

Dear BHMS Families,

I hope this message finds you well and enjoying some good family time on the first Monday of our spring break. By now I am sure that you have heard that Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that New York City public schools will be closed starting today, until at least April 20. Following the same advice from the New York City Department of Health and Hygiene, BHMS will remain closed after spring break, until at least April 20.

Over the past two weeks, the faculty and staff have been preparing for remote learning in the event of an extended school closure. That planning will continue on Monday, March 30 (already scheduled as a staff day) and Tuesday, March 31, as we continue to refine lessons and logistics. Remote learning will begin on Wednesday, April 1. Distance learning will be new for all of us and will continue to evolve as our teachers respond to what is working and what can be improved. We understand and are taking into consideration that many adults will be working from home during this period, complicating their ability to help or supervise students with their schoolwork.

Although it is early in the break, I wanted to communicate this decision about the school's closure as early as possible, giving everyone time to plan. I hope that knowing this in advance will give you the start of a roadmap for what lies ahead. I also hope that, with this knowledge, families, as well as faculty and staff, can take a break over the next two weeks. We may be in this situation for longer than we like, and self-care is critical.

I also want to share an update about our Middle School teacher and to thank those of you who have reached out, offering to help. We have been informed that the teacher is doing well and continues to have no symptoms of the virus at this time, [eleven] days after possible exposure. All of your kind wishes and generous thoughts have been conveyed and have made me so proud to be the head of BHMS.

As we navigate the foreseeable future, our patience and grace under pressure will no doubt be tested. The way we handle the situation, remaining calm and serving as good role models for our students, will be important. This is a time to remember that respect for our children lies at the core of everything we do and that despite these circumstances, our children will continue to learn and grow into the wonderful people they are meant to be.

A hallmark of our school is the strength and caring of our community. In addition to considering the continuity of student learning, we are giving special consideration to the ways in which we can maintain our connections to one another during this extraordinary time.

We will be back in touch specifically about all that our remote learning entails by the end of next week. Until then, please take care of yourselves and stay well.

Sincerely,

Stephanie