Dear Charter Leaders, Business Managers and Board Chairs,

This update includes information about OCSSR communications, a survey regarding technology needs, an explanation of how charter tuition payments and reimbursements impact district net school spending calculations, an open meeting law webinar opportunity, Massachusetts Partnerships for Youth workshops, and the Q&A from the Commissioner’s call with leaders on Friday, April 3rd. Please share with your staff.

Best to you all.

-Lee DeLorenzo

**Contacting us: Contacting you**

We are purposefully not reaching out with requests to charter school leaders at this time such that you can focus on supporting your students, staff, and families. If you would like to engage with our office on any ongoing work (review of site visit reports, accountability plan revision, governance requests), please do so.

* The best way to [get in touch with us is by individual email](http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/contactbytopic.html) or at charterschools@doe.mass.edu.

**COVID-19 Statewide Technology Needs Assessment**

We know that since the statewide school closure, many districts/charter schools have surveyed parents to assess what their needs are with respect to access to both broadband internet and devices (desktop computers, laptop computers, Chromebooks, and/or tablets). As a state, we're hoping to aggregate the data you've collected thus far, so that we can target additional support and resources to those districts and families most in need.

If you have data on these nine questions, please share so that we can better understand the need for digital services and devices statewide. If you don't have precise numbers, estimates are better than no data at all. Thank you.

* Please complete this [survey](https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/5520609/COVID-19-State-wide-Technology-Needs-Assessment?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=651b7f3c-8826-41c0-999a-1e4b8ca9d08b): <https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/5520609/COVID-19-State-wide-Technology-Needs-Assessment?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=651b7f3c-8826-41c0-999a-1e4b8ca9d08b>

**Explanation of how charter tuition payments and reimbursements impact district net school spending calculations**

During a recent call between charter leaders and the Department’s School Finance staff, a few questions came up related to the relationship between district’s net school spending and charter school tuition. The Department’s School Finance team has created the following explanation. Please direct any follow up questions to us or the School Finance team.

As part of the Chapter 70 program, the state establishes net school spending requirements for every school district, which is the sum of the district’s required local contribution and Chapter 70 aid each fiscal year. The Department uses the expenditure data that districts submit on their End of Year Reports to track net school spending compliance. Net school spending includes district general fund operating expenditures, excluding transportation and capital expenditures. Net school spending also includes the out-of-district tuitions that districts pay for charter schools in addition to school choice and special education placements.

When determining net school spending compliance, the Department nets each district’s charter tuition reimbursement against their reported net school spending because the purpose of these funds is to offset the charter tuitions that district​s are assessed (see lines 14b and 15 in the table below). This has the effect of reducing a district’s net school spending, but it does not change the district’s net school spending requirement. This means that the district needs to spend these dollars elsewhere in their budget or the unexpended amount will be carried forward and added to their next year’s requirement. The Department tracks [compliance](http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/chapter70/compliance.html) in this way for both the previous fiscal year (actual net school spending) and for the current fiscal year (budgeted net school spending).



Budgeted net school spending data is a key component in calculating the above foundation spending percentages that we use to set charter school tuition rates. Changes in budgeted net school spending have a direct impact on our quarterly tuition updates. There is a more [detailed explanation](http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/finance/tuition/rates_explain.xls) on the Department's website.

There are two factors that contributed to the decrease in projected fiscal year 2020 tuition between the second and third quarters for many charter schools. The first is that second quarter charter tuition estimates were lower than first quarter estimates for a number of school districts, but, due to timing differences, these lower estimates did not factor into budgeted net school spending until the third quarter tuition update. The Department also distributed additional charter tuition reimbursements between the second and third quarters, including $7.5 million in charter school enrollment growth mitigation aid from the fiscal year 2020 budget and an additional $5 million in charter tuition transition aid from the fiscal year 2019 supplemental budget. These two factors decreased budgeted net school spending for many districts by lowering their charter tuition expenditures and increasing the amount of tuition reimbursement that we netted against their budgeted net school spending. This in turn decreased the above foundation percentages that we applied to many districts’ rates, which decreased the total estimated tuition to charter schools statewide by $5 million.

