



Hello Preschool Family!

As most of you know Good Shepherd Christian Preschool has been working throughout the summer to evaluate all options for opening and opening safely. The members of the staff and preschool board have one thing in mind when evaluating all options and that is "The children come first". The needs of the children come first, the safety of the children come first and the emotional support of the children come first. We discussed many options, schedules, safety precautions and we came to one decision, which was the hardest decision we have had to make in the recent years. We will not be able to open at this time for the upcoming school year. We will continue monitoring the guidelines, Covid-19 case counts in Allegheny county and school district recommendations monthly with the hopes of opening in January.

During the discussions there were a few key points that stood out to us when making this hard decision. The first is the emotional need of the child. Preschool is the building block of a child's feelings of physical safety and emotional safety in school. The teachers want to be able to comfort your child when they are upset, but with all the guidelines and restrictions we would not be able to do so to our high standards. Many parents returning to Good Shepherd know that when a child is sick often you will see myself or the teacher holding them to comfort them until an adult is able to pick them up. This level of comfort and reassurance would not be able to take place for the upcoming school year. We feel this to be detrimental to their emotional needs. In the years past when parents would drop a child off and the child was clearly distressed from the parent leaving the teacher or myself could hold them, walk them around the school, visit me in the office to help ease their mind, etc. This year, once again with restrictions, we would not be able to provide that level of comfort.

These, of course, were not the only deciding factors, but some of the most important to us as a school. We believe consistency is key for any child and the ever changing environment and guidelines will not allow for consistency for the upcoming school year. Children learn best when they are comfortable in an environment and with all the changes that take place on a regular basis, unfortunately inconsistency is our only consistency.

Even though we will not be opening on time and as stated before hopefully opening January, I want to provide support to parents. I will be starting a closed group for the 2020-2021 students to provide weekly themes, videos and opportunities to come together as a school virtually. We are a Christian preschool and chapel is important to us, therefore we will also have a chapel time for the students to learn bible story and our chapel songs. This will be a free service and more details will follow in a later email.

I know, as a parent myself, this email is a tough email to read. Please know we weighed every option and our decision comes with your child's needs as the number one focus and reason for our decision. Opening in some capacity in January is our ultimate goal and we will work very hard to accomplish this goal if possible. We will truly miss the returning students, miss meeting the new students and miss the family environment that Good Shepherd Christian Preschool has always had on a day to day basis. This decision does not come without a heavy heart. Thank you for your support, understanding and patience!

In Love,

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