



March 27, 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope this finds you and your families well in these extraordinary times. Although we have only been on Spring Break, in light of the worldwide crisis, it feels like we have been apart for much longer!

Like you, all of us at MAPCDS have been preparing our homes and families for reduced access to services and cultural experiences, physical distancing and extended time at home. We have also been planning meaningful ways to connect with you and your children thinking about how we can serve the greater community as well. We are writing now to share some of our plans in broad strokes, so you will know what to expect from us in the coming weeks.

Connections – the social and emotional ties that unite us - have always been at the center of our educational practice and at the heart of our mission, and now serve as our guiding principle as we move to an online format. Orienting ourselves to this new mode of engagement will take time for educators, children and parents. Our teachers have already begun to imagine this model's potential and have been notably creative and enthusiastic in response to the unique challenge the sudden, long-term closure presents. We are deeply grateful for the dedication and professionalism they have already demonstrated over the Break, and their unwavering commitment to supporting you in the weeks ahead, while also caring for their own families at home.

On Monday, March 30th, we will have our professional development day, as originally scheduled on the annual school calendar. We have changed our original agenda for the day to enable the staff to come together (virtually!) to share our many ideas, become comfortable with the platforms we will use, and make specific plans and schedules for their time online with your children. Beginning Tuesday, March 31, we will offer a combination of pre-recorded content from our teachers posted to the blog and live, interactive sessions through Zoom. Just as with our daily online journal, a cell phone or computer will be needed to access these opportunities. Please reach out to us if this creates difficulty for your family and together we will determine an alternative means of communication.

We will share a schedule for the live sessions next week and anticipate the classes on Zoom to be no more than 30 minutes each. Timing may vary by age group as appropriate. Our goal is not to replicate a typical school morning or to complete any particular curriculum thread we have been exploring. Fortunately, our emergent curriculum model enables us to change direction as needed without disrupting the flow of learning. Where possible, we will incorporate the current themes each class has been investigating into our sessions and into play prompts for extended discovery. However, our main intention is to help students maintain their feelings of connection with their teachers, each other and the school, to feel seen, known, and nurtured during this significant disruption to their usual routines. Regardless of the setting, interweaving social-emotional, cognitive, physical and moral development is essential to our

developmentally appropriate practice. We are confident you will continue to see each of these elements through our reimagined work in the coming weeks. Next week, you can will hear from your children's teachers about plans specific to their class.

We recognize that many of you are working from home, and juggling significant demands and the needs of multiple children throughout the day. We do not expect you to "home-school" and we will avoid requiring an excessive amount of parental attention or resources to our online learning plans. Our aim is to provide support, not to add additional pressures to the current challenges. We invite you to join us online when it works in tandem with your family's unique daily logistics and to rely on the systems you already have in place when that is preferable. Young children are naturally self-motivated to explore, discover, tinker and test. They are always learning! You will now have the opportunity to see more of this in action as you combine home and school life. This period will ultimately encourage sustained independent learning, creativity, flexibility, resilience and community care in our children: all essential life skills!

As always, we are also here to support you as parents. A link to resources that you might find helpful as you manage your own response to the current landscape is included below. In addition, we have included a curated list of online experiences for young children which you might want to introduce at home as you see fit. Finally, we continue to post relevant articles to our Facebook page and invite you to follow us there if you don't already? <https://www.facebook.com/921MadisonAve/>

What else would be helpful? Please let us know!

This moment in time is a testament to our resilience and we know we will all emerge stronger from it. We appreciate your continued support and generosity of spirit as we navigate uncharted territory together.

Be well!

Laura and Adrienne

[MAPCDS ONLINE RESOURCES LIST](#) (click to access)

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