* Please contact Hadley Cabral or Rob O’Donnell if you have any questions.

**Upcoming Open Meeting Law Webinar Training, April 9th**

Due to public health recommendations regarding social distancing, the Attorney General Office’s spring regional trainings previously scheduled to be held in Stow, Westwood, Great Barrington, and Barnstable have been postponed. The AG’s Office will be working to schedule future trainings in these locations. In the meantime, you may participate in an upcoming Webinar training.

Upcoming Open Meeting Law Webinar Trainings
**Thursday, April 9: 12:30pm - 2:00pm**

**Training Registration:**  Individuals interested in attending an educational forum are asked to register in advance by emailing OMLTraining@state.ma.usor by calling (617) 963-2925, and providing: 1) their first and last names; 2) phone number; 3) email address; 4) town of residence; 5) the public body/organization they represent, if applicable; and 6) the date and/or location of the educational forum they will attend.

**Unable to participate in a live training?**
Training videos, which feature the same content as live trainings, are available on our website.

* Visit: [https://www.mass.gov/service-details/open-meeting-law-training-videos](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__mass.us15.list-2Dmanage.com_track_click-3Fu-3Dcb4a8f8dde889f526f9b8ca4e-26id-3D7673b6601d-26e-3D0b7320b6bc&d=DwMFaQ&c=lDF7oMaPKXpkYvev9V-fVahWL0QWnGCCAfCDz1Bns_w&r=j1cvHjg5yDZWP3NFeoA_vEFx9fV4BREnzh6qEDkBBks&m=-uRP_IONBEpBVpK4CGrKBc9HYxqGcKq8e8V1vA6dEM4&s=gDtu42ZzqjkBjLT2nWFjbagpcWGMN9nEkoV0qyBEQEA&e=).

**Updated** **Massachusetts Partnerships for Youth Remote PD Workshops**

Massachusetts Partnerships for Youth (MPY) is offering a series of FREE remote professional development workshops for all Massachusetts K-12 educators during these challenging times.

PDPs will be issued for a minimum of *FIVE* 2-hour sessions.  CEUs will be issued in any increment for most workshops, pending approval.

*Request forms can be found at* [*mpyinc.com/events*](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__r20.rs6.net_tn.jsp-3Ff-3D001Qg-2D5ykaHFqDONvtUzatvrAmyOlN7xyEUVCgoI9DmX-5FNFD9aN7w8eWCH3qSBdsASad-2DC8ICgBMnrKS4cZ4DnP5Vj5ERmGSH7FfiUhGrrKxVRMyb14nAUhi9LEPVyj-2Da1XgRRbZUeqL2xwi-5FdZ0NbfV3Nj7-2DJz8vnF2yjy-2DHKpoCcFG2YHiUzQnA5W2-5Fi0ImMb-26c-3Dot-5F-2DtbJE26pikoJSuRBz6mQs04wk-5FbhQuNWw-2DQjiebrMSuz0v8V9jw-3D-3D-26ch-3DO4YRROZmpyWqWcjp6d1lL4Egy-2Dr1PvR9zsIudbboGAFXQIJDRd8hKQ-3D-3D&d=DwMCaQ&c=lDF7oMaPKXpkYvev9V-fVahWL0QWnGCCAfCDz1Bns_w&r=SbWGMrrvenEnLFosrGYSYpGWrnsxjtGty1IHToWStlU&m=1It_VAyEpbkzHHEl3lsTt3mJmL7XYybMzO1N4msYjWA&s=H7Nv5_UtfV0viY9_LubNlVZV3kOv2o8drpFTcPzWW-E&e=). Certificates will be emailed in June.

**Remote In-Service Workshop Schedule 2020**

1. **﻿Promoting Resilience and Healthy Outcomes for LGBTQ Students**

Presenter: Jeff Perrotti, Senior Consultant of the Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ Students and The Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth

Date: Monday, April 13

Time: 10am-12pm

Overview: This interactive webinar will highlight policies, best practices, and resources for supporting LGBTQ students and families, with a focus on transgender and gender nonconforming students. It will feature the experiences of preK-12 students, parents, and educators who have successfully navigated this terrain. Participants will learn strategies to foster resilience and provide support during this challenging time.

