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## Federations Do Not Close

The other day I walked out of our Federation building deeply depressed.

I know that closing the building was the right thing. I know that it's important and necessary and justified. I just felt sad. I drove home sad, and I came into my house sad. It took me a while – and my kids – to figure out why: I genuinely love our work and our staff. And I was

depressed because I was thinking about how I'd miss our daily encounters, our conversations, our meetings, and our vibrancy.

So we're going to keep that alive. We all need it. It's healthy for us. Literally.

We'll have to adapt somewhat over the next few weeks but I know that we can do it. We're going to try to not overwhelm your inboxes with too much material – but we also know that in this new era, keeping in touch is one of the best things we can do. So let me share with you an email sent moments ago from our Impact Department to our entire staff. This is our attempt to keep everyone updated during the time we're gathering digitally instead of in person. While we may be physically distanced, we are very much socially connected with each other and with our community partners. Remember:

**Federations do not close.** Our buildings may close, but we do not.

So, here are just a few things that our Jewish Federation did yesterday...

- Hillel GMW, our multi-campus Greater MetroWest Hillel, is still running, and actually has more programming planned than ever- all virtual, of course! The new format, called "The HQ" (Hillel Quarantined), includes lectures, yoga and baking classes, hangout sessions, and more!
- Tracy Levine, Fara Gold, and Gerri Russo from the One Happy Camper team are attending the Bi-ennial Leaders Assembly Camp Conference 202.0 virtually, since the multi-day conference in Baltimore was canceled. The OHC team has been reaching out to key day and overnight camps serving GMW to understand concerns and contingency plans for the coming summer and possible ways Federation can support them.
- Sarah Segal, with Synagogue Initiatives, is connecting with Greater MetroWest synagogues to identify their most pressing needs and how Federation can be of help. We'll be getting survey results around this later this week.
- The Community Relations Committee (CRC) is in touch with NJ nonprofit advocacy groups to coordinate legislator outreach related to the needs of individuals with disabilities as well as our local agencies. They're also working with our nonpublic school partners to possibly create a joint call to action to the governor and the NJ legislature to support NJ's nonpublic schools during this emergency.
- ABLE has continued to reach out to families and partner agencies to assess needs and offer support. People have been incredibly grateful to hear from Federation and know that we are here as a resource.
- Rebecca Hindin of our Day School Initiative convened the Deans of Instruction from each of the day schools to learn more about what is working and what isn't, determine which platforms work best, identify lead teachers who can cross train between schools, and understand the professional development and immediate needs teachers have that we can support in the next few weeks.
- Chief Security Officer Robert Wilson continues to work daily with our agencies and synagogues who are applying for the FEMA Nonprofit Security Grant Program. Our Greater MetroWest community is working hard to meet the deadline of March 27 at 5 p.m.
- The Center for Volunteerism launched an "[I Want to Help](#)" form for volunteers to complete if they are interested in helping as we assess needs throughout the community. In the first 24 hours of this being live, we received 28 responses – 12 of them are teens!

One particularly inspiring moment was when, after extensive lobbying by our Chief Jewish Learning Officer Robert Lichtman, a local hospital decided to make an exception for one of our chaplains to continue to visit Jewish patients (technically a volunteer, she had been informed

she would no longer be allowed in the hospital). If you or someone you know is experiencing stress, anxiety, or could benefit from meeting with a chaplain, please reach out to [Robert Lichtman](#).

All that was in one day. Today we gathered 120 Federation professionals (including a few from Israel) for a virtual staff huddle (pictured above). **Imagine what we'll do tomorrow.**



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