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CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR

KARYN E. POLITO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

ORDER EXTENDING THE TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

COVID-19 Order 16

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2020, I, Charles D. Baker, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, acting pursuant to the powers provided by Chapter 639 of the Acts of 1950 and Section 2A of Chapter 17 of the General Laws, declared that there now exists in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts a state of emergency due to the outbreak of the 2019 novel Coronavirus ("COVID-19");

WHEREAS, on March 11, the COVID-19 outbreak was characterized as a pandemic by the World Health Organization;

WHEREAS, in response to the pandemic, on March 15, 2020, I issued an Order requiring all public and private elementary and secondary (K-12) schools in the Commonwealth to suspend normal, in-person instruction at the end of the school day on March 16, 2020 and not to re-open for normal operations before April 6, 2020;

WHEREAS, the number of presumptive positive and confirmed cases of COVID-19 continues to rise exponentially in the Commonwealth. As of March 24, 2020, 1,159 cases of COVID-19 were reported by the Department of Public Health, including 11 deaths; and

WHEREAS, sections 7, 8, and 8A of chapter 639 of the Acts of 1950 authorize the Governor, during the effective period of a declared emergency, to exercise any and all authority over persons and property necessary or expedient for meeting a state of emergency, including but not limited to authority over public assemblages in order to protect the health and safety of persons;

NOW, THEREFORE, I hereby order the following:

All public and private elementary and secondary (K-12) schools in the Commonwealth, excepting residential schools for special needs students, shall not re-open for normal operations

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before Monday, May 4, 2020. This directive supersedes the provision of the March 15, 2020 Order establishing an earlier date for re-opening.

As provided in the March 23 Order regarding Essential Services, public schools are directed to continue efforts to maintain the operation of programs that provide take-out or delivery food services and other essential, non-educational services to students and families during the period in which this Order is in effect. Public schools are additionally directed to continue collaborative efforts to provide student access to alternative learning opportunities.

The Department of Public Health and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, along with any board of health or authorized agent pursuant to G. L. c. 111, § 30, shall enforce this Order. In addition, I hereby direct the Commissioner of Public Health to act under the authority of G. L. c. 17, § 2A to supplement the terms of this Order in the event she determines additional measures are required to ensure that the terms of this Order are observed. Violation of the terms of this Order may result in penalties pursuant to Section 8 of Chapter 639 of the Acts of 1950.

This Order is effective immediately and shall remain in effect until May 4, 2020 unless further extended.

Given in Boston at 3:15 PM this 25th day of March, two thousand and twenty

CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR
Commonwealth of Massachusetts