



Rocketeers,

We hope you are enjoying your summer, what a year! We are so proud of our entire Rocketship community for [the way that everyone stepped up with urgency](#) to give our Rocketeers quality distance learning instruction in the midst of a global pandemic. Way to go Rocketeers!

We know that there are still a lot of questions on how schools will be reopening next school year. Rest assured, our team of experts are working around the clock to make sure we are prepared for any scenario as we work with regional, city, and district leaders to follow health, safety, and educational guidelines. We will be updating you on a weekly basis, starting now, until the beginning of school.

Your input is incredibly valuable to help inform our decisions for next year. Thank you to all of our parents who completed the Office of the State Superintendents Family Survey and participated in family focus groups.

Here are a few key updates to share with you:

- **Save the Date:** Mark your calendars, because school starts on August 19, 2020! Visit the [DC COVID-19 webpage](#) for the 20/21 school calendar. We will continue to post key updates on this page as well as Kinder Camp and Orientation dates. These will also be posted in school Facebook groups.
- **Weekly Communication:** On our family survey, the vast majority of families asked to be updated on a weekly basis by email. Moving forward, we are going to be sending you weekly emails and texts with information on next school year, reopening updates, and other important info. We'll also be posting these communications in school Facebook groups - be sure to join your school's [Facebook group](#) if you haven't already.
- **Preparing to Return to In-Person Learning:** While we are incredibly proud of how our teachers, Rocketeers, and staff transitioned to distance learning last March, we know that we are at our very best when our teachers and students are together in classrooms. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) agrees and recently stated "that all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school. The importance of in-person learning is well-documented, and there is already evidence of the negative impacts on children because of school closures in the spring of 2020." That is why we are busy preparing plans to reopen our campuses for the new school year. We are also working closely with the Mayor's office and other charter schools to align our

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practices and provide continuity for families of students attending multiple schools.

- **New Health & Safety Measures:** Over the last two months, we have been consulting with national and local public health professionals, reviewing CDC guidelines, and evaluating how school systems in other countries have successfully reopened campuses. We are developing new systems and protocols that create multiple layers of protection to reduce the risk of Covid-19 on our campuses while also creating the excellent learning experience that our Rocketeers deserve. We will ask that all staff and all students in grades K-5 wear masks at school. There is significant evidence that universal mask wearing effectively fights the spread of coronavirus. It's a good idea to start practicing mask wearing with your Rocketeer this summer. We'll be sharing much more detail on our health and safety plans next week, so stay tuned.
- **Accommodating 100% Virtual Instruction:** We are excited that the vast majority of our parents indicated that they want to come back into our classrooms next year--which we believe is the best learning experience for our Rocketeers who are able to attend school. However, we also understand that some families will require a 100% virtual learning option next year. We are continuing to work on robust instructional plans to accommodate these Rocketeers and will share more details on our virtual school experience in the coming weeks.

Future Updates:

- Detailed reopening plan
- Kinder camp and orientation dates
- Health and safety protocols and procedures
- Child-friendly resources on what to expect at school next year

Sincerely,

Josh Pacos
Director of Schools