

March 17, 2020

Dear Curtiss Families,

The past week has been a whirlwind of information and continual change that has culminated in us moving into a period of school closure that, at this time, is scheduled to run through our Spring Break. This is truly uncharted territory for all of us that we are working daily to navigate together. I cannot speak highly enough about our staff and how they adapted, took every new change or piece of information in stride, and never took their focus off of doing everything we can to prepare our students, families, and each other for this transition.

With a plan in place to support this transition with our students on Tuesday, we were devastated to learn mid-way through our Conference Day on Monday that we would not be able to be open to carry our plan through with our kids the following day. As a follow-up to the communication you have received from Mr. Bower, I feel compelled to share the steps we took as a staff to assist you in your preparation as you receive materials from our school and have age-appropriate discussions with your child about all that is currently happening in our community and our world.

Discussing the Situation with Your Child: As educators, we work to find the teachable moments we can take advantage of in every situation. With regard to COVID-19, we planned for how to provide information to our students *based on factual information and guidance from our health organizations*. With the amount of potential misinformation that exists through avenues such as social media and how quickly it can spread through word of mouth, we planned to prioritize time at all grade levels to hold these discussions using common talking points and common age-appropriate video resources. Staff reviewed guidance for how to best communicate with children about the coronavirus from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and made plans to share videos on handwashing and/or specifically around the coronavirus that were made available for free through the educational resource *BrainPop*. I am including the links to these same resources below should you choose to utilize them to guide similar conversations with your children at home.

- CDC Guidance for Talking with Children:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html>
- Free BrainPop Video on Coronavirus (Recommended Grade 4 and Up):
<https://www.brainpop.com/health/diseasesinjuriesandconditions/coronavirus/>

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- Free BrainPop Jr. Video on Handwashing (Recommended PK-3):
<https://jr.brainpop.com/health/bewell/washinghands/>

Preparing Materials for Students During Our Closure: A second focus of our teams on Monday was planning and organizing materials to send home with our students to maintain *academic engagement* during our closure. The intent of this work is to provide the opportunity for students to engage in practice of previously taught skills from this school year while also promoting regular reading at home. Please note that this work does not include any new learning, is not mandatory, nor will it be graded in any formal manner. We strongly encourage our families to set aside time each day for your child to engage in one or more learning activities to reinforce and keep these skills fresh in preparation for our return to school. Additionally, we ask our families to please prioritize time every day for reading at home, whether this involves your child reading independently, reading aloud to you, or family members reading aloud to their child. There is *significant* research that emphasizes the impact of reading every day on the academic growth of our children, and we thank our families in advance for making this a priority each and every day while continuing to promote a lifelong love of reading within our children.

Pick-Up of Materials for Families: With the current health guidelines in place as of the date of this letter, we will be providing the opportunity for families to call and schedule times to pick up your child's materials and any personal belongings between the hours of 8:00 am and 12:00 pm from Wednesday, March 18th through Friday, March 20th. We will intentionally stagger scheduled times to ensure the current guidelines for group sizes and social distances are maintained at all times. As we prioritize the health and safety of our own staff during this time period, we will have one secretary available and on site each day to take these phone calls. Upon arrival at the school, Mr. Koehler, Mr. Rounds, or an assigned staff member will meet you to pick up your child's materials. We are currently planning with our transportation department to provide an option for delivery of materials following this timeframe for families unable to pick up your child's materials during these hours.

Resources Available Through Technology: While we are not sending home Chromebooks at grade levels K-6, many of our teachers will be sharing resources available online that families can choose to access to supplement your child's learning in addition to the resources your teacher sent home. Several companies are making their online resources available free of charge to assist schools and families in providing additional learning opportunities during closures. Attached to this letter, I am including one such example for Scholastic's "Learn at Home" resource that families can access for daily learning activities by grade range.

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We take great pride in our school in referring to ourselves as a family and creating a culture and environment that feels like home for our students. I know I speak for all of our staff when I share that this foundation has us well-prepared to take care of our students, families, and each other as we navigate the path forward together. As always, I thank all of our families for partnering with us to ensure our children are prepared to learn at high levels each and every day.

Please be safe and take care of yourselves throughout these next few weeks. As new information continues to come out, we will continue to adapt our plans accordingly and communicate with our families at each step along the way. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out to our office with any questions or ways in which we can provide support for your family until we are able to welcome our kids back "home" to school.

Sincerely,



Joe Koehler
Elementary Principal

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Dear Families and Caregivers,

We know that missing school isn't easy for your kids—or for you. But we also know that there are simple ways to turn unexpected time at home into exciting opportunities for your students to learn, think, and grow.

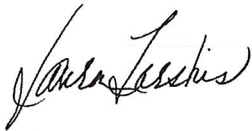
That is why we've created Scholastic's Learn at Home website. This free resource provides your children with 20* days of exciting articles and stories, videos, and fun learning challenges. Children can complete them anytime, in any order. They can work on their own or together with you and your family.

www.scholastic.com/learnathome

Our active learning journeys are available on any device and will provide your child with up to three hours' worth of exciting learning experiences per day. They can go on virtual field trips, meet best-selling authors, or dig deep into a topic they love.

We hope that you and your children stay safe and healthy, and wish you the best of luck during this stressful time.

With best wishes from all of us at Scholastic,



Lauren Tarshis
Sr. VP, Editor in Chief & Publisher
Scholastic Classroom Magazines

If you have any questions or suggestions, please reach out to me at ltarshis@scholastic.com.

