March 13, 2020

Dear Free Horizon Families,

I have started this letter several times, only to have new information arrive in my inbox. It seems that as some things become more clear, new questions or challenges arise. With so much happening at a rapid pace, we here at Free Horizon Montessori have focused our energy on the reason we are all part of this community: our children. We have been re-teaching hygiene skills and encouraging handwashing; keeping our school days as typical as possible while also preparing for remote learning; increasing our already-robust cleaning and disinfecting protocols, reminding one another to refrain from touching our faces and introducing the concept of social distancing. Oh, and teaching. We’ve also been teaching. Our teachers and staff have demonstrated incredible dedication, compassion, flexibility, and care. We will continue to all of this, just in a very different way. As shared by the district last night, Jeffco Schools announced a plan to continue instruction through remote learning during the school building closures implemented because of the recent COVID-19 outbreak. You will find our school’s plan below, and will update you with any new information that might impact this plan.

**FIRST STEPS:**
- Please make sure your Jeffco Connect accounts and contact information is updated so you receive district and school updates.
- No students will report to school March 16th – 27th. Remote Learning is planned for Tuesday, March 17th through Friday, March 20th. All students and staff have Spring Break from March 21st through March 29th.

**Today, Friday, March 13th:**
- 5th grade students – are bringing their district-issued Chromebooks and chargers home this afternoon. These devices will be used to deliver online instruction, details of which will come on Monday. Please have students take the Chromebooks out, connect to your home’s internet, and show you their Google account.
- Medications will remain at school unless picked up by guardians by 4:30 pm today or during the device check-out times on Monday (read below).
- Teachers worked with students today to make sure they know their logins and passwords.
- Families who do not have a device capable of supporting remote learning (Chromebook, laptop, or iPad) may check one out from the school to use during the period of Remote Learning. If your family needs to check out a device or a hotspot for internet access, please complete the form at [https://tinyurl.com/vqo6sbx](https://tinyurl.com/vqo6sbx) by 5:00 pm on Sunday, March 15th. Devices will be checked out at the school based on the times on the form on Monday, March 16th. Like checking out library books, devices and hotspots are school property. Families are responsible for returning devices and liable for damages.
- All instruction, assignments, and learning activities will be delivered remotely – watch for communications from your classroom teacher on Monday with more information. Our teachers are working hard to support a Montessori learning experience, extending Practical Life activities that so often connect us with reading, writing, and math in practical, real-world ways.

**Monday, March 16th:**
- This is a planning day for our staff to transition to the Remote Learning Plan and no instruction will happen on this day. We encourage families to take this day to assure student logins work and develop plans for supporting learning for the remainder of the week. We recommend setting up a dedicated space in your home for each child to focus on learning activities that require such.
- Our website and shared folders in Google Drive will provide links for all grade levels and specials. Our Special
Education staff will be contacting families and students directly with information on the manner in which their supports will continue during this period of Remote Learning.

- Our mental health staff will be available to connect with students who might benefit from talking to a familiar adult.
- In addition, please see some links below for some resources you might find helpful.

**Tuesday, March 17th through Friday, March 20th:**

- Remote Learning Days
- Follow teacher guidance on providing evidence of student learning. There are so many ways for this to happen - emails, photos, drawings, etc. We will be very creative with this, and use these to document "attendance" for these days. ( 
- Remember to incorporate fun, play, and outdoor time!

We all know that this process is new, different, and will come with some challenges. We are also confident that our staff and students will rise to the unique circumstances and continue learning throughout. Thank you in advance for supporting your child or children, for extending grace and understanding to our staff, and for the myriad of ways you are making adjustments to your routines to support the greater public health needs at this time. It’s a lot, and we are truly grateful to each of you and all you bring to our amazing community. We hope that circumstances evolve such that we can all return to our regular routines and school on Monday, March 30th. Please know, however, that we stand ready to continue supporting and evolving our Remote Learning Plan as long as it is needed.

In Partnership and Gratitude,

Kresta Vuolo
Principal

Additional Resources:

Jeffco Public Schools COVID-19 Website

VIDEO: Children's Hospital Colorado "Answering Kids' Questions About the Coronavirus"

FOR KIDS: A Clever NPR-made Comic for Kids About Coronavirus

Tech Resources for Families