March 22, 2020

Hello Cotting Families,

Week one of school closure is behind us. We have heard from many of you about the variety of challenges families are facing including supporting the learning and needs of multiple children at home, trying to simultaneously manage your own work responsibilities, the challenges of social isolation, and the continued overall level of stress and uncertainty we are all experiencing. We want to reiterate that we are here to provide support to families as best we can. Last week, the Mental Health Department hosted an opportunity for parents to come together virtually to connect and to discuss particular challenges related to our families. They plan to offer another opportunity on Wednesday, March 25 at 7:00 pm. Details for joining the meeting will be sent to parents by Pam Varrin.

Throughout this past week teachers, therapists, the Senior Administrative Team, and other staff continued to meet and collaborate to discuss ways to provide support to students and staff at home. We held PTO and PAC meetings. All of these opportunities provided a much needed chance to connect and hear from each other.

We have worked hard to provide you with a variety of resources and activities to help engage students in learning at home as much as possible. Each teacher has considered the unique learning needs of their classroom in providing these materials. Therapists and the vocational department have made resources available as well. I do want to stress that there is no pressure to use these activities. We fully recognize that each family’s capacity to engage students at home will vary and change as this situation unfolds. Our hope is to provide you with a variety of resources that you can draw from in the manner and time that works best for your family. I encourage you to continue to be in touch with your child’s teachers and therapists with questions and feedback.

For your convenience, I wanted to list some resource links that were recently sent home:
From the Communication Therapy Department:  
https://sites.google.com/cotting.org/ctcottingschool/home

From the Occupational Therapy Department:  
https://sites.google.com/cotting.org/otcottingschool/home

From Andy Lindblad for Science:  
https://sites.google.com/cotting.org/cottingvirtualsciencelab/home

From John Meredith for Social Studies:  
https://sites.google.com/cotting.org/social-studies/home

From the Vocational Department:  
https://sites.google.com/cotting.org/cottingschoolvocational/

Cotting’s Medical Staff are available to consult with families to support student needs at home. Simply email Michele Passanisi to request support at: mpassanisi@cotting.org or Medical@cotting.org.

We are grateful for all the ways that technology allows us to be connected during this time, but the social isolation is difficult and especially so for students. Even though school is closed, we can still show and celebrate our incredible Cotting spirit! So next week we will have a virtual Spirit Week. Throughout next week we are encouraging everyone to take a picture of anyone in your family wearing any kind of Cotting gear and send the photo to Lindsay Casavant at lcasavant@cotting.org. It will be wonderful to see members of our community while we are apart. We are continuing to explore other ways to connect students and families during this time.

As we head into our second week of school closure, I hope there will be some level of routine that sets in to make things more manageable for you at home. Please remember that all of the members of our Senior Administrative Team are available to you and we urge you to reach out with questions and for support. We look forward to the day when we are all back at Cotting again!

Keep calm and Cotting on!

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