

March 13, 2020

Dear Salmonberry Families,

As you may have expected, following the mandate issued by Governor Inslee today, **Salmonberry School's campus will be closed to students beginning now and extending until at least April 27. There is no school for kids on Monday, 3/16.**

Salmonberry teachers and staff will spend next week designing, collecting and curating curriculum and creating learning plans for each of our students. We will also be preparing to interface with families using on-line tools. As we chose not to have closures to do this work until now, and because this will represent a significant shift from our usual approach to curriculum design, this will take some time. We appreciate your patience while we do our due diligence to create an outstanding holistic learning experience for each child.

On Tuesday afternoon at 2:00 I will host a community meeting via Zoom's video conferencing platform to allow us to come together as the Salmonberry family and check in with one another. I'll have some information to share and also be ready to listen to your thoughts and priorities as *we strive to design a program that best supports you* in providing home-based learning aligned with Salmonberry's Mission and pedagogy. I will send a separate invitation to that meeting. Please stay tuned. I will also try to make myself available for individual phone calls or video calls next week, though I will be making an effort to keep these short, as I am focusing my time and energy on supporting staff and designing curriculum in the short term.

Beginning on March 23, Teachers will have physical packets of work and materials ready for you to pick up from school. These will include learning plans for at least the next week of instruction. Teachers will also be scheduling some on-line lessons and/or meetings or chat rooms appropriate for the developmental level of each class, and there will be other resources that are posted and curated on line. And teachers will be available for consultations and appointments with individual parents who want support. All this will become clear in the next ten days.

Very important to the teachers, the Board and myself is that we stick together as a community and support each other in whatever ways we can. Even while we are practicing "social distancing," I want to urge each of us to feel into, and embody, the true meaning of community. How are you? What do you need? How can I help? This time is going to be challenging for everyone but may present some real stress for certain ones of us. Everyone's situation is unique. In that

spirit, does anyone anticipate needing childcare? Julian Tiffay has offered to be available, if you'd like to see about scheduling him. jptiffay@gmail.com And does anyone need help with computer access? I would be happy to look into possible tablets or laptops that could be available to borrow should you anticipate having trouble interfacing with school due to lack of hardware.

Here are some words to think about from a Salmonberry seventh grader that emerged during a stunning transdisciplinary class focused on self-exploration and holistic reflection, which I have had the privilege to facilitate during these past few weeks at school. (A poem inspired by William Stafford)

How To Regain Your Soul

Enter into your art studio
Surrounded by drifting swirling colors
Soft dancing brushes
Blank ivory canvas
Let yourself be lost in a flurry of frantic bright splatters
Then when you have truly shed your outer layers
When you are raw as a skinned animal
Sit
Just sit. Look out through your window across the settling sky
And then, just as the sun sets, as nothing is sure anymore
Your soul will return.

Your kids are so amazing. I am missing them already. The hardest part so far for me, was at dismissal today, not being able to hug them all. I had to jam my hands deep into my pockets and just hug with my eyes.

Take care and be well.

Sincerely,

Paul