



MEMPHIS MERIT ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL
4775 American Way, Memphis, TN 38118
(901)-617-3690
SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

March 22, 2020

Dear **Memphis Merit Academy Founding Families**,

We hope that you and your families are safe and well during these unprecedented times. Over the last week we have been informed by Governor Lee, Shelby County Schools, the Shelby County Health Department, and other governmental organizations to determine the next steps as we continue to move forward to ensure scholars are set up for success during a time of school closure. Our leadership team and founding staff have been working on ways we can continue to support you during this challenging time. We have kept three pillars as our top priorities:

- **SAFETY**- The safety of our founding scholars, families, and staff are our top priority. You have entrusted us with the safety of your child and we take that responsibility seriously. The decisions being made are taking everyone's safety into consideration.
- **SUPPORT**- When you registered to join us on this founding journey, we made a promise to you that we would provide your child with an academically rigorous curriculum in a stimulating environment that fostered growth. During this time of extended closure, we plan to continue in our promise to provide your child a quality education that continues to stimulate them and grow them academically.
- **MERIT**- *We believe that college begins in kindergarten.* We are committed to continuing this level of excellence as we move into distance learning. Our priority is to uphold the academic bar that we have set at Memphis Merit Academy to continue to foster the academic goals that you have for your child.

Per the announcement made by Shelby County Schools, we will remain closed until April 6, 2020. Our top priority is to keep scholars, families, and staff safe while maintaining a high-quality academic experience. Although scholars received packets of work to suffice the duration of the break, our team has worked tirelessly to ensure every scholar continues to grow their brain. MMA will be launching our distance learning plan beginning Tuesday, March 24, 2020 to support scholars with the already assigned coursework and additional work via our distance learning platforms. Please review the following updates for guidance:

UPDATES

- SCS MEAL SITE DISTRIBUTION UPDATE- Shelby County School has revised planned meal preparation and community-wide distribution. Please see the full distribution list [here](#) and continue to share with others needing assistance. Also – there are a lot of other businesses that are providing food supports. [McDonalds is giving free breakfast for SCS Students](#) and [Burger King is also giving buy an adult meal get two free kids meals](#)
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- As of now, Memphis Merit Academy **will remain closed on an extended Spring Break until April 6, 2020**, due to COVID-19 pandemic and national state of emergency. MMA is following school closure guidance of Shelby County Schools for school closure.



- As of now, there are no known or confirmed COVID-19 cases amongst our scholars, families or staff.

COMMUNICATION

- **PHONE CALLS.** Your child's teacher will be communicating with you this week. Each family will receive a phone call from your child's teacher to check-in to determine support your family may need during this time to complete coursework and onboard your family to any aspect of our virtual learning platform. Teachers will ensure families have login credentials for various platforms during this time.
- **SCHEDULED UPDATES.** We will make **weekly updates about extended school closure on Fridays by 4PM, unless it is necessary due to a pertinent change**, for families to continue to plan for potential closures via Facebook, email, and text message.
- Our school website will host ALL the information you need to stay connected and equipped for distance learning. Visit www.memphismeritacademy.org for updates! Our team is constantly making updates.

DISTANCE LEARNING

- We will launch our Distance Learning Program on Tuesday, March 24, 2020. We are working to maintain a level of excellence and ensure all scholars are able to continue to grow their brains.
- **SCHOLAR LIFEWORK.** Your scholar received Extended Spring Break packets on Wednesday, March 12, 2020 for completion and login credentials for Lexia and Dreambox. This packet covers work for March 13th through March 27th. If your scholar was absent on March 12th, there is a bin outside of the school with packets for you to pickup or you may access them for print [here](#).
- **MORE LIFEWORK.** For scholar coursework beginning for the week of March 30-April 3, 2020 you may log onto www.memphismeritacademy.org to find updates and future scholar work to download.
- **VIRTUAL SUPPORT.** Beginning Tuesday, March 24, 2020 teachers will be offering **Office Hours** to support scholars in the work packets received prior to school closure. Scholars can check the schedule and logon to receive help with any assignments via Zoom. See the [Lifework Hotline /Virtual Teacher Support](#) Schedule.
- **LESSON WARM-UPS.** Within our suggested schedule, our team will provide links to oral drills your child can review while at home. These videos should help your child refresh on the necessary skills to continue to be a strong reader.

