

## **Remote Learning and Financial Implications During the Pandemic - March 27, 2020**

Dear Families,

While so much has been upended in the last two weeks, Hilltop is very much not closed. Our faculty and families have spent many hours working together to provide meaningful education for the students. This impressive effort has brought success in providing curriculum to support Hilltop students' development, and also success in keeping Hilltop's sense of community alive. In the weeks to come, the Board believes that Hilltop staff and families will deepen our ability to teach our students, especially the younger ones, and cultivate more ways of being together that meaningfully help get through what could otherwise be an isolating experience.

We are also aware that this is an uncertain time economically for many families and businesses, and for Hilltop itself. The Finance Committee is meeting weekly to determine how to manage for the short term and for the long term. We are considering several individual and school-wide options to help with these real challenges. We are fortunate that March and April are months during which no regular tuition payments are due. We hope that this eases some of the stress families may be experiencing.

To further ease financial stress for families, Hilltop's Finance Committee has decided to offer families who find it necessary an option to delay the start of next year's tuition payments from May 1st to as late as July 1st. **If you would like to request a deferral of your initial tuition payment for the 2020-21 school year from May 1 to July 1, please contact [Deb Lagoy, Business Manager](#), or [Tamara Mount, Head of School](#).** Any families who are able and willing to maintain the May 1st tuition payment date are strongly encouraged to do so. Keeping our cash flow steady enables us to continue to pay teachers and maintain our facility, which is critical to the long term viability of our school. Your understanding and help with this is greatly appreciated. Thankfully, the State of Vermont recognizes the importance of maintaining critical childcare facilities and has continued to provide the State funding for the early child care programs during this time of physical isolation.

We are in a fortunate position to have an endowment that we can lean on to get us through what we hope will be a temporary crisis and economic downturn. Many schools are having to ask for great sacrifices from their communities. We, instead, are able to mitigate that sacrifice by making a carefully considered draw on our endowment fund to

help cover any gap in tuition payments. The more families who are able to stay with the May 1st payment plan, the smaller that draw can be, preserving the remaining funds to support Hilltop's long term strategic goals of equity and sustainability. We will continue to communicate closely as we move to develop options that will work for all of us. We truly appreciate your understanding and commitment to the long term future of Hilltop Montessori School!

-Asher, Alix, and Vanessa