

March 30, 2020

Blessings Hephatha families and stakeholders,

May the peace of our good and gracious Father be with you all. The last 14 days have inevitably led to a whirlwind of emotions and thoughts. These unprecedented times have been difficult to process for all of us. Strength and unity are paramount in the Hephatha family collectively overcoming the obstacles at hand.

Hephatha staff has continued to lift all of you in our prayers. You are constantly on our minds, and in our hearts. Our greatest joys come from the day to day interactions and relationship building of not only your children but with you as well. We are here to offer our support during these trying times that may be impacting our health, both physically and mentally, our home life, and even our employment.

While there are still many unknowns due to this virus and recommended social distancing practices, several constant facts have remained in place.

1. Our Father has got all of us in His protective hands.
2. We are united as the Hephatha family, lifting all our collective needs up in prayer.
3. The Early Childhood Teachers miss their students. They have taken extraordinary steps to ensure our education expectations are being met and that they are finding avenues to make genuine connecting points with their students. Additionally, they have strived to provide the same content and curriculum that would be presented in our traditional classroom setting.

There is no concrete date set for our return. Many different organizations have tried to pinpoint a set return date. While we do have some idea as to how long this new way of life shall continue, we do NOT want to put fixed dates in place for our return.

As we have learned over the past three weeks, this situation is extremely fluid and has evolved at a rapid pace. A possible return date may be altered based on the recommendations of local and federal health officials. During this unknown, our Early Childhood teachers are committed to providing each of their students an academic foundation that will prepare them for the upcoming year.

In the meantime, the topic of tuition has been brought up periodically. Hephatha Early Childhood has continued to provide an academic product consistent with our core values and mission statement. We will continue to provide this product while we experience social distancing.

That being said, there are some avenues of Early Childhood Education that go beyond our academic model. Socialization and Child Care are two areas that are part of our program model as well. Over the past week, we performed a cost analysis of all programs offered. The focus was to identify engagement and academic-focused time periods, as compared to time periods in which socialization and child care were our focus.

As a result of this analysis, Hephatha school administration, in conjunction with campus administration and the board of education, has made the decision to reduce tuition by 30% for the month of April. The reduction of tuition may be expanded to May if social distancing is still needed to flatten the diagnosis curve.

As we have a variety of programs offered, we will directly contact you with specific figures for April tuition. For families that have not seen a fiscal impact as a result of this interruption to our livelihoods, and are interested in paying their full tuition, Hephatha will write a letter of donation for your tax-deductible gift reflecting the 30% additional payment.

For families that pay annually or semi-annually, Hephatha has two options regarding new tuition rates:

1. Hephatha will provide a tax-deductible letter of donation that reflects the 30% of tuition donated for the allotted time we are experiencing collaborative learning.
2. At the return of our traditional learning model, funds will be provided to you that accurately reflect our time in our collaborative learning model.

Moving forward, an option for online tuition has been made available through our app and website. Additionally, a dropbox has been added to the door next to the administration office for those interested in paying by check.

If there are any specific questions related to this new policy, please do not hesitate to reach out. You can contact one of the following edeyke@hephatha.net, tmora@hephatha.net, or hglennon@hephatha.net.

Stay strong in your faith-walk with the Lord, and know that this time of unknown too shall pass.

God Bless!

Eric Deyke



Principal
Hephatha Lutheran Church and School