* [**Register Here**](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__r20.rs6.net_tn.jsp-3Ff-3D001Qg-2D5ykaHFqDONvtUzatvrAmyOlN7xyEUVCgoI9DmX-5FNFD9aN7w8eWDj0TlvhtEY5B6K300zTOTaC29tN-5FNY-5Fa10emxwfp6-2DaDggJloNKUfhLOLefZeyDZ5-5FN-5FRMJXJK81c2ZFQIN8voqblWJ7lnOvYOh7bQX9lAOzuzM-2DKB84L3sGv9YG4SPGNze8fl3Q26t-26c-3Dot-5F-2DtbJE26pikoJSuRBz6mQs04wk-5FbhQuNWw-2DQjiebrMSuz0v8V9jw-3D-3D-26ch-3DO4YRROZmpyWqWcjp6d1lL4Egy-2Dr1PvR9zsIudbboGAFXQIJDRd8hKQ-3D-3D&d=DwMCaQ&c=lDF7oMaPKXpkYvev9V-fVahWL0QWnGCCAfCDz1Bns_w&r=SbWGMrrvenEnLFosrGYSYpGWrnsxjtGty1IHToWStlU&m=1It_VAyEpbkzHHEl3lsTt3mJmL7XYybMzO1N4msYjWA&s=zjfjQ3Fa49dZL3EJUfdxxYTrCP9T5ssGR-u8WdwlVTo&e=) **for Promoting Resilience and Healthy Outcomes for LGBTQ Students Workshop**
1. **Engaging with Families during COVID-19**

Presenter: Megan Harding, M.S.W., BRYT Network Family Engagement Specialist

Date: Tuesday, April 14

Time: 10am-12pm

Overview: The coronavirus is here and families are experiencing varying degrees of stress and crisis. This webinar will draw on the experiences of the BRYT Family Engagement Team to share common struggles that parents are experiencing at home during this period. Shared will be some of the tools, supports and strategies that BRYT is offering families.

* [**Register Here**](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__r20.rs6.net_tn.jsp-3Ff-3D001Qg-2D5ykaHFqDONvtUzatvrAmyOlN7xyEUVCgoI9DmX-5FNFD9aN7w8eWDj0TlvhtEY5TWDI0vkLPeoFEbLsXYeSX4wX1rKT44qNDImHMImzjKUjWLDK55aBcvxVeWqf7SF03cu0cc3HafZWFKYG2aCvKvS84eQcPFnLxoq6Fo08DMcN1IiRQsgZaQfDSaF8kG5V-26c-3Dot-5F-2DtbJE26pikoJSuRBz6mQs04wk-5FbhQuNWw-2DQjiebrMSuz0v8V9jw-3D-3D-26ch-3DO4YRROZmpyWqWcjp6d1lL4Egy-2Dr1PvR9zsIudbboGAFXQIJDRd8hKQ-3D-3D&d=DwMCaQ&c=lDF7oMaPKXpkYvev9V-fVahWL0QWnGCCAfCDz1Bns_w&r=SbWGMrrvenEnLFosrGYSYpGWrnsxjtGty1IHToWStlU&m=1It_VAyEpbkzHHEl3lsTt3mJmL7XYybMzO1N4msYjWA&s=wV1iOMOAeNhCTD_BoDdLQ_eCQZqX0z4cVKvsRiSuDDc&e=) **for Engaging with Families during COVID-19 Workshop**
1. **Practicing Positive Psychology**

Speaker: Pam Garramone, M.Ed.

Date: Wednesday, April 15

Time: 10am-12pm

Overview: What can we learn from positive psychology (the science of happiness) that can help us take care of ourselves and others through this pandemic? Learn happier habits that can sustain us now and in the good times to come. Let’s laugh, feel lighter and learn together!

