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PARENT NOTIFICATION December 20, 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope you and your family are well. The year 2020 has been challenging for all of us, and with the holiday season upon us, I would like to wish each of you the very best. **I would like to take this opportunity to inform all of our stakeholders that the return to In-Person & Hybrid Instruction has been delayed until Tuesday, January 19, 2021.** This decision is based on a number of factors, including weekly guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and Pennsylvania Department of Health. During the past six-week period, we have experienced a dramatic increase in positive COVID-19 cases in the local community, a significant increase in hospitalizations, and sadly, an increased mortality rate. Based on prior trends, it is the expectation that positive case counts will increase even further after the Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa and New Year's holidays over the next two to four weeks.

By remaining apart for the two weeks following Winter Break, students and staff members who may be exposed to COVID-19 and experience illness can do so at home, and take the necessary measures to improve their health while preventing spread of illness. This will be key to our ability to come together in person as a school community on January 19th.

Any student or staff member who becomes ill or is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 during the period January 4 through January 18 is asked to contact Tina Vojtko, RN at (570) 855-0118 before January 19th and should not come to school – please stay home if you are sick or exhibiting symptoms.

As we collectively continue to navigate these challenging times, we encourage our students, families and staff to consider the more widespread impact of your individual behaviors and activities. We continue to encourage the universal preventative measures of:

1. Wear a face covering.
2. Maintain six-feet of social distancing with individuals outside your immediate household.
3. Do not congregate with individuals from outside your immediate household.
4. Practice good personal hygiene – wash your hands frequently and use hand sanitizer.
5. Remain home if you are ill or do not feel well.

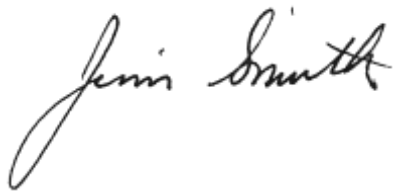
Although the past year has been fraught with historic challenges, which will most likely continue into the first quarter of the new year, **we must continually remind ourselves there is hope in the not-too-distant future!** Two new COVID vaccines are in the early stages of distribution, and others are expected to come online in the coming weeks. For those of you who know me, I have an intense phobia to needles. That being said, I am actually excited about the opportunity to get immunized, as it is a major step for us to begin to return to a sense of normalcy – for ourselves, our children, and our community. Although this is a personal decision for each of us, please take the time to do your own research of legitimate sources of information about the vaccine, and consider the widespread implications of vaccination versus non-vaccination.

Although Bear Creek Community Charter School continues to deal with short-term challenges associated with the pandemic, we are also focusing on long-term planning. This includes opportunities for students to shore-up their learning through additional after-school and summer educational programs, providing opportunities for more students to engage in the Bear Creek Experience, and developing additional avenues to provide value to our students, families, staff and community.

We will be communicating with parents during first week of the new year regarding the logistics of returning to the in-person/hybrid instructional model, including expectations for Chromebooks, etc.

We appreciate everyone's patience and support as we navigate these challenging times. Please enjoy the upcoming holiday season with your immediate family. Wishing you and your family a wonderful holiday season, and a Happy & Health New Year!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Jim Smith
Chief Executive Officer