

March 18, 2020



Dear Stokes School Community,

Just one week ago we were going about our regular routines - going to work, teaching and learning at school and moving about the area freely. As we know, our routines have changed for the unforeseeable future and we must adapt to those changes accordingly.

Initially, when Stokes School leadership and staff began crafting distance learning plans for our scholars, it was with the understanding that school would be closed for a couple of weeks. Based on the most recent reports from the federal government, we may be facing a very different scenario. Although no one knows exactly how long schools will be closed, we are now preparing for potential school closures that could last for a month or longer.

To prepare for this new reality, our instructional leadership teams are currently creating distance learning plans for three different scenarios:

- Plan #1 envisions a two week closure;
- Plan #2 assumes that school will resume in mid-late April (after our originally scheduled spring break); and
- Plan #3 assumes that school will be closed for several months - potentially for the rest of the school year.

Because we are planning for the unknown, it is important that we explore and prepare for multiple scenarios. This planning, however, takes time and coordination. It is for this reason that we have decided to adhere to our original school calendar and not to change the dates of our spring break scheduled for April 10th - 17th. This will allow our teachers and instructional leaders two weeks of additional time between now and then to collaborate and to work through all of these scenarios. We know that teachers have been sending resources and communicating through multiple formats and platforms and we are currently researching distance learning approaches that are best aligned with our curriculum and family needs. We will be creating more consistent structures for communication and lesson delivery very soon.

Additionally, because of recent restrictions on international and domestic travel and in anticipation of travel becoming more challenging in the coming weeks and months, we are cancelling our 5th grade international study tours to Panama and Martinique as well as our 4th grade trip to Virginia Beach and our 3rd grade camping trip. We understand that this will be a huge disappointment to our 3rd, 4th and 5th grade scholars. It is equally disappointing for those involved in planning and preparation for these trips. It is one of the highlights of each school year. However, when considering the safety and well-being of our scholars and staff, we will always err on the side of caution. We will think through different options to potentially make up these trips in the future. We will also reimburse families that have already completed payments for this year's trips. Additional information about these topics will be shared as soon as it is available

I am extremely proud and humbled by the way our school community has come together in the last few days to take care of each other. Families have probably experienced first hand the care and attention that Stokes School teachers have given to their scholars remotely. Other members of our staff are working behind the scenes and should be equally acknowledged and commended. This includes Stokes Kitchen

staff, instructional leadership staff, student support and family engagement staff, learning specialists and special education staff, administrative support staff and our maintenance crew. Additionally, much gratitude to our network leadership team that has been meeting and planning everyday - multiple times a day - for the past few weeks in an attempt to keep up with and get ahead of this complicated situation. Finally, many thanks to all of the families and friends in our community who have come forward to offer assistance to others as well.

Please be safe and we will continue to communicate updates or changes as this situation evolves.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Erika Bryant', with a stylized, cursive script.

Erika Bryant
Executive Director