

September 23, 2020

5 Tishrei 5781

To Our Dear Greater Baltimore Community:

During these Aseres Yimei Teshuva, we express endless gratitude to Hashem for enabling our schools to once again welcome our students to our campuses and buildings. Much care, effort and expense went into preparing our schools to reopen and keeping them open under medical guidance and following Maryland state and local government regulation. We can all be very proud that the sounds of Torah and learning once again rise from our community's schools. Our schools stand united in wanting our Mosdos Chinuch to remain open.

The arrival of Succos is a time for joy, and we encourage each family to celebrate and enjoy Yom Tov fully. However, we must realize that COVID19 is still very much present and still very serious, and we cannot let our guard down. Some of the customary Yom Tov activities may undermine our efforts to stay safe and may make it difficult to reopen and keep open our schools after the Yomim Tovim. Accordingly, we must request – and insist – that every one of our families be particularly vigilant between now and Simchas Torah.

First, we remind and beseech you that every member of your family must continue to:

- Wear masks in public
- Maintain physical distance of at least 6' from others
- Wash hands regularly and diligently or sanitize if necessary
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- Stay home if you are not feeling well or suspect you may have been exposed to someone who is COVID19 positive

Second, if someone in your home is quarantined, please take it seriously. If your physician or your child's school has required your child to quarantine, that means he or she must stay home and cannot play in-person with friends or go into stores, shuls and the like.

Lastly, and particularly within the context of Succos celebrations, special attention should be given to the following:

- Enjoy Yom Tov carefully! Only host overnight Yom Tov guests if you have specific guidance and a way to do so that greatly minimizes the risk of virus spread.
- If possible, limit travel. If you must travel, do so ONLY with guidance and taking precautions that greatly minimize the risk of virus spread.
- Follow all recommended guidelines regarding responsible protocol in any gatherings. Please note that large family get togethers, Sukkah hopping, Simchas Beis Hashoeva celebrations and Simchas Torah present unique challenges during this time, and safe behavior is critical.

The decisions that you and your children make over Yom Tov will directly affect whether your children can attend in-person classes after Yom Tov, and even may affect the ability of our community's schools

to reopen and stay open after Simchas Torah. Each school has specific policies and guidelines which has already or will be communicated directly with you. Please understand that all guidelines are developed carefully and with the best interests of our community at heart. Thank you in advance for doing your part to ensure that schools will reopen in-person in a timely manner after Simchas Torah and that our families and community will remain healthy in the new year.

Warm wishes for a Gmar Chasima Tova and a joyous and wonderful Yom Tov.

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