



# MOUNTAINSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT

MOUNTAINSIDE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
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April 16, 2020

Mountainside Families,

I hope that this letter finds you safe and well. I would like to take a moment to update everyone on the status of Mountainside Schools. As you may be aware Governor Murphy announced today, in conjunction with the NJ Department of Education and the New Jersey Department of Health, that **all New Jersey schools will remain closed through at least Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>**. As such, Mountainside's distance learning program will remain in place until at least that date. Please remember that any decision to reopen schools is fully driven by the existing Executive Order 104 and we will remain closed until such time that the Governor lifts the Executive Order and issues guidance about the resumption of public schooling.

While we all terribly miss seeing our students' smiling faces each day, we understand the importance of this decision in order to preserve the health and safety of students, staff, and the Mountainside community.

As a district, we fully recognize the impact this pandemic is having for our families on many levels outside of education and are here to also support the emotional needs and the varied circumstances that exist in your homes. Earlier today, the school counselors sent out an email with detailed information and links for how they can provide support for students and parents. Please review their correspondence and reach out if you could use their assistance in any way. In addition, I would like to remind all families who may be experiencing a change in financial status, free lunch applications can be submitted at any time. If you believe that your family may be eligible, please refer to information and application instructions which can be found on this link of the Mountainside Schools website: [Food Services](#). Once submitted, all forms will be quickly reviewed and eligible families will be enrolled in the program as soon as possible.

On another note, as any potential date for return moves later in the year, I have received some questions regarding the status of various upcoming events and activities. Please know that all of our Mountainside traditions are very important to us and we know they hold a special place for students and families as well. It is our intent to recognize and celebrate these events, especially those for our graduating 8<sup>th</sup> graders, by any means that we can even if these celebrations may need to look different this year or be held at an alternate time. While I continue to remain hopeful for these activities to take place in a usual fashion, we also need to be prepared, and are already looking into creative alternatives in case we need to adjust. We will monitor all guidance provided in order to determine how, and when, we can hold these meaningful activities and will keep you informed of any updates along the way.

Thank you for being a continuing partner in supporting your child's education and for your ongoing support for our staff as we navigate through these changing times.

Be well and know that we are here for you,

*Janet Walling*

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