

Hello Classroom Teams,

I am stressing “team” at this time because that’s what we all are. A team that takes care of those around us, however we can. I wanted to send out a quick email to you from your Ed Team here at Central. We appreciate your patience! We have been having regular meetings to try and sort out our situation, not only for the classrooms, but also for the agency. With the guidance of many local, state and regional entities we will continue to adjust our plans accordingly. Our guidance is coming from - Office of HS, DHS, CACFP, State governance, etc.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Please print and read this email completely. It is long, but important for ALL to be aware of the details and what they are responsible for. Share it with all teaching staff.

By now you should have read 2 emails and I will tell you about a third.

- 1) To Parents- Friday the 18<sup>th</sup> will be our last day open with children until at least April 13<sup>th</sup>.
- 2) To HS/EHS staff-(you should have had this in your email upon your arrival today.) We know you will have questions and I will cover some in a bit.
- 3) The letter you may not have seen is in regards to the Neighborhood Centers. They will continue to be open, but by appointment.

I also wanted to mention, at this time, we have not made any changes with our Central Office Team except following the common sense rules that we think all should have been practicing anyway.

### **PAYROLL/BENEFITS**

Please know that a lot of factors were considered as we made our decisions for our HS/EHS program as we know our decisions are impacting staff and the families we serve:

- Safety of all is important, but also to still provide for needs of those we serve in the best way that we could (more on that to come in a separate correspondence).
- Availability of supplies.
- You will be getting paid. We are part of an Agency that does have policies to follow however. Here are the different situations for you:
  - 1) You will have the option of working at the site, at home or to be considered self-isolating.
    - a. If you work on site will you get paid as usual and continue to accrue benefits as usual.
    - b. If you work from home, you will have guidance as to what that entails and how it will be documented. You will be paid for those work hours. If you have benefit time (sick, vacation, personal day) saved up, that will be used to make up the remainder of your regularly scheduled work hours before “Emergency Leave” will come into play.
    - c. If you choose to self-isolate and if you have benefit time (sick, vacation, personal day) saved up, that will be used first to pay you your regularly scheduled work hours before “Emergency Leave” will come into play.
  - 2) Please be aware that everyone will continue to accrue benefits but if you are not working, they will be used up with each payroll before “Emergency Leave” is added.
  - 3) If you have insurance, nothing changes there.
  - 4) Timesheets need to be kept up to date. If staff decide to self-isolate, they will need to be able to still fill out their timesheets, via phone or computer.
  - 5) All staff need to be thinking of their plans for the next few weeks. Once this email is shared AND understood, please report to Kathy or Jackie **AND** myself as to the plans of your entire team. We want to know classroom by classroom, not by individuals. Please discuss and get that information **to us by the end of the day Thursday 3/19/2020**. If we have other needs we will let you know.
    - a. I plan to work on site and not use any benefit time.
    - b. I plan to work from home and use my benefit time.

- c. I plan to do a combination of a and b.
- d. I plan to self-isolate and not work, using my benefit time.

### **WHAT TO DO NOW AND IN THE NEAR FUTURE**

We know that you most likely have lower numbers this week and yes, some staff absent as well. But, with these numbers we still need to be providing those great experiences and routines that you already do with the children. Enjoy that time with them! Along with that, it means using instances like this wisely. Ratio is of course your first priority. If you have that covered, we wanted to remind/suggest some things that can, and should, be happening in your classrooms these next few days with children as well in the weeks ahead.

- 1) While things are still fresh in your mind, get all of your contacts into CP if you haven't yet.
- 2) GOLD-time to get caught up on entry as well.
- 3) Kalisha sent out a list on 3/17/2020 of those needing to update their GOLD Reliability and Mandatory Reporter. If you have newer staff, they too may have trainings to finish. Send certificates to her.
- 4) This Friday is in a sense the end of the month for some of you, if you decide to self-isolate and not be back into the classroom (following the guidelines in your staff memo from Matt and the explanations above), so you will want to be mindful of that.
- 5) We will be providing food for families that can come and get it. Some teaching staff may be needed to help with this process.
- 6) Spring cleaning may need to happen on your playgrounds or in your sheds. Please clean and purge broken items in your storage sheds as needed.
- 7) Speaking of spring...inside cleaning can happen as well. I know we have had some extra cleaning time recently, but did you go to the back of your cupboards and pull it all out and wipe them down? Doing this, and then sorting and possibly purging, will make putting it back in so much easier. Plus, it will make it easier to pull things out in the spur of the moment and in accordance with the children's interests and to rotate on a regular basis. When did you rotate and restock materials last? Consider the following:
  - Do you have things where you want them? Time to rethink your organization perhaps?
  - Do you need to repackage games, puzzles or sets of things?
  - Do you need to get various "parts" put back where they belong?
  - Do you have books that need some TLC?
  - How do your desk/office areas look? Time to start fresh with cleaning and organizing?
- 8) You can be working on future calendars and newsletters so they are ready to go when needed.
- 9) Have you ALL, truly read through the Creative Curriculum manuals? Everyone needs to become comfortable with the Curriculum now that materials have been delivered and the training is completed.
- 10) For HS-You may want to start assembling "kits" for your different Creative Curriculum studies? This would be a great time to work on those. You will also want to start creating lesson plans.
- 11) For EHS-this would be the time to start adding in the "Routines" for all of your children into the digital format. Yes, these will need to be updated when the children return, but get those basics in there. The next step will be the "Experiences."
- 12) Look at your bulletin boards and postings. Does anything need recreated or just taken down? Things fade and become tattered over time and need attention. Pay attention as to whether you have too much hanging up.
- 13) There is always labeling and the removal of adhesive to do on cabinets, floors, etc.
- 14) What are some of those things in your classroom that you "never have time" to do, make, create, organize, read, etc.? Now is your time to do so.

15) Madison staff-with the upcoming move, there will be things that can be done both at Madison and Corse in preparation. We will get that out later as far as Madison projects but if you are interested in helping clean at Corse, let me know.

**PARENT ENGAGEMENT, KEEPING IN TOUCH and NEXT STEPS**

You will be receiving information as to how we will stay in contact with families and how it will be documented. This will come to you by Friday. We are working to get things out to you as soon as possible, but things do take some time. Parent Engagement should be a coordinated approach with the FDS.

We will continue to stay in touch with any information we feel you need to know or with things we need you to do.

Once again, we appreciate your patience and understanding as we tackle this new obstacle. We are “Head Start” and can do this! We appreciate all you are doing and will be doing until we can get back to what we call “normal”!

**Thank you!**

*Dawn Cazin*

Education Manager

Head Start and Early Head Start

Community Action of Southeast Iowa

2850 Mt. Pleasant St. Suite 108

Burlington, IA 52601

Phone: 319-753-0193

[dawn.cazin@caofseia.org](mailto:dawn.cazin@caofseia.org)

