



August 19, 2020

Greetings!

These days, it feels like time is simultaneously flying by and standing still. We have continued to work closely with our Board of Directors to find a path forward for our programs that is safe, implementable, and robust. We will be following the most recent guidance from the Chester County Health department, which was released on Friday. With the uptick in community transmission rates starting in late July in Delaware and Chester Counties, CCHD has issued a statement recommending that all schools--both public and private--start the year virtually and continue in this format through October 9th.

Our goal of offering on-campus programs in a safe way, for as much of the year as possible, hasn't changed. Therefore, we will use two of our float weeks and push our start date back to the original date of Monday, September 21 at which point we will be virtual until at least October 9th.

We recognize that this announcement likely brings mixed emotions for our community. Please know that we greatly appreciate your ongoing flexibility as we continue to adapt to the fluidity of this situation, and the latest guidance from health officials. This has not been an easy task, and we are thankful for the on-going support of our community as we make these exceptionally tough decisions.

We know we are not alone in our eagerness to re-join as a community, regardless of the fashion. Toward that end, although programs won't officially kick-off until September 21st, we will be offering some fun opportunities to connect virtually as a community during the weeks of September 7th and 14th.

For NEW Families: We recognize the importance of new-to-OC youth having the opportunity to meet their Facilitator(s) in-person, as well as making a face-to-face connection with a peer. We will be contacting each new family in the coming weeks to set up a time for you to come on campus (outside, socially distanced/masked) to meet your Facilitator, as well as a peer in your youth's program(s) if you are comfortable doing this.

For ALL Families: In addition to your youth's virtual program time, we are excited to announce the following upgrades to our virtual experience for the start of the program year.

- **Access to OC Outdoor Campus:** We will be allowing individual families or small clusters (maximum three families) on campus. A sign-up will be available in the coming weeks. More details to follow!
- **Supply Kits:** Each youth will receive a kit of basic supplies to use at home during their virtual program time.
- **Program-specific Websites:** One of the upgrades families requested last spring

was to have an easier way to stay on top of the various program content and synchronous and asynchronous offerings. We are in the process of designing a website for each program so that all of this important information is housed in one place! We are excited to roll this out next month.

- **Access to OC Materials:** Families will be able to borrow OC materials (think hands-on manipulatives such as snap circuits, math boxes, science equipment, books, etc.) for two-week periods. There will be a digital sign-out list that families can peruse and then decide which item(s) they want to borrow. Pick-up and drop-off will be from OC. Margaret and Julia have been working on creating this searchable database and we look forward to sharing it with you before the program year begins. (Please note: material borrowing will likely only be available during the weeks when we are virtual. Once we are--hopefully--back on campus, we will need access to all of our materials for OC programs).
- **Field Trip Recommendations:** Do you ever find yourself wanting to go on a field trip, but wish that it had been previously vetted by a trusted source? Look no further! We will be offering weekly outdoor field trip recommendations. Whether your family is choosing to adhere to strict social-distancing, masking, and self-isolation guidelines, or you have formed a "pod" with another family or two, we're confident that all families will benefit from new ideas for fun and educational field trips. For families who are seeking social interaction in a safe format, this may be a great way to meet that need. It will be up to individual families to coordinate.
- **Mental Health Resources:** With the start of the year occurring virtually, that certainly addresses the concern for physical safety in regards to contracting COVID-19. However, we would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the very real fact that physical safety is only one (very important!) piece to the puzzle. The emotional well-being of our community members holds equal importance. Toward that end, we will be offering some virtual workshops led by mental health professionals this fall for members of our pre-teen and teen community, as well as for parents who are wanting to know how best to continue to support their youth during the on-going pandemic.

We are grateful for your on-going patience and support while we create and adjust to design a fulfilling program year. Please feel free to reach out to us with questions or clarifications.

In partnership,

Julia, Mike, and Rick

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