



Shalom School

SACRAMENTO'S JEWISH DAY SCHOOL

April 2, 2020

Please read the Head of School message that was sent in the e-news as it contains important updates about our school closure.

Dear Shalom School Families,

It may seem unreal, but we are coming to the end of our third week of distance learning. I've been reading and thinking a lot, as I am sure you have, about what the seismic shift in our lives caused by the COVID-19 pandemic means and how we might best approach the complicated and challenging situation in which we now find ourselves. One of the things I have been trying to do is to make sure to share information as clearly and transparently with all of you and with our teachers, children, and community. I have several updates and announcements below, and I hope you'll read them carefully and let me know if you have questions.

Before I get to those, however, I hope you will take a few minutes to read the next few "non-news" paragraphs. Though I know we are all hungry for news—for facts, updates, and certainties—I want to acknowledge for myself and all of us that right now, too much news can be as harmful as too little. As much as we need the information that is available, we also know that there's more that we don't know than we do. And most of us also find that tuning in to the news cycle for extended periods can make us more anxious than we'd be otherwise. For me, one of the most difficult challenges over the past three weeks has been an almost persistent sense of overwhelm.

One of the ways I've been coping is to focus on gratitude. I have shared it before, but it bears repeating—our teachers have been heroic and amazing. They have faced their own personal challenges as well as technical and pedagogical obstacles and have created exciting, engaging, and robust virtual classrooms. I am so thankful for all of them, and for you, our families and community members, who continue to support our school, partner with us, and help us continue the sacred task of nurturing our children.

Our tradition teaches, "You are not expected to complete the work, but you are also not free to desist from it." (Pirkei Avot) Put simply, while we aren't expected to do everything perfectly, we are also not permitted to just give up. If there is any single piece of wisdom that is getting me through these times, it's this one. I hope that it offers you some solace as well. For me, it is a reminder that we are all doing our best, and that our best is good enough. Not every student will complete every distance learning assignment. Not every family will make every Zoom meeting. Not every communication will go smoothly. Not one of us is perfect, and we don't have to be.

If the stress of our ongoing isolation and situation is weighing on you and/or on your children, I encourage you to remember that the most important thing is not to give up. Do what you can, focus on the most important things, and be gentle with yourself and others. Keep letting us know how you are doing and share your feedback. Our teachers are here to help you prioritize and problem-solve. Our children will get the skills and content they need, and we will continue

to be here for you. While we don't know what awaits us on the other side of this scary time, I have tremendous faith in our school, community, and families, and I hope you do, too.

Many of you are wondering (as am I!) when we will be able to return to campus. Based on the most recent information from the Governor's office and other authorities, we are not planning to return to school in April. The following are our current plans:

- Our last day of instruction before Passover break will be Tuesday, April 7.
- We will resume distance learning on Monday, April 20 and will continue through **at least May 1st.**
- We will continue to gather information, monitor the situation, and make further determinations about a return to campus; we will communicate updates to you as soon as we are able.
- We will return to our campus as soon as we can be sure that we can protect the health and safety of all students and staff.
- While we won't have formal distance education over Passover break, we do want to stay connected and are offering some special enrichment opportunities for both kids and adults—please see the e-news and plan to join us for one or more of these fun events.

Please don't hesitate to be in touch if you have questions, concerns, or just need an ear. We are so grateful for your ongoing patience and support.

Shabbat shalom,

Nancy

www.shalomschool.org

