



New Discoveries

Montessori Academy

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Dear NDMA Family,

Please note the following *Critical updates* regarding COVID-19. Minnesota Education Commissioner Mary Ricker, and Governor Tim Walz provided the following updates today:

- a. **Distance Learning** will occur March 30th through May 4th.
- b. The Governor has issued a **Stay Home** order from midnight March 27th through midnight April 10th.
- c. School staff will return to schools May 1st and 4th to prepare for students to return for on-site learning beginning May 5th.
- d. Public Schools will continue to provide **meals** and **childcare** March 30th through May 4th.
- e. Although Public School staff are not considered Tier 1 **essential employees**, if our staff are healthy, they will be called on to help with meal preparation, meal delivery, learning materials delivery, etc. Select staff will be contacting students/families during the week to stay connected, and to make sure that learning is happening.

When *Distance Learning* begins Monday, March 30th, please note that we will continue to follow our school calendar. Because *Distance Learning* continues into April, for example, there will be no *Distance Learning* on Friday, April 10th (Good Friday) or Monday, April 13th (Easter Monday). We will send reminders/updates along the way as this continues to evolve.

We are moving up the date *Distance Learning* plans will be posted to our website. Our goal now is to have plans posted by the end of the day, Friday, March 27th. We will update the plans as necessary.

If you do not have a technology device (iPad, Chromebook, laptop) at home, please contact your child's teacher. We *may* be able to help. Your child's teacher will explain the process for borrowing a device. Do NOT contact your child's teacher if



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your family has a device – even if everyone in your family must share the same device. Also, please contact your child’s teacher if you do not have internet connectivity at home. Please note, if you have a data plan for a smartphone, you may be able to use the hotspot feature to provide internet access for an iPad, Chromebook or laptop.

We are finding that it will not be as easy to get connected to internet without incurring up-front expense (to the tune of \$200.00). I am reaching out to local providers to see if they can do better than that.

*The Minnesota Department of Health is making the following recommendations: MDH is taking a very aggressive stance related to self-isolating people and subsequently self-quarantining family members showing signs of COVID-19. The main symptoms are *fever OR cough* (new onset, lingering or worsening) OR *shortness of breath*. The strong recommendations from MDH are that if you or family members are showing these signs you should stay home. A fever is generally defined as an oral temp of 100.4 degrees or higher. If your baseline temp (normal body temp when healthy) is lower, you may have a fever even if your measured temp is below 100.4.*

Basically, if you have any of the respiratory symptoms above, you should stay home. Ideally, you should contact your medical provider for guidance. If you choose not to do that, you should follow the recommendations of MDH and stay home for at least 7 days, and for 3 days with no fever and improvements of respiratory symptoms-whichever is longer. Siblings and household members should then also stay home for 14 days to monitor their symptoms. If you are able work from home during this time, that is great and encouraged by MDH. Staying home means *not* going to the grocery store, etc.

Please proceed to next page for a couple more items.



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If you have access, please note the following online resources that may be helpful:

- <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/about.pdf>, Coronavirus disease facts from MDH
- <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/action.html#schools>, Strategies to slow the spread of COVID-19
- <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/supporting-individuals-autism-through-uncertain-times>, autism help
- <https://theautismhelper.com/emergency-home-school-kit/>, autism help

You can look forward to similar greetings from New Discoveries Staff members in the coming days. Please know that we miss you, and we wish you the very best as you honor the **Stay Home** order from Governor Walz.

