March 20, 2020

Dear Team and Family,

I hope this finds you safe and healthy. Thank you all for operating with a sense of purpose and urgency as we moved our entire organization remote. In just one week, our teachers and regional team have created and distributed learning materials to our 5,500 students, our clinical services teams have staffed a mental health hotline and worked to provide free access to telehealth services for our families, and our operations team has been part of a city-wide effort to provide food to families. Parents have reached out sharing how much they appreciate the consistent communication they are receiving from their teachers and schools. Thank you to each of you. The work you are doing has been nothing short of amazing and is bringing a sense of normalcy to students and families across our city during this confusing time.

As we settle into working remotely and providing services to our students and community, I want to share some important updates. Below you will find the following: 1) important safety tips, 2) academic updates, 3) resources for staff 4) resources for families

Health and Safety

As I’m sure you are aware, the number of positive Coronavirus cases continues to grow in our city. While our health care leaders continue to work to slow the spread and find ways to combat this disease, it is important that we take the following key steps to avoid infection:

- Frequently clean hands by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water (for at least 20 seconds);
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands;
- Avoid close contact with anyone who is sick

As a community, we must all engage in the practice of social distancing, as it is a proven method to slow the spread of the coronavirus. Some tips include sheltering in place and limiting close contact with anyone. For more information and a list of frequently asked questions on social distancing, please check out this NPR article.

Anyone with virus-like symptoms should be checked out by a health provider immediately. Please visit cdc.gov/coronavirus for more information about the virus.

ACADEMIC UPDATES

Thank you to each of you for your role in getting our continued learning plan off the ground with students. Our week 1 goal was around setting the foundations for a distance learning environment, ensuring that our systems for student check-ins are happening at a high level and that our students are completing the work. The foundation for success in a distance learning plan is establishing consistent, on-going
communication between teachers and families. It is what will allow us to give feedback on student work, follow-up on a late assignment, share important updates or shifts in student work expectations, and connect a family with a necessary resources.

1. **High School:** Google classroom for our high school students launched on Wednesday. Our high school teams were relentless about getting lessons created, making sure students had technology access, and following up on student work. The first week’s assignments are due later today, and multiple classrooms are already above an 80% completion rate for student work.

2. **3rd-8th Grade:** Learning packets with two weeks of material were distributed to students before we released from school last week. For students who were absent, material pick-ups were held this week. Teachers have been checking in with students each day, and our 3rd-8th grade students will transition to Google Classroom by Wednesday, March 25th.

3. **Kinder-2nd Grade:** Our youngest students also received learning packets and reading logs with two weeks of materials. The focus in the first two weeks remains that teachers are checking in with families each day to help establish routines, problem-solve, and ensure students are progressing through their learning packets. Regionally, we will gather feedback from schools on what is working and what needs our K-2 students have to establish an updated plan that will start after the first two weeks.

The assignments students are completing will count towards their quarter 4 grades, year-long GPA, and promotion to the next grade. We will be working with the LDOE and NOPS in the coming weeks to clarify all promotion and grading requirements, but the expectation is that students complete the distance learning assignments. Our students deserve the same access to remote learning opportunities as their peers across the country. As equity is one of our core beliefs, we are so appreciative to each of you for so quickly pivoting how you support students, creating a schedule that works for you and your families, and ensuring that the learning doesn’t stop for our students.

**RESOURCES FOR STAFF**

Dr. Stephen Jones and his team are now providing Telehealth Services for ALL KIPP New Orleans Schools staff and families. You can now schedule a time to video conference with a health care professional between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Please visit [lahclinics.com](http://lahclinics.com) to schedule an online visit.

At this time, our school buildings are closed to non-essential staff members.

The City of New Orleans is providing text alerts related to the crisis. You can sign up for texts by texting COVIDNOLA to 888777.

Support services available for staff include:
- Louisiana Department of Health Hotline: 855-523-2652 or 211
- LCMC Health/Children’s Hospital: 504-962-6202
- Ochsner’s COVID-19 Nurse Care Line: 844-888-2772
• Severe Medical Emergencies and Crises: 911

For a list of frequently asked questions related to KIPP New Orleans Schools, please click here.

We will continue to provide weekly updates to the staff section of kippneworleans.org/coronavirusupdates.

RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

Teachers are hosting office hours every day from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. to provide academic assistance for students.

We know that the mental health of our families is important now and always. To support our students and families, we have set up a hotline for emergency mental health support for families. If any of your students/families are experiencing a mental health crisis - any situation in which a person's feelings and behaviors can lead to them hurting themselves or others – please direct them to 504-373-6269, extension 1061.

According to NOLA Public Schools, since Monday, March 16, nearly, 8,700 meals have been served to students in Orleans Parish, with approximately 6,200 being served yesterday. In collaboration with many charter school leaders, the New Orleans Recreation Development Commission (NORD), local non-profit organizations, faith-based partners and private businesses, NOLA Public Schools launched a full-scale Citywide Feeding Program. This program currently consists of 43 Community Feeding Distribution sites across New Orleans that ensure families can easily access breakfast and lunch during this prolonged school closure. Families wishing to access information on child nutrition resources should visit the District’s webpage at https://nolapublicschools.com/covid19/nutrition.

We encourage you to reach out to coronavirus@kippneworleans.org if you have any questions. Lastly, let's keep our team and family members directly impacted by COVID-19 in our thoughts.

Thank you for your hard work and dedication to our students and families.

Stay well,

Rhonda