FOOD ACCESS UPDATES

- Our team has compiled a [list](#) of local resources for food for your family during this time.

COMMITMENT TO SCHOLAR GROWTH

- **We are committed to excellence.** This is a new experience for us all, so we ask for your patience during this transition. We will continue to work on this transition to online learning in order to ensure it is the best experience for all involved.
- Teachers will review your child's daily progress on the Dreambox and Lexia platforms to ensure your child is making adequate progress and may decide to host a learning session specifically targeted to your child's needs.
- We have school teachers. Every teacher is readily available to assist any child that needs support regardless of their assigned classroom. Please call anytime during the listed office hours for more support.



SUGGESTED DISTANCE LEARNING SCHEDULE

We know that this is a difficult time with many juggling working, working from home, and children at home because schools and daycare facilities are closed. The following is a snapshot of scholar schedules over the course of the next few weeks, for a more detailed schedule, visit our [website](#).

Snapshot of Scholar Schedule	
Time	Lesson/Activity
8:30-9:15AM	Morning Meeting (Breakfast, One School, One Vision, College Chant, Who Are We?!, Affirmations)
9:15-9:30AM	Reading Aloud (Scholar will hear story read aloud)
9:30-10:15AM	Oral Drill Practice & Literacy Work from Grade Level Packet
10:15-10:30AM	Brain Break
10:30-11:15AM	Math Oral Drill Practice & Math Work from Grade Level Packet
11:15-12:00PM	CGI Problem of the Day
12:00-1:00PM	LUNCH
1:00-1:30PM	Physical Activity/Brain Break
1:30-2:00PM	Daily Writing Practice
2:00-2:30PM	Dreambox Learning- Digital Platform
2:30-3:00PM	LEXIACORE5 Learning Platform
3:00-3:30PM	CORE (Virtual Field trips, Online science activities & more)

This is just a **suggested schedule**. Please know that you may complete grade level packets at a pace feasible to your family within each week. We understand that families are trying to juggle multiple responsibilities right now. **The most important thing is to set up a schedule based off of what works for your family!**

TIPS FOR DISTANCE LEARNING SUCCESS

- **Create a designated learning space.** Organize learning materials and designate a common area for learning. Ideally, the space has a strong Internet/Wifi connection, can be blocked from noise at times, and is located where family members can participate in your child's learning.
- **Begin and end each day with a check in.** Designating time to check in with your child helps your child feel more secure and supports them to process the situation. Questions to ask: What are you learning today? What materials do you need? What did you enjoy learning today? What was challenging?



- **Schedule physical activity and social interaction.** Physical and social activity are essential to your child’s wellbeing. Scheduling time for movement, social interaction, and play helps your child have a positive experience at home. Create a family dance, act out a scene from a book, interview a family member, play your favorite game, cook or bake your family’s favorite recipe.
- **Support your child’s emotional needs.** In stressful times, children need supportive and stable relationships with trusted adults. Stay close with your child and provide age-appropriate information.
- **Monitor communications from your child’s teacher and school.** Check Facebook, email, text, and please return any missed calls from your child’s teachers.

Lastly, during Memphis Merit Academy’s Board of Directors meeting, the Memphis Merit Academy Charter School Board of Directors released the following statement in regard to the COVID-19 pandemic:

"Difficult roads often lead to beautiful destinations.

We understand the complex challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic has presented for our families, our students and communities worldwide. We are fully committed to supporting the Head of School and Memphis Merit staff to ensure that all of our families are fully informed of any and all school changes and receiving the academic support that they need as we navigate this crisis. We want to assure you that our highest priority is the health, safety, and academic growth of your children, and we encourage you to remain hopeful as we all travel this difficult road together."

We are one school, one vision, together on a mission! Again, all resources can be found on our [website](#).

Committed to excellence,

Lakenna Booker

Founder and Head of School

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