

From: Scarcelli, Fabio (DESE) <Fabio.Scarcelli@mass.gov>
Sent: Thursday, May 21, 2020 12:23 PM
To: Marchese, Nina (DESE) <nina.m.marchese2@state.ma.us>
Cc: Johnston, Russell (DESE) <russell.johnston@state.ma.us>
Subject: Update from OASES

Dear Executive Directors of Collaboratives, and Executive Directors, Program Directors and Education Directors from Approved Special Education Schools,

It is difficult to believe that we are in week 9 of this pandemic, but here we are working harder than ever to ensure students receive the support and services they need.

Thanks to Joanne Haley-Sullivan and Elizabeth Becker for being members of DESE's "Return to School Committee." I am confident the concerns and unique challenges your programs face will be addressed with their representation.

Updates:

New resource from Chief State School Officers (CCSSO):

Promoting Rigorous Outcomes and Growth by Redesigning Educational Services for Students with Disabilities (PROGRESS Center). The PROGRESS Center will help private, public, and charter schools improve their capacity to design and implement high-quality, evidence-based educational programs to meet the standards of the *Andrew F.* decision. The expected outcomes are an increase in knowledge, awareness, and use of resources to improve quality and implementation, and ultimately an ecosystem of educators who can design and implement quality special education programs. The PROGRESS Center is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs, and is housed at the American Institutes for Research (AIR). AIR is partnering with National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD), Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), Evergreen Evaluation and Consulting (EEC), and a group of distinguished center advisors to support the Center's work. Together the team brings extensive expertise in evidence-based practices, special education law and policy, and engaging educators, families, and leaders to develop and implement high-quality educational programs for students with disabilities.

The PROGRESS Center will build knowledge about what it takes to develop and implement these programs by:

- Exploring what is known from research, policy, and law;
- Gathering information from stakeholders including families and young adults with disabilities;
- Sharing strategies from schools that are showing success with improving outcomes for students with disabilities;
- Working collaboratively with stakeholders to address challenges through annual thought leader meetings.

To learn more about the Center, staff, and activities watch this short video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uK3ha3Wl0bg&feature=youtu.be>

The website of the PROGRESS Center is: <https://promotingprogress.org/>

As issued on May 13, 2020 from the Commissioner's Office:

Remote Learning Survey

Dear Superintendents, Charter School Leaders, Collaborative Directors, Directors of Approved Special Education Schools, and Assistant Superintendents,

Please take a few minutes to help us understand the current state of remote learning in the Commonwealth and your evolving needs by filling out the following survey by **Friday, May 22**:

<https://www.surveymzmo.com/s3/5595059/Spring-2020-Remote-Learning-Survey>.

We are collecting information about remote learning plans from all districts, charter schools, vocational technical schools, approved special education schools, and collaboratives across the Commonwealth. The purpose of this effort is to better understand the various approaches that districts and schools are taking to engage students in learning while school buildings are closed.

The survey results will inform DESE's ongoing efforts to prioritize areas of guidance and support and will also inform the public and key stakeholders about our collective efforts to provide effective remote learning programs to all students.

Thank you for providing this information and for your continued efforts on behalf of our students.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner

Your input in this survey is needed because as stated at the top of the survey, "This information will inform DESE's ongoing efforts to prioritize areas of guidance and support, and inform the public and key stakeholders about our collective efforts to provide effective remote learning programs to all students."

The Restraint Security Portal will be on May 22, 2020 for certification of restraints, **even if there are no restraints in your program**. Look for the specific information in the update from Commissioner Riley later this week.

Please remember to refer to DESE's updated website where the home page has all of the resources you can imagine. Information is being updated and posted constantly. The most applicable section for most of you is the Special Education section but feel free to look at the many other resources and trainings DESE is offering. www.doe.mass.edu.

An updated list of committee members on the Department's "Return to School Working Group" and the subcommittees can be found at:

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/return-to-school-wrokgroup.html>.

I know many of us were disappointed we didn't hear anything more about ESY or summer programming, so continue to plan as best as you are able and we are hopeful for an update from the Governor soon.

Recommendation:

Speaking of Hope, if you haven't even seen Some Good News (SGN) with John Krasinski, it is worth your 20 minutes. If you only have 5 minutes, watch 14:06-19:35 which is powerful. It shows that despite everything going on with this pandemic, there are still good things happening –proms, graduations, births, parades, patients recovering....what people and how people are living and making the best of where they are and what they are dealing with. It is sure to bring a tear to your eye or put a smile on your face, or maybe both!

At the following link, scroll down to the second video (the first video is a 1:47 overview) to watch the segment but definitely watch **14:06-19:35**:

<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/some-good-news-john-krasinski-spotlights-viewers-taking-a-break-1294944>