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From: matthew.leclere@caofseia.org

Good Morning All,

These uniquely challenging circumstances have forced everyone to think outside the box, work outside their comfort zones, and take some risks with the way they have “always done things”. This is not an easy task under normal circumstances, let alone a mass pandemic as we have been facing the past several weeks.

I know this is difficult! I know that, by mere happenstance, you have been thrown into a position that everything and every way you have been used to teaching has been upheaved. But, I also know that YOU are rising to the top and showing exactly what you are made of! The lessons that are being posted, the videos I have watched, the activities created; all are incredible! And all under duress. You have proven what resilience looks like and I am very proud of the work you have done.

Here are a few updates for you:

- If you did not listen to the Governor’s address Thursday, she extended the State’s COVID-19 response through April 30. This means that schools we remain closed at least through that date and so will we. She announced that she would give 2 weeks notice prior to reopening the schools to give time to prepare. So, by mid-April she will address this again and decide whether we could open by May 1 or if that deadline gets postponed further. Parents have been sent an official letter to this effect and should receive it early this week. We will follow up with a text from ChildPlus to communicate the extension of the shutdown.
- Policy Council for April 9 has been cancelled. Notification was being mailed out Friday. A packet of information, including my report, monthly component reports, a Corse update, and financial reports will be sent out on Wednesday or Thursday of this week to Policy Council members.
- The In-Kind papers and explanation letter are copied and went in the mail Friday. Hopefully, parents will receive them Monday or Tuesday and begin keeping track of activities right away. We have designated Jennie’s HS email as the point of contact if parents return forms electronically. These will be disseminated so that education can mark the appropriate goals associated with the activities on the form. This is a work in progress and hopefully we will be able to capture some of the time families are working together.
- OHS continues to send guidance as new information comes available. This is all new for everyone and something no one could have exactly predicted. Regional Office is all working remotely so they are experiencing some of the same challenges. We will work through this and be stronger because of it.
- Travis did some really nice work to the Tolson site. There was an entry area that was showing some serious wear. He was able to rebuild this and make it look better than the original. Well done Travis!
- As part of the President’s recovery package, \$750 Million was added to Head Start. OHS has directed us to put together plans for a summer option as a large portion of spending this money. This is not a matter of making up days, it is however, a method of offering continued services to families as they begin to come back from this period of time. We will keep you updated as we know more.

There is no real way to know how long this remote learning will need to continue. I appreciate your efforts and your commitment to the children and families we serve. I also appreciate your time as you watch webinars and work to improve your craft.

Be well everyone.

Matthew LeClere, Ed.S.

Director Head Start/Early Head Start

Community Action of Southeast Iowa

If you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.