



Monday, March 23, 2020

PARENT ADVISORY: Continued Closure

We are thinking of you all and hope you are safe and healthy.

Much has transpired since the last parent advisory on March 12, 2020. *We want to state that there are no known COVID-19 (coronavirus) cases in our WMS community at this time.* Since the onset of SFUSD's announcement of school closures a week ago, and our decision to follow suit, the City issued a Shelter In Place Public Health Order requiring people to stay home except for essential needs. This order is in effect until at least April 7. [Read the full Public Health Order here.](#)

We recognize this is a very challenging time that may cause anxiety, frustration and fear; especially for parents as you balance childcare, health and safety, and work. While we monitor and manage through these unprecedented and turbulent times, we continue to be mindful of the needs of the families we serve. WMS staff members are developing childcare and child development solutions for our families as quickly as possible and as is allowable, while following the Shelter in Place order.

Continued Site Closures During Shelter in Place Order

The health and safety of our children, families, and staff is our number one priority. **WMS will continue our closure until the Shelter in Place Public Health Order is lifted, or until further notice, per the City ordinance.** We also await further guidance from SFUSD regarding our BASE! Programs, and will follow SFUSD's schedule for resuming BASE! programs.

Sunset Preschool Operation to Support Essential Service Employees

Both the local and statewide Shelter in Place and Stay-at-Home orders have articulated that **childcare facilities are not Essential Businesses. They however may operate to support essential service employees that are required to work during the Shelter in Place period.** Essential Businesses include health care workers; police, fire and other emergency responders; utility providers such as electricians, plumbers, and sanitation workers, veterinary services, gas stations and auto repair shops, hardware and other home supply stores, banks and laundry services.

Starting on Wednesday, March 25, 2020, WMS is actively planning to open our Sunset site for emergency preschool childcare services for Essential Service families, as permitted by the order. We are committed to ensuring safe and healthy environments for children during this stressful time. In addition to providing childcare for Essential Service families, we would be providing opportunities for staff to work. WMS will need to make a number of adjustments to the preschool program to balance the priorities of serving Essential Service families and keeping our staff, children and families safe. Recent emergency childcare service guidelines include:

- Our childcare facility must adhere to social distancing protocols to minimize risk.
- Children will be in age-appropriate classrooms of 12 or fewer, and must have separate rooms and separate bathrooms.
- Groups of children will not mix with each other.
- Staff will not circulate between groups, and cannot work more than 6 hour shifts in the classroom.
- Extra sanitation practices and health screening practices will be implemented.
- *Childcare will be limited to those permitted to work during the Shelter in Place order.*

WMS will work within this structure to provide adequate and vital childcare services to Essential Service families during this turbulent time.

Current WMS families will retain their childcare spots and be able to return to the regular program once the Shelter in Place order has been lifted. At this time, the State has not provided an end date to the Public Health order. As such, there may be an impact to age-appropriate classroom transitions and childrens' graduation upon your return. We are monitoring the situations and will attempt to plan accordingly.

We realize this does not meet the needs of all Essential Service families we serve. We do not have the ability to open a site for infant and toddler care at this time. Additionally, we are looking into an option to open childcare for school-aged children of Essential Service employees. If you are an Essential Service employee and are in need of immediate childcare, we suggest visiting Children's Council's website which provides up-to-date childcare options: [Children's Council Stay-at-Home Resources](#). WMS will continue to update families as the situation changes and our offerings increase.

March Tuition Refund

Recurring program payments will be paused until we reopen our regular program services. We offer families the opportunity to [request](#) a prorated tuition refund in recognition of this closure. If your family does not choose this option, non-refunded tuition amounts will be used to pay teacher salaries during this trying time. This contribution qualifies as a tax-deductible donation. WMS is a nonprofit organization that supports our community. We are in this together and your financial support is greatly appreciated.

If you would like to provide immediate help to WMS, please consider [making a 100% tax-deductible donation here](#).

Thank you for supporting each other and the WMS community! Please take care of yourself and stay healthy.

Ben Wong
Executive Director