

# Prescott Farm

## Environmental Education Center

August 10, 2020

Dear Fledglings Families,

We are writing to let you know that the Board of Directors and Leadership team at Prescott Farm have come to the difficult decision to cancel Fledglings Nature-based Preschool for the 2020-2021 school year. All tuition and registration fees will be refunded to you.

Please know that our decision to close is very difficult, but ultimately, necessary. For the past months we have been considering the variety of ways we can safely provide the program and mitigate the risk of spreading the coronavirus between our students, their families, and staff. In trying to put the safest policies and procedures into place to facilitate reopening, we have been guided by the recommendations of Governor Sununu's Economic Reopening Taskforce related to child care programs, the Centers for Disease Control, and the NH Department of Education's Back-to-School Guidance.

However, as we considered steps that would need to be taken to become operational, we also learned of the re-opening decisions being made in the school districts around us, most of which were announced last week. It became clear that the realities of operating during a pandemic would lead to untenable disruptions in our ability to provide care throughout the year. As a small program we are constrained by limited indoor program space. After modifications to the space, we would have had to restrict the number of children we allowed to attend Fledglings to twelve students per day. For the children Fledglings could accommodate, a variety of uncontrollable circumstances would have required us to close the program for days or weeks at a time. Among those circumstances are:

- 1) Family obligations of our staff which would prevent them from being able to come to work due to unpredictable COVID-related closures of local K-12 schools.
- 2) Symptoms of- or exposure to- a confirmed case of COVID-19 by a Fledglings student or staff member

Looking forward, we fully expect to re-open Fledglings in the future when the risk of COVID-19 has been reduced, but not prior to the fall of 2021. In the meantime, our staff will be focused on making improvements to our programs and facilities over the coming year with the intention that Prescott Farm will be even better prepared to offer nature-based educational programs to area children going forward.

As always, we encourage families to reach out by email with any questions they may have to Jayne Hastings, Preschool Director at [jhastings@prescottfarm.org](mailto:jhastings@prescottfarm.org). Jayne is away this week but will be returning the week of August 17th and will respond then.

We care very much about our Fledglings students and families and empathize with any disappointment and frustration you may be feeling. As always, the health and safety of students, families and staff is our top priority and we thank you for your continued support and understanding.

Sincerely,

Jude Hamel  
Executive Director

Jayne Hastings  
Preschool Director