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June 17, 2020

WCHS Will Honor Juneteenth

WCHS Students, Families, and Staff,

Williamsburg Charter High School (WCHS) will be closed on Friday, June 19, 2020 in observance of Juneteenth, the commemoration of the freedom of the last enslaved African Americans in the United States on June 19, 1865. The day is also sometimes called “Juneteenth Independence Day,” “Freedom Day” or “Emancipation Day”. June 19, 2020 marks the 155th anniversary of freedom.

WCHS is committing to celebrating Juneteenth as our schedule permits moving forward. June 19 typically falls during June Regents testing so until it is legally a holiday, we cannot promise this day will be a day off annually, but we can henceforth promise to honor Juneteenth in our community. Governor Andrew Cuomo has said he will propose legislation next year making June 19 a permanent state holiday. In 2018, the U.S. Senate [passed a resolution](#) designating June 19 as “Juneteenth Independence Day,” but it has not yet reached the House. We [invite you to sign the Change.org petition here](#).

We believe community-wide celebration of Juneteenth is especially critical in light of the disproportionate impact COVID-19 has had on the Black community and the unjust killings of Black Americans at the hands of police in recent weeks and over the course of the country’s white supremacist history. We acknowledge that this has been an incredibly difficult past few months and hope our community will use this day to catch their breath, reflect, celebrate, and call for justice in America.

Thank you,

Lester Samson, Head of School
Valerie Jacobson, Head of Operations
Lourdes Rivera-Putz, Board Chair