



Dear ABCD Family,

I hope that you and yours are safe and well as the COVID-19 crisis continues to change life as we knew it in previously unimaginable ways. I'd also like to offer my deepest condolences to those of you who have lost family and friends to this cruel disease.

The coronavirus has thrown many of the people we serve into crisis. Many are more susceptible to COVID-19 than the general population. There are those who have lost jobs and are struggling all the more. Others are essential workers who have to go to work while their children stay at home and are expected to do their schoolwork online.

In our efforts to help, we confront new challenges every day. And we rise to them. I want to acknowledge your unfailing commitment to the people we serve and the courage you show in helping them manage the frightening uncertainties they face on every front.

One of the challenges is the extension of school closures in Massachusetts through June 29th. Governor Baker's announcement was prompted by the importance of protecting residents from contracting COVID-19 or infecting others. But the decision also extends the pressure on parents and families, including members of our Head Start family.

We must continue to respond with compassion and creativity and expand the range of emergency services we provide. I'd like to share two of this week's highlights:

- **Head Start** provided packages containing educational materials, groceries, diapers, and more to 1,600 families who picked them up on Wednesday, and on Thursday, the team mobilized a brigade of 12 buses to deliver to those who couldn't pick up their packages. Boston 25 TV featured this incredible effort. You can [watch it here](#).

- Last weekend, our **Housing** department responded to two dire emergencies. One couple, no longer able to pay for their motel room, was put out. They hadn't eaten in days. One of them struggles with a medical condition that prevents them from entering a shelter. We provided temporary housing and are working on stabilization. The other emergency involved a family living on the streets in a tent. We provided food, toiletries, and blankets, and we are following up to help them emerge from this crisis.

Everyone's health and safety are my top concern; still, we are planning for how best to reopen programs and services in anticipation of government officials stating that it's safe to do so. There is no blueprint; it's a work in progress, but together, we will make our way through this uncharted territory.

My thanks to each of you. Please stay safe!

My best,

John J. Drew

P.S. The Head Start deliveries started just after dawn yesterday, and here's a photo of the last bus to return after its rounds at 8:19 p.m.

