

## Notes from Leadership in the Wilderness Session II

NY Regional Breakout | May 11, 2020

### Past and Present: Leadership and Vision with Dr. Erica Brown



#### [Webinar recording](#)

Template for your own reflection ([Online form](#), [Printable form](#))

#### [Jump straight to the resources](#)

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#### Question directors are holding:

How do we balance being inspirational yet not be committal when we communicate with parents? We don't know the future, so it's hard to communicate anything right now.

#### Thoughts:

- There was equal sentiment that we could benefit by speaking with a public relations expert. What do they need to know? What don't they need to know?
- It was recommended that we gather the messages that other leaders have shared i.e. Rabbi Meir Muller; Noah Hichenberg; Ronnie Becher; Heschel; Bonnie Blanco; Cindy Grebow.
- Be transparent, acknowledge that it's emergent, embrace the *bouncing forward* metaphor that Erica shared.
- Shellie shared a potential structure for your communication to parents.
  - Offer parents a factual part. What do you know?
  - Include an uplifting spiritual story. The spiritual moments between teachers and families.
  - Be transparent about the emergent and unknown next step but share what you are doing as a leader. Who you are leaning on? Who are you in communication with? What is going to help guide you?
- Parents will appreciate you are doing something. Even if things may change

- Include your tuition story into your letter. Your financial scenarios should match your educational scenarios. It's hard to plan for differences but that transparency will be helpful for families to hear.

**Another question directors are holding:**

**When will we know what we are doing? How do we make those decisions?**

**Thoughts:**

- People are rolling out in Europe. We will learn a lot from them.
- Some people are making their decisions now.
- OCFS is going to work on their regulations soon. Right now, these are recommendations not regulations. You can always be more cautionary.
- It's like driving while you are learning to drive.

**On the topic of bouncing forward:**

- Identify your leadership strengths
- What are your resources?
- What do you have control over?
- Who else are you leaning on?
- Use the template for your own reflection linked at the top of this page.
- It's important to figure out what's most important, i.e. a safe loving environment.
- What's the one thing we want parents to know.
- We are reinventing the wheel in many ways.
- It's not re-opening anymore – more like creating new.

**Emerging ideas/strategies:**

- Children moving up with their previous teacher for a sense of stability. 4s teachers will be there to help.
- This is applicable with or without in-person school.
- Exploring adding a K-model for parents who might be more interested in what we have to offer
- Specialists via zoom. We are already doing this, we can help mitigate risk by continuing to have them see some specialists this way – such as music.
- There's potential that different families will have different adjustment experiences. Some have been with you a while and are part of your routines. Others will feel the affect less so.
- Create or find social stories that help children know what to expect.
- Masks for children so they can work through this during play. Purim and other masks will help take the fear factor away.

### Thoughts about the future:

- Parents concentrate on their children's development.
- Children are very resilient. Children will experience a new normal. This is what school is. They may not be as apprehensive as we expect.
- Some children are already very familiar with masks. Others may not be.
- Important to help children see emotions in a range of ways. How do you communicate through your eyes? Your hands? Your body?

### Resources shared or referenced during the break-out:

- **Video:** [Virtual Pizazz for Teachers – Episode 1, Showing Up](#), Lizard Brain. Tips on how to take what you do in the room and bring it online. (16 min.)
- [Boulder Journey School Covid-19 Updates.](#)
- [Staying Healthy at Boulder Journey School.](#) Boulder Journey School's social story of the new routines children will experience when back in school. (16 pages)
- **Video:** [We Are Wearing Masks](#). Westchester Day School's video message to families featuring School Director, Jamie Schneider Schwartz about wearing masks. Includes Morah Jamie modeling wearing different masks; teachers voices reading the book, **We Are Wearing Masks**, by Meredith Polsky; and a slideshow of the school's teachers wearing and not wearing masks side-by-side. (5 min.)
- [COVID-19 Tracking in Child Care Settings.](#) This 22 question survey is helping to track the experiences of in child care settings. It is for program directors and owners. [Results of this ongoing tracking are being shared out on a facebook group](#) aimed at sharing what precautions are working and not working in child care settings during COVID-19.
- [Karen Deerwester's video on FB about wearing masks.](#)