



## **Genesee Community Charter School** **at the Rochester Museum & Science Center**

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To: GCCS Families  
From: Shannon Hillman  
Re: Additional GCCS Coronavirus Response  
Date: March 12, 2020

Dear Families,

Information is rapidly changing regarding the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and now the World Health Organization has identified as a global pandemic as of Wednesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. Additionally, there is now one confirmed case in Monroe County. Like all educational institutions and businesses, our school is receiving daily updates on directives from the Monroe County and New York State Health Department for how to manage and prevent further spread of this new virus.

Our cleanliness plans have already been put in place. Last night, the Board of Trustees met for their regular meeting dedicating a large amount of time to our response to new and developing information regarding the coronavirus. Additionally, our Safety Team met to discuss how to reduce exposure to the potential virus. As you are most likely aware, “social distancing” is now the new strategy for reducing the spread of the virus in addition to the cleanliness procedures we have in place. This means we have additional measures to take until we have new information or further notice.

We will reduce social interactions by keeping most of our interactions to class-sized groups (35 people) in the following ways:

1. Winter Exhibition Nights – We are cancelling 4<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> grade Exhibition Nights for this evening (March 12, 2020). Kindergarten Exhibition on Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup> will either be modified for only families or canceled. We will let first grade families know the decision by early next week if not sooner.
2. Community Circle – we will provide an alternative to Community Circle time for students in their own classrooms. Unfortunately, families will not be invited to the classrooms for Community Circle or lunch.
3. Overnight field studies – Due to travel restrictions and risk of exposure, we are cancelling the Boston Overnight field study for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades. As of right now, the Settler Simulations for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades are being modified to not include the sleepover portion, but the two day-long field studies are still scheduled.
4. Day Field Studies – Most field studies are being cancelled or postponed through the end of April.
5. All Family Association sponsored events are cancelled until further notice. This includes Chess Club.
6. As of right now, family members may not volunteer regularly in classrooms.
7. Families MAY enter the building at arrival and dismissal to pick up and drop off children, but are not encouraged to stay.
8. All Special Education and other regular service providers will still be servicing children as it is important to keep our programming running as smooth as possible.

9. Parent-teacher conferences are still scheduled for next Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup>. However, teachers are willing to modify the in-person conference to a phone conference. Please contact teachers directly regarding this.

Although it is our goal for the school to remain open. However, we have been directed by the New York State Health Department that the school must close for 24 hours if we have one positive diagnosis of COVID-19. At that point, the Health Department will direct us on the length of closure and tasks that need to be completed before returning. Therefore, we have plans in place just in case our school has to close based on the Monroe County Health Department.

1. We have plans for our maintenance staff and school staff to deeply clean our school during closing and as directed by the Health Department. We are working closely with the RMSC to utilize their best cleaning methods for this purpose.
2. We are sending snow pants and other non-essentials home to reduce the amount of clutter in classrooms. Water bottles are also going home to be washed daily.
3. If RCSD is fully closed as a district, we will likely also be closed. Please use Channel 8 (WOKR), Channel 13 (WHAM), and Channel 10 (WHEC), our school's website, email, and Facebook pages for up to date information. However, RCSD may only close one building at a time depending on the positive cases. As of right now, we believe transportation will not be interrupted unless the entire district closes.
4. Teachers are making preparations to provide outside instruction if the school is closed for a large length of time. We will be sending home learning packets with students tomorrow in backpack mail as a precautionary measure. Families will be advised to utilize the packet with children IF school closes. We are also providing additional online resources (including i-Ready information and passwords) for additional instruction. Classroom teachers will notify families directly regarding specific instructional plans.
5. If our school is closed for a long period of time, we will provide families with community resources and information regarding meals.

Since information is rapidly changing, we will continue to closely monitor the Monroe County Health Department's directives regarding next steps. Additionally, since we share a building with the RMSC Preschool and a campus with the Rochester Museum & Science Center, we are in constant communication with their staff regarding any positive cases of the coronavirus or additional preventative measures they are taking.

Here are some things your family can do to help us prevent the further spread of the disease:

- Know the symptoms of COVID-19: fever, cough, shortness of breath.
- Continue promoting everyday disease prevention strategies:
  - If your child is sick, stay home from school
  - Avoid close contact with those who are already sick
  - Teach your child(ren) to cover his/her/their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing with a tissue or the crook of the arm
  - Wash hands often with soap and water
  - Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth
  - Keep children at home if they are showing signs of a fever (99.5 degrees)
  - Notify the school when your child is absent and provide any information about their symptoms or diagnosis
  - Consult <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> for further guidance from the U.S. Department of Education.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. When we have new information to share, we will communicate via email, backpack mail, and on our website under "Latest News."