



Dear Friends,

Over the last four weeks, we have all experienced the mounting impact of COVID-19. While there is still so much that is unknown and unnerving about this crisis, I continue to be heartened by how our Little Sprouts community has supported one another with grace and compassion. Today, I would like to share with you our updated plans for safeguarding our schools and company throughout the remainder of this incomprehensible crisis.

As you know, all of our schools and our Home Office have been closed since the week of March 16. Our decision to close was very clearly the safest route for all of you and your families, along with the families we serve. We were the first network of for-profit childcare centers in New England to participate in safety closures without government mandates. I hope that demonstrates just how deeply you and your family matter to us. Your safety before, during, and after this pandemic remains paramount.

Financially, though, the closures have created exceptionally difficult conditions for our company. Recently, tuition became more of a contribution, with families generously offering to pay what they could during this time. We remain deeply grateful and indebted to all of our families—those who are financially positioned to help us through this crisis and those who continue to strengthen our community through connection, kindness, and genuine acts of care.

Despite remarkable efforts and heroic acts of generosity, since mid-March, we have only collected a fraction of the tuition that is essential to remaining operational. Given the significant reduction in incoming tuition, our company cannot run anywhere near the same capacity as when our schools are in session.

**It is with that understanding, and a very heavy heart, that we are extending furloughs to all school-level staff and the majority of Home Office employees at the end of the day on Friday, April 10.**

A furlough is a leave of absence due to circumstance—in this case, due to COVID-19. **Being placed on furlough means that employees have not lost their jobs, and it qualifies these employees for income relief through unemployment.**

Also, Little Sprouts intends to cover 100% of all employee benefits for those who are currently enrolled in one or more of our plans. This means that our employees' benefits will currently remain in place at no cost to them.

All of our teachers and leaders play a vital role at Little Sprouts. Our Executive Directors and Education Coaches are vital to inspiring our organization, our teams, and our families. While we had hoped to maintain active employment for school-level leadership in some capacity, COVID-19 has placed our entire industry in the

inconceivable position of needing to place even more valuable, talented, humble, and hard-working professionals on pause. Given the unknown length of this closure, the most secure route for your school's leaders to collect the majority of their wages is to place them on furlough. Our purpose is rooted in the power of relationships and we recognize how valued your relationships are with your school leaders. We know you depend on them; we do too.

**Quite simply, this is the most responsible course of action that we can now take to help ensure that all of our teachers, leaders, and children can later safely return to school.**

As you may have gathered, due to the pressures of COVID-19, our active workforce has been reduced by over 95% over the course of a few weeks. At this time, we will maintain a small, remote team of Home Office personnel to support ongoing questions from families and staff, as well as continue to share the radiance of our community with one another, even while we are apart.

Throughout the remainder of this safety closure, all of your questions, concerns, and feedback may be emailed to [friends@littlesprouts.com](mailto:friends@littlesprouts.com). Thank you in advance for your patience as we process an increased number of our friends' inquiries with a much smaller team.

You remain our community's most loving and gracious helpers and it is because of you that even through this heartbreak, I remain optimistic and grateful. I cannot wait to continue building our stronger, healthier, and even more beautiful future together.

With gratitude,

Sarah

Sarah Schroeder  
Chief Executive Officer, Little Sprouts



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