* ﻿[**Register Here**](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__r20.rs6.net_tn.jsp-3Ff-3D001Qg-2D5ykaHFqDONvtUzatvrAmyOlN7xyEUVCgoI9DmX-5FNFD9aN7w8eWDj0TlvhtEY5T5s7Z3U6Ax8K5pj9AJLo8cyYUt1YfHDiJOnnR-2DI0ONoHWtHJemuNFHg3D3MssWwfHVTRMMel3U1-2DoimoRMT8nZLGmeLvMv2UzZGTkEtI4R6WN09t1Wmg-2DtaylvMMGAMm-26c-3Dot-5F-2DtbJE26pikoJSuRBz6mQs04wk-5FbhQuNWw-2DQjiebrMSuz0v8V9jw-3D-3D-26ch-3DO4YRROZmpyWqWcjp6d1lL4Egy-2Dr1PvR9zsIudbboGAFXQIJDRd8hKQ-3D-3D&d=DwMCaQ&c=lDF7oMaPKXpkYvev9V-fVahWL0QWnGCCAfCDz1Bns_w&r=SbWGMrrvenEnLFosrGYSYpGWrnsxjtGty1IHToWStlU&m=1It_VAyEpbkzHHEl3lsTt3mJmL7XYybMzO1N4msYjWA&s=aNL7Sq2kMgkCBCABZHz1oBpmNOhx4bbG1Dmwk6DY6CQ&e=) **for Practicing Positive Psychology Workshop**
1. **Positive Anxiety**

Speaker: Patrick Barbieri, M.Ed., Executive Director, LABBB Collaborative

Date: Thursday, April 16

Time: 10am-12pm

Overview: Anxiety can be described as a state of being overwhelmed, futuristic thinking, perfectionism; followed by physiological symptoms that grip and paralyze us. There is a stigma associated with having anxiety and we are on a mission of trying to rid ourselves and others of these thoughts and feelings. “Anxiety” is not a permanent state, it is a flow of thoughts and feelings we choose to call anxiety. If we can learn to understand this energy and accept the feelings associated with it, we will realize that these thoughts and feelings can be positive, inspirational and motivational and can drive us to be more productive and successful.

* [**Register Here**](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__r20.rs6.net_tn.jsp-3Ff-3D001Qg-2D5ykaHFqDONvtUzatvrAmyOlN7xyEUVCgoI9DmX-5FNFD9aN7w8eWDj0TlvhtEY54oix08Ba9MVqwkfp8HPzB0-5Fi-5FmoNY3lNiEcToZ6WafZR-5F0-2DUz-5FONjjwzHrnap6vJvc5CehHyPbfiaD75Y81TaDUbK5VfqERDMyMcuY4YqdJCFAJwjwtlM94fbaMOT8dB-26c-3Dot-5F-2DtbJE26pikoJSuRBz6mQs04wk-5FbhQuNWw-2DQjiebrMSuz0v8V9jw-3D-3D-26ch-3DO4YRROZmpyWqWcjp6d1lL4Egy-2Dr1PvR9zsIudbboGAFXQIJDRd8hKQ-3D-3D&d=DwMCaQ&c=lDF7oMaPKXpkYvev9V-fVahWL0QWnGCCAfCDz1Bns_w&r=SbWGMrrvenEnLFosrGYSYpGWrnsxjtGty1IHToWStlU&m=1It_VAyEpbkzHHEl3lsTt3mJmL7XYybMzO1N4msYjWA&s=8W4rgcWJl0eFZXzvwyuttjP27QXTda7_V7All-EdsDs&e=) **for Positive Anxiety Workshop**
1. **How Can We Support One Another (Staff) While Working Remotely?**

Speaker: Michelle D. Lipinski, M.Ed., Principal, Northshore Recovery High School

Date: Friday, April 17

Time: 10am-12pm

Overview: We will discuss the following steps:

Step 1: Stop pretending we are all on the same page

Step 2: Acknowledge the ugly

Step 3: Maintain high expectations while practicing radical compassion

Step 4: What happens when we suspect our staff members may be struggling?

