



Dear First School Families,

I hope you are all well and staying healthy! What an unprecedented time we are living in. It is a little bit hard to wrap our minds around the way we will need to adjust our lives in the coming days and weeks. Each of us have family, friends and colleagues whom we value and need to consider moving forward.

### **COVID-19 Resources for Families**

I have been thinking of the children in the First School, their families, faculty and staff and how suddenly our daily lives have changed. It can be confusing and worrying for young children when their familiar routines change unexpectedly. With that in mind, I want to share with you some resources that may help support your conversations with your children or offer you some support as you manage the daily stress of a more isolated lifestyle. Many thanks to Erin Weiss, our school counselor for recommending the following information from the [Child Mind Institute](#) and the [National Association of School Psychologists](#). For adults, here is another resource for stress management from the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#).

Finally, as news of COVID-19 floods the news, Key School is also maintaining a webpage dedicated to providing the latest information and [Key's response](#).

### **First School Distance Learning**

As you can imagine there have been many online conferences and phone calls amongst the administrators, faculty and staff at Key as we began to develop plans for distance learning for students of all ages. For a faculty so dedicated to hands-on, collaborative learning it has been a true challenge and professional development opportunity to consider how to provide structure and plans for an extended period of time away from Key. As I have connected with the First School faculty, I can assure you that each teacher is striving to create engaging, family-friendly plans. Given the age of your First School student, we also recognize we are heavily relying on parents to facilitate learning. This can feel overwhelming. In times when the pressure seems to be mounting, please know that we want to provide meaningful learning opportunities that can be completed at your convenience. Additionally, we are striving to have the children use materials readily available at home or are providing online resources such as video links. As they have throughout the school year, teachers will be communicating using Seesaw. **Homeroom teachers will send distance learning templates on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays each week.** The templates will include language and literacy activities, math activities and at regular intervals, science, PE, music and library content. **Each day teachers will post a short video in an effort to maintain a visual connection with your child.**

We currently ask parents to use the Seesaw Family app in order to see your child's online journal and to message with teachers. **During our distance learning period there are a few important details to share:**

- **Families need to use the Seesaw Class program.** Seesaw is a web-based program so you can sign-in on a computer at <https://web.seesaw.me/> or download the Seesaw Class app to a tablet.
- **In order to begin using the Seesaw Class program, you will need a 12-digit code.** This code will be emailed to you Tuesday, March 17.
- **If you have multiple children using the Seesaw Class program, they will need to log in and out to switch between their classes using the 12-digit code.** Think of this as a password. Please keep the code information in an easily accessible location.

- Teachers will provide web-based links in the learning templates. **In order to open the links you will have to tap the button that says “View Original.”** Links will also be shared in the body of the announcement.

**Mrs. Olson's & Ms. Coates' Pre-School Class**  
**Learning at Home**  
**DAY 1**

Good Morning, Friends! **Please choose from any of the activities below** and have fun learning from home. If you choose to go on an adventure instead of the activities below, we'd love to hear about what you have engaged in (playground, nature walk, etc.). Don't forget you can also snuggle up, read books or cook together.

Language Development	Math Development	How the World Works
<p><b>MAKE PLAYDOUGH</b></p> <p>Follow these instructions to make playdough:</p> <p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.5 cups water</li> <li>1 ½ cup salt</li> <li>1 ½ tbsp. cream of tartar</li> <li>5 tbsp. Vegetable oil</li> <li>2.5 cups flour</li> <li>Food coloring or colored paint</li> </ul> <p>Instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mix all ingredients together</li> <li>Cook the dough over low heat, stirring constantly</li> <li>The dough will start to appear sticky, it is ready when edges of the dough appear dry. Pinch a piece of dough, if it's not goeey, it's ready!</li> </ul> <p>It's time to play with the playdough and explore its qualities! To keep the playdough soft, put it in an airtight container. You will need it again for another day's activities.</p>	<p><b>ORDINAL NUMBERS</b></p> <p><a href="#">Click here</a> to read MathStart Book <i>Henry the Fourth</i> by Stuart J. Murphy. This book reinforces the concept of Ordinal Numbers.</p>  <p>Extension Activities for Further Exploration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about things around the house and identify their order. "Which step is first going up the stairs? Which is second? Which is third?" Look at cars parked on the street and talk about their order. "Which is the second car from the corner?"</li> <li>Make a line of toy animals or cars. Pretend it's a parade! Ask the child to point out the second one in line, then the fourth, the third, and the first. Turn them around. "Now which is first?"</li> </ul>	<p><b>SENSORY EXPLORATIONS</b></p>  <p>Find some hard toys (like toy cars, toy dogs or toy dinosaurs) and get two bins or bowls.</p> <p>Add mud and the toys to one bin and add soapy water to the second bin. Allow your child to use a sponge, washcloth, or toothbrush to scrub and clean the "muddy toys."</p> <p>Can you count how many toys are dirty?</p> <p>How many toys have you cleaned?</p> <p><a href="#">Click Here</a> to read <i>Harry the Dirty Dog</i> by Gene Zion</p>

[View Original](#)

- Students can send messages, photos and short video clips to their teachers to stay connected. Two very simple how-to guides are attached to this email. These guides will also be posted to each teacher's Seesaw page.

As we roll-out the First School distance-learning plans, please know that I welcome your feedback. We are all in this together and eager to support one another. During these stressful days, I hope you are still able to carve out unstructured time with your children. Please continue to read together, go outside, try new things and play often! In case you need some ideas, here is a [huge list of fun activities](#) that allow for social distancing.

Nina Austin, Academic Technology Department Head, has been crucial in helping us prepare for the distance learning environment. If you have questions about Seesaw, please contact her at [naustin@keyschool.org](mailto:naustin@keyschool.org)

All the best to each of you. I hope we are reconnected at Key School again soon.

Take care,

Becky Fetters  
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