

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICE OF



HEIGHTS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

March 23, 2020

Since the release of information to our staff and families last week from our President and CEO, Claud Lamar, regarding necessary changes on campuses based on the most recent developments surrounding COVID-19, there have been questions and concerns, as well as a great deal of misinformation on social media and other places. As promised, we will continue to provide our HCS community with updates and we wanted to take time to clarify a few things that seem confusing.

IS HCS CLOSING PERMANENTLY? Heights Christian Schools has not shut our doors permanently, nor were we forced to close by any state or county entity. The closure of some of our preschool campuses is temporary. Brea, Chino Hills, and La Habra Heights Preschools remain open. The elementary and Junior High campuses have moved to a distance learning model allowing the teachers to continue to meet student learning needs using online resources, while also following recommendations and mandates of reliable health and government officials. As of today, our **campus closures are extended and the earliest return date would be Monday, April 20, 2020**, which includes a week of Easter break.

IS HEIGHTS PROVIDING EMERGENCY CARE ON-SITE? The La Habra Heights and Chino Hills Preschools still remain open for HCS families that need childcare, as well as the Brea campus providing emergency childcare for ALL medical personnel, first responders and essential services providers. All teachers working with kids in the Emergency Center are fully state qualified. If you know people that are providing essential services and need childcare, please help us get the word out. It benefits the community at large and also helps us to bring back more teachers sooner!

WHAT ABOUT DAYCARE FOR K-8 STUDENTS? We endeavored to offer daycare on the elementary campuses to support medical personnel, first responders and essential services providers that needed childcare for their children. However, based on attendance, the need did not warrant keeping multiple campuses open. HCS families that need childcare during the day are invited to join us on the Brea campus. For details, call 714.990.8780 or email jwhittemore@heights.net. *HCS daycare rates apply for students staying beyond the 8AM-3:30PM normal school day schedule. No additional charge for those already enrolled in daycare.*

WHY SO MANY LAYOFFS? Unfortunately, as the concern around COVID-19 continued to grow, more and more preschool families stopped attending the preschools. Over the course of the 2-3 weeks before our official closures, a great majority of our preschoolers were being kept home. Most shared with us their strong intention to return as soon as the health crisis is contained. However, during the time that they were out, they were not receiving any services. So, most pulled their children from our program, kept them home, and stopped paying tuition.

HCS is a not-for-profit organization and the sudden, dramatic loss in revenue led to the **TEMPORARY layoffs** of so many of our valued and cherished employees. It was a heart-wrenching decision that none of us took lightly. We serve as stewards for God's resources and have always set tuition and other fees as low as possible. For a non-profit organization, we have been very healthy financially and have always maintained a reserve for an unforeseen emergency. However, the impact of the financial loss in the past month was more than anyone could have anticipated. Within a month, the ministry's revenue stream dropped more than 50%, leaving us with 100% of salaries as well as all the fixed costs (mortgage or rent, utilities, maintenance of facilities, licensing and insurances). It is not sustainable, and we were forced to move forward with TEMPORARY layoffs. Many of the staff retained have agreed to significant pay cuts because they believe in Heights, are 100% invested in the families that we serve and want to help ensure that Heights can continue into the future.

WHY SHOULD I STILL PAY TUITION? It is our desire that families will stand with us as we stand with you to maintain a Christian school option in our communities. Your ongoing support is crucial in our ability to survive into the future. During the closures, our TK-8 teachers are working diligently to provide distance learning for their students, and they are knocking it out of the ballpark. While we know that many parents feel like they are “homeschooling” and we certainly appreciate the partnership and support during these extraordinary times, the contribution of teachers should not be overlooked. Teachers are continuing to create the lesson plans, monitor pacing and assess learning. These are critical factors in ensuring that the upcoming weeks adequately support and prepare your students for the next level. The process and offerings will only continue to improve over the coming weeks. We are also exploring opportunities to use ZOOM or similar platforms for weekly chapels and other ways to help the students feel connected with their teachers and classmates. This is important because their routine was also disrupted abruptly. At the preschool level, we are developing some fun learning ideas that parents can do at home with their preschoolers to keep them engaged. We will keep in touch weekly as we walk this out together.

PLEASE STAND WITH US! We want you to know that you are forever counted as a member of our HCS family. These are truly confusing times, and as we all have seen and experienced, there are often conflicting reports, and changing information hour by hour. **We are asking you to STAND WITH US as we stand with you!** If you can, please continue your enrollment with HCS, and please do not stop paying tuition. If paying tuition presents a hardship for your family, please reach out to us. As always, we will do our best to work with you.

This has been a truly heartbreaking season; we miss the children on our campuses, and we are concerned for the care and well-being of staff that have been TEMPORARILY laid off. Please rest assured, **we will reopen!** In no way do we minimize our current situation... it is grim and for many, the impact feels devastating. However, our confidence is rooted in the conviction that God exists, that He is in control, and that He is always good. We cannot control what’s going on around us in the world, but we can entrust it to God! Please join with us in praying for the Lord’s healing on our country; ask that He would preserve us and believe with us that He is bigger than the challenges we face. We are truly better together, and together, we will call on the gates of Heaven and see God work, all for His glory.

Blessed be the LORD! For he has heard the voice of my pleas for mercy.

*The LORD is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped;
my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him. The LORD is the strength of his people;
he is the saving refuge of his anointed. Oh, save your people and bless your heritage!*

Be their shepherd and carry them forever. Psalm 28:6-9

COVID-19 EMERGENCY CARE
for Infants, Preschoolers, and K-6th Grade
6:30AM—7:30PM Daily
MEDICAL PERSONNEL, FIRST RESPONDERS
and Essential Services Providers

HEIGHTS
BREA CAMPUS
200 S. Associated Road, Brea, CA 92821
714.990.8780 • jwhillmore@heights.net
TODDLER & PRESCHOOL: 20427011 • PRESCHOOL: 20427022
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
CALL OR EMAIL THE SCHOOL OFFICE

What we need to complete registration:
INFANT & PRESCHOOL: Physician's Report, Immunization Records
and required State Registration Paperwork
K-6TH GRADE: Emergency Card
HeightsChristianSchools.org
Better Together: Faith, Family, Community

**HEIGHTS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS, CHINO HILLS
and LA HABRA HEIGHTS PRESCHOOL CAMPUSES**
remain open for current HCS families that need
childcare for their toddlers and preschool-aged
children 18 months – 6 years old.
*Infant care is also available
on the La Habra Heights Campus.*

Depending on the needs of our communities,
we may open additional Emergency Care
Centers in La Mirada or San Juan Capistrano.
**If you need more information on these
services, please call Angela Esslinger at
714.921.9070.**