Step 5: Provide resources...support....empathy

* [**Register Here**](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__r20.rs6.net_tn.jsp-3Ff-3D001Qg-2D5ykaHFqDONvtUzatvrAmyOlN7xyEUVCgoI9DmX-5FNFD9aN7w8eWDj0TlvhtEY5C3usQlRrp1UIVhTA3BcIIl0A-2DcdWkph9b-2Dd8HHWX3LLJSGjWZUZhTGKHBULk27eOJ3-2DiF6808P1kuifY-2DhXgadCg4xlKEqBE1U9U5RA6TDE1dpou-2DyeJyVDvy3DA2V3h-26c-3Dot-5F-2DtbJE26pikoJSuRBz6mQs04wk-5FbhQuNWw-2DQjiebrMSuz0v8V9jw-3D-3D-26ch-3DO4YRROZmpyWqWcjp6d1lL4Egy-2Dr1PvR9zsIudbboGAFXQIJDRd8hKQ-3D-3D&d=DwMCaQ&c=lDF7oMaPKXpkYvev9V-fVahWL0QWnGCCAfCDz1Bns_w&r=SbWGMrrvenEnLFosrGYSYpGWrnsxjtGty1IHToWStlU&m=1It_VAyEpbkzHHEl3lsTt3mJmL7XYybMzO1N4msYjWA&s=3C_Y8_V7hW1oCsnp5CJ92vzWFJqQhmxGpowRvD6tpmI&e=) **for How Can We Support One Another (Staff) While Working Remotely? Workshop**

**Guidance on Remote Learning for English Learners**

The Department has recently released [Guidance on Remote Learning for English Learners](http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/ed-resources.html#ele).  This guidance includes a set of recommended strategies and resources to help educators continue to provide ELE services and a list of online learning opportunities to keep English learners engaged while they learn remotely during this period of school closure. We invite you to customize these recommendations for your individual district and schools and for individual students within them.

Attached to this email you’ll also find Provisional Identification and Placement Procedures During Periods of Extended School Shutdowns Grades K-12. This document provides guidance on the provisional identification and placement of English learners (ELs) while continuity of education services are being provided through remote means and face-to-face screening is not possible.

* This document isn’t posted to our website yet, but by early next week you’ll find it alongside the Guidance on Remote Learning under [Resources for English Learners](http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/ed-resources.html#ele).

**Friday, April 3, 2020 – Commissioner and Charter School Leader Call @ Noon**

The Commissioner continues to have his weekly calls with charter school leaders. We will continue to share the guidance provided by the Commissioner each Monday after the call and eventually post it to the Department’s website. Below, please find the areas covered by the Commissioner’s April 3rd call.

1. **Updated DESE COVID-19 Website**

Earlier this week, the Department updated the COVID-19 website to provide a single source for all the information and updates sent to the field <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>. We strongly suggest bookmarking this page and checking it daily as the Department has added a significant number of documents since last week, including resources for supporting students with disabilities, a letter from to families, and information about USDA reimbursements. Also, you will find specific questions and answers with regard to charter schools on that same site.

1. **New English Learner Resources**

On our COVID-19 site, on the “Learning at Home” section, there is a section titled: “Educational Resources for Students and Families.” It contains updated guidance from the Department’s Office of Language Acquisition (Guidance on Remote Learning for English Learners) as well as additional online tools that provide content in multiple languages. We hope you find these [**resources**](http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/ed-resources.html#ele) useful as you provide assistance to English Learners remotely.

1. **April Vacation**

The Department received questions about whether charter schools should keep their planned April school vacation week this year (the week of Patriots’ Day, April 20) or use that week to continue the remote learning plan they have put in place. **This is a local decision**. Each charter school board of trustees establishes the school year schedule, consistent with state standards outlined in the [Student Learning Time regulations](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr27.html?section=all) and charter commitments. Within those standards, the board of trustees may adjust the school calendar to meet the needs of its community.

For charter schools considering using part or all of the April vacation week to provide continuity of learning for students, please note that Patriots’ Day is a statewide legal holiday.

As a reminder, I am going to grant blanket approval for charter schools to follow the minimum requirements established for all public schools for the 2019-2020 school year.

