

HMS Current Status and Plans for Continuing Student Engagement at Home - March 13, 2020

Dear Families,

As soon as we have a plan for one scenario, we are dealing with the reality of another. As you heard, schools in our area are closed as of Monday, March 16, and all Vermont schools must be closed by Wednesday. The soonest we will be back is April 6th, and that is not definite at this point. Not much is definite, other than we need to feel in community and support each other, as we isolate. Quite a juxtaposition.

How to do this?

Today I have been in touch with all of the teachers, and we had a full Board Meeting—by video-chat, of course. We are working on plans to support students and families with student learning, and to support staff and families as individuals and as a community as this situation unfolds and continues.

Teachers are developing plans for each program and will be in communication with you by program and individually. Tomorrow could be considered a “snow day” type of day off from school. However, we urge you to take social distancing and family isolation seriously. We will only [“flatten the curve”](#) if we all keep apart. Students can take comfort in the notion that they are doing a great service, and helping those in a higher risk group, by laying low.

By Tuesday, you will have received initial communication from your teachers. It will include a recommended schedule for the days at home and lessons and activities, with a range of detail by program. Contact from teachers and further lessons and ideas will continue, as long as staff are healthy and able to do so. For the younger programs, these will be ideas to draw upon. We realize some of you might be stretched to try to work from home AND attend to the needs of your children. Don’t put too much pressure on yourself. Do what you can and go easy on yourself and your children. For the older students, we will recommend structure and have a schedule for group lessons online and assignment review.

We will be developing a schedule/plan for families to pick up anything needed from the school (boots, jacket, books, assignments, etc.). We will ask families to reserve a time

to come when the building will be open with a staff person there — at a distance. Likely Tuesday - Friday this week from 10-12 in the morning.

These will be challenging times, and great opportunities to practice patience, flexibility, and resilience, as we serve the wider community by staying at home as much as possible. We will be in touch by program and from Admin and the Board as more details become available and the situation progresses.

Stay well!

Here is a link to the Vermont CDC for more information and to check on updates and some useful posters for students:

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/infectious-disease/2019-novel-coronavirus>

[Social Distancing](#)

[Keep Germs from Spreading](#)

[Proper Handwashing](#)