June 16, 2020

Dear Kawaiak Head Start/Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership (HS/EHS/CCP) Parents/Guardians,

Congratulations to you and your child if your child has officially completed our Head Start Program and is planning to move on to Kindergarten learning next Fall! We are happy that we could be a part of your child’s life and development! 😊

I would like to recognize all our staff for another successfully completed school year even while working around COVID-19. I am super proud of our staff as each person had their unique challenges (teaching their own children at home, not able to physically interact and plan with co-workers, missing their students, having limited technology, finding their own health at risk, etc.).

Kawaiak wide, some staff have voluntarily returned to working from their offices on June 15, while others continue to work from home if they are year-round employees. All Kawaiak facilities continue to remain closed to the public but with staff available by phone or email. Kawaiak Administration meets weekly to re-evaluate how to proceed and seeks to do its part in preventing the spread of COVID-19.

As far as EHS/CCP and possible HS or child care services, we are preparing to bring back teaching staff in phases, we are developing policies and procedures for when we do open, and expect to provide COVID related training for staff. We are in communication with Kawaiak Administration during this process. It is possible that summer services could resume in Nome and Shishmaref but it is equally possible that they may not so we strongly encourage you to continue to utilize the alternate child care you may have found. Either way we are making plans to resume services with the possibility of a reduced number of students attending to support social distancing and we are looking at what we can do to improve our distance delivery services if COVID circumstances do not allow us to open to center based services. We are seeking to think outside of the box for our students and families during this uncertain time.

In the meantime, Emergency Temporary Child Care Assistance will continue to be available to families enrolled during our usual summer services (Nome EHS/CCP & UPLC Child Care, and Shishmaref EHS Immersion and EHS Home Visiting services). Funds will pay for alternate child care. Call 907-443-4358 if you have questions or wish to apply.

KAWERAK. INC.
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Advancing the capacity of our people and tribes for the benefit of the region.
Teaching staff will continue to provide home learning packets, diapers and wipes for our Nome EHS/CCP and Shishmaref EHS Immersion and EHS Home Visiting students during COVID-19 related closures. No application is required for children to continue in the programs just listed as they are already scheduled to operate for the summer under normal circumstances.

BSSD and NPS meal services have concluded for the school year. A huge THANK YOU to BSSD and NPS for providing meals!

In our village communities, Baylor University will be mailing boxed meals to student homes throughout the summer. In Nome, the Nome Community Center will continue to make meals available for pick up every Monday – Friday at noon at the Elementary School, the Boys & Girls Club, or the Seventh-day Church in Icy View from June 1 to August 21.

Some of our year-round staff will continue to be reachable at their work numbers. If you are unable to reach who you wish to, you are welcomed to call Kawerak’s main number at 907-443-5231 during our shortened business hours (11am-3pm) and your message will be passed on to the appropriate person. Kawerak anticipates being available by phone and email during regular business hours (8am-4:30pm) beginning June 29.

One last reminder: Census participation in our region is often low. I strongly encourage you to ensure that someone from your household get on to internet and complete the census questionnaire for your household. Completing the Census is safe and confidential and the census numbers provide resources for our children and their communities for the next 10 years. Visit 2020CENSUS.GOV to respond.

We’ll keep updates coming this summer as plans for change in services develop.

Enjoy the beautiful weather we have been having and have a safe summer!

Sincerely,

Deborah L. Trowbridge
Head Start Director