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MARCH 12, 2020 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wellesley Public Schools Will Be Closed for Two Weeks Beginning March 13

Tolles Parsons Center Will Be Closed Beginning on March 13, All Council on Aging Programs and Wellesley Free Libraries Programs Suspended

Based on the evolving conditions associated with the COVID-19 outbreak occurring throughout the state and in our community, the Wellesley Public Schools (WPS), in consultation with Town leaders, has made the decision to close beginning tomorrow, Friday, March 13, 2020. As the situation remains fluid, WPS anticipates remaining closed for approximately two weeks, however, this may change based on direction from state and local health officials.

All students will be dismissed at the end of the day, today, Thursday, March 12.

Over the next few days, WPS administrators will work collaboratively with the Wellesley Teachers' Association to finalize plans for remote learning. The district will use their four remaining "snow days" to prepare for this transition. We will update staff and families in the coming days with additional information about these plans.

We realize this decision has a significant impact and far-reaching ramifications for our community and understand the disappointment, frustration and uncertainty that is created. However, we believe these steps are necessary given the current realities.

The Wellesley Health Department (WHD) urgently reminds all parents and children that it is imperative to follow protocols for personal protection for prevention, as well as to lower risk of transmission of illness to others. Please remember the importance of social and personal distancing; avoid large gatherings; and do not congregate in areas.

Currently the Wellesley Free Libraries (WFL) are open; however, all programs and activities are suspended. Please remember that while schools are closed, the WFL cannot act *in loco parentis* and is not a place to drop kids off for extended periods of time. When visiting any Library buildings children should be accompanied by adult caregivers, limit the time of the visit and restrict use of public computers.

To protect senior citizens in our community, effective on Friday, March 13, the Tolles Parsons Center will be closing for a minimum of two weeks, and all Council on Aging (COA) programs and activities, including the lunch program, will be suspended. COA staff will be available to

provide critical support services to residents. In addition, the COA bus service will be running on a restricted basis. Please contact the COA for assistance at 781-235-3961.

We are urging our senior citizen population to continue to be vigilant, avoid large gatherings, practice social distancing and good hygiene, and to stay home as much as possible to limit exposure to Coronavirus.

Working closely with the WHD, the Recreation Department will be modifying, postponing, and/or canceling future programs and/or large gatherings. For Recreation programs that ARE NOT CANCELED, participants can expect to receive emails regarding information reducing the risk of COVID – 19. A daily of list of program offerings and cancelations can be found at www.wellesleyrec.org

We ask for your flexibility, support and understanding as we work to best address the needs of our entire community at this difficult time.

Please continue to visit our Coronavirus Information website for updated information:
www.wellesleyma.gov/coronavirusinfo

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