



Central Administration

25 Linnell Circle, Billerica, MA 01821 * Tel: (978)528-7826 * <http://www.valleycollaborative.org>

March 20, 2020
9:00 a.m.

Dear Valley Community,

I believe during this time of uncertainty that is upon us all, the power of communication and connection is a top priority. On behalf of myself and the staff at Valley Collaborative, I wanted to share some updates and information as they have become available.

Learning and Related Services:

On Monday, March 16, 2020, Valley communicated and released to all families, member and non-member districts, and our greater community at large, an Academic Outreach Enrichment Guide and a Related Services Outreach Enrichment Guide. Both of these guides contained some initial enrichment ideas for students. The opportunities and activities within both guides are for enrichment purposes only and are not mandatory, nor are they meant to replicate learning and/or services that would be provided if Valley was open. The content of both guides are offered instead, as opportunities for families to access enrichment activities, if they so choose. The Academic Outreach Enrichment Guide and the Related Services Outreach Enrichment Guide have continuously evolved since their inception on Monday. As these guides are 'live' Google docs, they will continuously be updated with new ideas, activities, and potentially reconfigured based on the skilled Valley professionals dedicated to supporting your students during this closure.

On Wednesday, March 18, 2020, the Valley Leadership team held a virtual meeting specifically to reorganize these guides to ensure they are robust and user friendly. Valley's dedicated teachers and therapists are electronically collaborating together, with our program Principals and Assistant Principals, to structure the content of both Guides while brainstorming additional areas to focus enrichment opportunities - organized by school, classroom, subject, and/or therapeutic discipline. It is our intent to continue to update each guide throughout Valley's closure as a way to keep families and students connected. Teachers and therapists are reaching out to families/students to offer support, where needed. Links to these Guides can be found below:

[Academic Outreach Enrichment Guide](#)

[Related Services Outreach Enrichment Guide](#)

The literacy team is writing up the first of their weekly blogs during the shutdown. In these blogs, the elementary and middle/high school reading teachers will provide parents with information, activities, and resources. These suggestions will cover students from grades K-12. Each week a new topic will be covered. The literacy team has also put together leveled book lists where parents can use their student's reading score to match appropriately challenging reading material.

To date, each school has had their social workers and teachers reach out to all families to check on supports that are needed. At this time, every family that has identified food as a concern has been connected with their home district for daily food distribution. Valley remains committed to supporting our families in every need. Our social workers and teachers will continue to have contact twice a week to address any concerns that arise.

Technology Outreach:

In anticipation of providing online resources, the Collaborative is aware that some students may not have access to a computer or the internet. In support, the Principals reached out to all parents and guardians to assess their at home computer/technology situation. The Collaborative established a program to lend students Chromebooks that will be made available for the period of closure so that those students without computer access at home will be able to participate if they so choose. A staggered pick up time was established to practice the recommended social distancing practices. A total of 27 Chromebooks were handed out to our Valley families on Thursday, March 19, 2020. Additionally, the Collaborative has forwarded information regarding free/reduced cost internet from Comcast.

Adult programming:

In regard to our Adult Services Programs which are funded by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB) and Social Security Administration (SSA), program supervisors continue to reach out every Tuesday and Friday to offer whatever support to our families we can. Our Adult Services community has expressed that they are very grateful for the contact and will reach out with questions as they arise. The Adult Services Supervisory Team is meeting via video conference at least daily to share updates and resources. Department wide staff meetings are being held weekly. Valley has also reached out to all of our community business partners to ensure work and volunteer opportunities will continue to be available to the adults in our Today & Tomorrow Program when Valley reopens. Katie Mick, Undersecretary of Human Services for the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, reported Wednesday that guidance for provider program funding during the COVID-19 Pandemic should be available Friday, March 20, 2020.

Health Update:

At this time there have been no reported cases of COVID-19 within the Valley Staff or Student community. We have been made aware by the Billerica Board of Health of 3 confirmed cases in Billerica. The local health departments have already contacted you directly if you have been considered a “close contact”. We will continuously notify the Valley Community with updates from our local boards of health, as well as the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Please email Valley Collaborative’s Lead Nurse, Jessica Scalzi, at jscalzi@valleycollaborative.org if you or your family have tested positive for COVID-19 or been asked to quarantine due to exposure.

If you or your family is in need of Non-Emergency Assistance, please call 2-1-1. Mass 2-1-1 is a 24/7 service that was created as a resource to connect callers to information about critical health and human services programs. Call 2-1-1 for information about the location of open shelters, transportation or other restrictions due to a declared state of emergency, post disaster assistance,

ways to volunteer or donate, or other services you or your family may need. For more information, please visit <http://www.mass211.org/>.

Employee Assistance Program Information:

Mass4You is an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offered by the Group Insurance Commission (GIC) and Commonwealth of Massachusetts for all active, state and municipal employees and their families who are eligible for GIC benefits. Enrollment in GIC health insurance coverage is not required to access services offered through Mass4You and participation in program benefits and services is confidential. To access Mass4You EAP benefits, such as finding a provider, getting access to counseling and all other EAP services:

- Call 1 (844) 263-1982 (available 24/7)
- TTY Support for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing: 711-1-844-263-1983
- Visit www.liveandworkwell.com

Please visit the following links to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's website for Information and Resources for Special Educators:

[COVID-19 Information and Resources for Special Educators](#)

[DESE Supplemental Educational Resources](#)

We will update our Valley Community weekly with this newsletter, but please reach out at any time, as will we, if our status changes.

Be well,

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

Chris A. Scott, Ph.D.
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