Dear Families,

Many of the things we usually do in school are going to have to be done differently this year. But I want you to know that I remain committed to making sure your child still has **a positive, enjoyable, and engaging kindergarten experience**.

I truly believe that **children's development and learning is best supported when teachers and families work together**. Whenever our school needs to be closed to children this year, I will be sending home a variety of **learning experiences** that you can easily do with your child using materials that you already have at home and at whatever time or times of day works best for your family.

I will also be sending home ideas for ways you can **document your child's learning** and how you can easily share that documentation with me. One of the quickest ways will be to use our **new** **tool for family communication** through either a free mobile app (if you have a smartphone or tablet) or through a secure Internet portal. I'll be sending you an invitation to create an account in our teacher–family communication tool and information about where to find it and how use it.

There's an important reason why I observe children and collect and analyze documentation of what each of them knows and can do. This evaluation is how I learn what each child currently needs to best support continued growth and learning. **Collecting, reviewing, and responding to a child's demonstrated skills and abilities is called "formative assessment,"** but it could just as easily be called "informative assessment" because that's exactly what it does—it informs my understanding of your child's current abilities so that I am better prepared to provide individualized learning experiences that will gently challenge—but not frustrate—your child.

The good news is that the information I will be asking for from you includes many of the **same kinds of things you may already do** to document milestones of your child's growth and commemorate important life events. Written notes, photos, copies of writings and observational drawings, short audio or video recordings of your child engaged in the normal experiences of childhood, such as playing, building, creating art, listening to stories and books, having conversations—all of these work quite well as documentation of development and learning.

And, again, I will be offering guidance as we move forward to help you know what to look for and what it says about your child's development.

It is truly fascinating to watch young children develop and learn, and **I look forward to working with you** to best support your child during the coming year.

Best regards,

Your child's teacher