The longest that any school district or charter school will be required to go is its scheduled 185th day. No schools will be required to be in session after June 30, although the district or charter school could decide to go longer**.**

If a charter school continues to provide remote learning program for students from April 21 to 24, the charter school is not required to go beyond its previously scheduled 181st day. Charter schools that maintain the April vacation week as a school vacation will be expected to resume their remote learning program on April 27 and conclude the school year no earlier than the previously scheduled 185th day.

1. **Payments to vendors**

The Department has issued guidance that recommends continued payments for outsourced operational services that are needed to ensure continuity of essential services when schools reopen. Such payments may be conditioned on negotiated changes to contracts in order to address unanticipated service needs during the state of emergency. These services include, but are not limited to, transportation, custodial, and food services.

Department staff are working to determine guidance about particular expenses – such as transportation – for which charter schools receive a reimbursement.

1. **Remote learning guidance** **and Advanced Placement tests**

The Department continues to provide resources for remote learning on its website: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/learn-at-home.html>

College Board is offering free, virtual classes for Advanced Placement (AP) students in addition to at-home AP testing.(The exam will only include topics and skills that most AP teachers and students have already covered in class by early March. Information about what will be covered on this year’s AP Exams is listed on [AP Central.](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__apcentral.collegeboard.org_about-2Dap_news-2Dchanges_coronavirus-2Dupdate&d=DwMGaQ&c=lDF7oMaPKXpkYvev9V-fVahWL0QWnGCCAfCDz1Bns_w&r=wBxO7aVt7rRDBAIsl9fpV3vL_wJ57CyjlniWSaTO6h4&m=0T56f1ZfnWl2nAdtSf81QeEjuRKZw8pnVE-Bb5HGc2c&s=kO6V0s62tcNJzDZuWMMBbEHeVcGuqzWQu4QsKAXf7zs&e=)) Students and teachers can attend [free, live AP review courses](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__apstudents.collegeboard.org_coronavirus-2Dupdates-23free-2Dap-2Dclasses&d=DwMGaQ&c=lDF7oMaPKXpkYvev9V-fVahWL0QWnGCCAfCDz1Bns_w&r=wBxO7aVt7rRDBAIsl9fpV3vL_wJ57CyjlniWSaTO6h4&m=0T56f1ZfnWl2nAdtSf81QeEjuRKZw8pnVE-Bb5HGc2c&s=SoCLtoz80JPNBanfe7bfAKFP8FaSJXIH-hZPN1t-aJ0&e=), delivered by AP teachers from across the country. These mobile-friendly classes will be recorded and available on-demand so teachers and students can access them any time and will focus on reviewing the skills and concepts from the first 75 percent of the course. There will also be some supplementary lessons covering the final 25 percent of the course.

The AP exams will only be given remotely this year, and the College Board is working with partners to address any barriers to technology that students might face. If your students need mobile tools or connectivity in order to take an AP exam, please [reach out to the College Board directly to let them know.](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com_-3Furl-3Dhttps-253A-252F-252Fcollegeboard.tfaforms.net-252F74-26data-3D02-257C01-257Cjcaccavale-2540collegeboard.org-257C6c312549b55e4312e93e08d7d1a41412-257C7530bdedfd6e4f58b5d2ea681eb07663-257C0-257C0-257C637208374951118441-26sdata-3D4Npp3JNYWIVyRfBbovCTgvx-252FfbCwECoRMrjSIyRBezs-253D-26reserved-3D0&d=DwMGaQ&c=lDF7oMaPKXpkYvev9V-fVahWL0QWnGCCAfCDz1Bns_w&r=wBxO7aVt7rRDBAIsl9fpV3vL_wJ57CyjlniWSaTO6h4&m=0T56f1ZfnWl2nAdtSf81QeEjuRKZw8pnVE-Bb5HGc2c&s=wsEnmcMoXY3BzGaXpEapb78uLqDrh8TPi7sHkeFnH4o&e=)

Schools served by the Advanced Placement (AP) STEM and English Program implemented through Mass Insight Education can contact Wesley Chen at wchin@massinsight.org for information on additional AP programming support.

1. **Charter days in session**

The annual report guidelines will prompt schools to provide the number of “in person” days in session and “remote” days in session.