

Elizabeth McGonagle
Executive Director

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Susan Donelan
Dir. of Student Services

Dr. Jean Kenney
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Date: March 20, 2020
To: Helene H. Bettencourt, Associate Commissioner
Nina M. Marchese, OASES Director
From: Elizabeth McGonagle
Re: Emergency Closure of The Education Cooperative

Please be advised that The Education Cooperative closed effective March 16, 2020.

The superintendents and executive directors of the school districts and special education collaboratives of the Tri-County Roundtable developed a coordinated plan to close all of our schools for at least one week, starting Monday, March 16, 2020, in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Tri-County Roundtable is a professional association comprised of the following school districts and special education collaboratives: ACCEPT Collaborative, Ashland, Dedham, Dover Sherborn, Framingham, Franklin, Holliston, Hopkinton, King Philip Regional, Maynard, Medfield, Medway, Millis, Natick, Needham, Norfolk, Norfolk County Agricultural School, Plainville, South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School, The Education Cooperative, Tri County Regional Vocational School, Walpole, Wellesley, Westwood, and Wrentham.

We decided this in consultation with our local boards of health and medical and scientific experts in our communities. Several factors influenced our decision. We reviewed the recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, and Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. We considered the impact of the virus on the vulnerable members of our communities. This was particularly relevant to TEC as we provide services to high risk and medically fragile students from over 25 communities including districts with quarantine issues directly related to the exposure during the Biogen conference. Finally, we recognized the challenges of fostering learning in the atmosphere of uncertainty created by this unprecedented situation.

TEC was in communication with families as soon as we became aware of the possibility of school cancellations. The Education Cooperative notified all parents and guardians through a memo emailed to all families as well as distributed by hard copy for families with limited access to email. Memos were sent home and posted on our website on March 2nd, March 12th and the

decision regarding closure was announced and posted on March 13th. Additionally, a message alerting parents to the emergency closure of all TEC programs was sent to all families by the Executive Director using our emergency notification system, K-12 alerts on Friday, March 13, 2020 at 6:00pm.

TEC staff collaboratively developed and implemented plans specifically designed to engage, challenge and support the unique needs of their students. Students in need of technology were provided with a Chromebook to take home to facilitate access to educational resources on March 12th and 13th. Equipment for our severe special needs students was sent home or delivered to the home by TEC staff on March 13th and 14th. Additionally, all students and families were immediately contacted by their teacher by phone and email to communicate a specific plan to provide access to educational resources and to establish the connection with their teachers and all related service providers. TEC Staff has actively communicated with students and families throughout the closure period providing access to educational resources, enrichment activities, and guidance from our talented related service providers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth McGonagle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Elizabeth McGonagle