



PARENT NOTIFICATION

April 10, 2020

Now that the decision has been made at the state level to close all schools for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year, there is a great deal to consider. Although we will do our best to answer your questions, some answers require guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Other questions may require additional time to be able to provide you with accurate information. Bear Creek Community Charter School's Leadership Team is meeting Monday morning to discuss what we consider our Six Week Plan, which will cover the period May 1 through June 12, and will wrap up the current school year. As we receive direction from the state, and as we formulate our plans for the future, we will continue to share information with our parents and other key stakeholders.

First and foremost, we hope and pray you and your family are safe and healthy. Quite frankly, that must be everyone's priority right now. We understand that the current situation is unique and unprecedented, and is causing a great deal of additional stress and turmoil for our students and their families. We want you to know that we appreciate all your efforts in partnering with us to ensure some level of learning continues to occur. We have a common goal – to act in the best interests of your children. Although moving forward with the learning process is not ideal under the current circumstances, we are confident that as long as we continue to work together, your children will continue to learn and to thrive. Children are resilient!

How will grades be calculated? Our priority right now is to finalize grades for the Third Quarter (Q3). Each teacher is determining the quantity and importance of the assessments students completed during the third quarter, what projects were in process, and what assessments were not completed because of the abrupt closure of school. Once this information is gathered at all grade levels, a plan will be put in place to ensure students receive a fair and equitable grade for their collective work during the third quarter. The review and enrichment material that is requested of students through April 30th will not be graded. Consideration is being given to how the work expected from students during the last six weeks of school will be measured.

What will learning look like for the remainder of the current school year? We are working on the answer to this question, and will share details once we have details of the plan worked out. We will continue the current course through the end of April, and will detail a new Six Week Plan to wrap up the current school year (May 1 through June 12). Although we are following a strategy of review and enrichment, we understand that there is new content that students need to be exposed to so they are prepared to move forward with their academic career. Teachers are currently working to identify critical academic skills that students need to be exposed to prior to being promoted to the next grade level, and we will be seeking to implement a plan to expose students to that academic content.

What if I don't have access to technology at home? Technology will play a critical role in the learning process during the present situation, as well as in the future. Those parents who do not have access to technology at home are asked to take steps to ensure their children have access to technology. Bear Creek Community Charter School is willing to help those parents who can demonstrate a legitimate need. Local communications companies and internet service providers are providing free or low-cost internet access during the pandemic. Bear Creek Community Charter School has compiled a list of resources for parents, but parents need to take the steps to reach out and pursue these opportunities. If free internet access is not available in a particular area, the Bear Creek Foundation has agreed to partner with the school to offset costs to parents on a temporary basis. Also, Bear Creek Community Charter School will loan parents a school iPad to use for the remainder of the school year, if they do not have access to a computer, iPad, tablet or Chromebook. Please contact Kim Stevens or Jim Smith if you require assistance or support.

Will students be promoted to the next grade level? Because this question impacts every public school in the Commonwealth, the state is expected to provide guidance and direction to local schools on this subject. Although not confirmed, we anticipate this to be a decision that is evaluated on a case-by-case (student-by-student) basis and will heavily depend on student performance during the first three quarters of the school year as well as teacher recommendation.

How will we get access to student's belongings left at the school? We are working on a plan to collect and return student's personal belongings, along with any educational materials and supplies at school that may benefit students at home. Information will be shared sometime next week.

Will there still be a promotion ceremony for 8th grade students? Yes, but we don't know when that will occur or what that will look like. The Board of Trustees and school staff are committed to ensuring our 8th grade students who are moving onto 9th grade receive the recognition they deserve. Honoring our 8th grade students and providing them with a capstone to their Bear Creek Experience is important. We will definitely be planning something special for our 8th grade students and their families; we simply can't commit to what that will look like or when it will happen. We will need to wait and see how the situation in our community continues to develop.

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The current situation is challenging, stressful, and raises a great deal of concerns for all of us. As long as we continue to take the necessary precautions to ensure our health and safety, and work together for the benefit of your children/our students, we will make it through the current crisis.

We all are seeking a return to normalcy, but until then, realize we are all in this together. We will continue to do our best to keep you well informed, and teachers are available to answer any questions you may have about student work. For those who celebrate, we wish you a wonderful Easter and Passover.

Jim Smith
Chief Executive Officer
jim.smith@bearcreekschool.com

Additional Support

Supporting our students and families during this challenging time is important to our school family. All of our staff are available to support you as necessary. Do not hesitate to e-mail school staff during this period of school closure. A complete list of staff contact information is available on the school's web site at www.bearcreekschool.com --> click on *Faculty* at the top of the page --> click on *Staff Directory* from the drop down menu. Some key contacts are as follows:

Melanie Leo, School Counselor
melanie.leo@bearcreekschool.com

Jillian Seeley, School Psychologist
jillian.seeley@bearcreekschool.com

Jennifer Smith, Math Specialist
jennifer.smith@bearcreekschool.com

Larissa Soroka, Literacy Specialist
larissa.soroka@bearcreekschool.com

Tina Vojtko, RN – School Nurse
tina.vojtko@bearcreekschool.com

Kim Stevens, Director of Student Affairs
kim.stevens@bearcreekschool.com

Kristen Young, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
kristen.young@bearcreekschool.com

Bridget Deeble, Director of Intervention & Support Services
bridget.deeble@bearcreekschool.com

Jim Smith, Chief Executive Officer
jim.smith@bearcreekschool.com or (570) 991-0766

Crisis Information

We encourage families to continue to seek reliable information relating to the COVID 19 pandemic from the following sources:

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)
www.cdc.gov

Pennsylvania Department of Health
<https://www.health.pa.gov/>