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March 15, 2020

A Special Message to the Staff from Head of School Lester Samson

Friends and Colleagues,

Earlier this evening the Board of Trustees motioned to make a resolution that Williamsburg Charter High School will be closed tomorrow, March 16, 2020 until April 19, 2020. We look forward to opening April 20, 2020. The school will be physically closed to students and staff.

Staff members are welcome to come in the school to get their belongings and/or receive additional technology training, from 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday. Members of administration will be available on site both days to answer questions and provide you support with technology skills that will serve you in a distance-learning model. Attendance is not mandatory. We are, however, asking that all staff members be readily available remotely Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. This means that you will be expected to work on the infrastructure of your Google Classroom and to respond to emails and phone calls throughout the day. I ask you also to please be professional in how you use social media during the day; comments reflecting that it is a “day off” does the teaching profession a disservice and undermines the serious crisis our community is facing.

Over the next few days we will begin preparing for our transition to distance learning. You will hear more from us about what that looks like. I will be meeting with Jahi and the instructional coaches tomorrow to flesh out the details and we will be looking to the departments for input.

Please note that this is a rapidly evolving, unprecedented situation. We appreciate your patience. During this unprecedented time, we ask that everyone is thoughtful and respectful in how we treat all members of our community as we work together to envision what the next few weeks will look like. These are stressful times and we are concerned about everyone’s mental and physical well-being. We are working to get you the answers to your questions and you will be hearing from us again. In the meantime, please direct your questions and concerns to covidconcerns@thewcs.org.

Please be safe and continue to follow the health safety precautions on the NYC DOH and CDC websites: nyc.gov/health/coronavirus.

Thank you,

Lester Samson