



Escuelita del Alma

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*El encuentro del aprendizaje con la cultura. * Where learning meets culture.*

March 13, 2020

Dear Escuelita Families:

Escuelita is forced to announce a school closure of one week effective Monday, March 16th, due to the possibility of exposure to the COVID-19.

In the afternoon of Friday, March 13th, Escuelita del Alma was informed that the grandmother of a student in the Yellow Room (the teachers are Ms. Maria & Ms. Yanitza) was confirmed to have contracted the Coronavirus. This grandmother traveled to New York City last week and developed flu-like symptoms a few days after her return to Austin. She came to Escuelita on March 4th to pick-up her granddaughter. Our student and her parents last had contact with her grandmother on Sunday, March 8th, during which time the grandma was experiencing flu-like symptoms. Our student was last in attendance at Escuelita yesterday, March 12th. As of today, neither the child or her parents have developed any COVID-19 symptoms. They have placed themselves in self-isolation for a duration of two weeks. They will also seek testing for COVID-19.

Upon a lengthy discussion with the City of Austin Health Department and our licensing representative at the Department of Family Protective Services regarding this possible exposure, I have found it best to create as much social-distancing between our students and their families, and our staff, by closing Escuelita for classes for the duration of one week, from March 16th through March 20th. It is my greatest desire that these days of closure will minimize additional exposure to anyone else. I have asked Escuelita's staff to stay home and practice self-isolation for the duration of our closure.

My main reason for closing Escuelita is because of the location and daily routines of the Yellow Room and its students. The room has no doors and is physically located between the Blue and the Pink Rooms. Many students, parents and teachers from both of our buildings traverse through that classroom several times a day. The Yellow Room also shares playground time, twice a day, with the children of the Purple and Turquoise Rooms. While I do not wish to be an alarmist, I do want to emphasize the magnitude of this possibility of exposure. I have already contracted with a disinfecting company that will be at Escuelita next week doing a massive and thorough disinfection of every classroom.

I am very aware of the difficulties that your family will encounter at finding yourselves without childcare for one week and with very little prior notice. Please know that I have not arrived at this decision lightly. I am simply trying to make the best decision that will keep everyone associated with Escuelita safe and healthy.

Please accept my apologies for this unexpected school closure. I ask that you continue to practice good handwashing techniques at home and that you also monitor your health. Should you notice any symptoms related to the virus, please notify me immediately via email at dinaflores@escuelitadelalma.com.

Sincerely,

Dina Flores, Director