



August 6 PM - Jran Email

Dear Jran Community:

Today, we will go over COVID19 updates, NOAA's new predictions for the 2020 Atlantic hurricane season, and security.

COVID19

During today's Faith Leaders call, Dr. Marc Boom, president and CEO of Houston Methodist, gave an update on the current COVID19 outlook and what we can expect this fall. Daily new cases rose this week with [five days of positive daily growth](#) but [daily new hospitalizations continue to decline](#). Dr. Boom stated that we can expect to see valleys and peaks throughout the fall as schools reopen and more people go out and about. The goal is to ensure the peaks are low and at a manageable pace. The 7-day average [positivity rate is around 12.5%](#) but City and County health officials would still like to see it between 5-7% before we begin any additional openings. TMC hospitals are 9% into Phase 2 surge for intensive care. Francisco Sanchez, deputy emergency management coordinate for Harris County, stated that we are still in [Level 1 \(Red\) – Stay at Home](#).

Dr. Boom stated that as schools begin to open in the fall there will be fits and starts. Some schools will have to close individual classes due to a positive case and some will have to shut down entirely if there is an outbreak. He reminded us that we have control over how schools fare this fall by the behavior we practice outside of the classroom.

There is some consensus from the medical community that young children under age 10 do not seem to be the super-spreaders as we originally thought. While some young children can get COVID19, and may get it severely, the evidence is showing that they are not as likely to contract the disease or spread it to others as are older children. On the other hand, children over age 10 seem to spread COVID19 just as much as adults. You can watch this [interesting exchange between two doctors](#) about reopening schools in the fall.

School openings are on everyone's mind as we inch closer to the fall semester. There is much debate among medical experts, parents, and educators as to the proper time and way to reopen schools. A group of day school directors from New York wrote an op-ed in the Jewish

Telegraph Agency asking that the [community support our teachers](#) as they become frontline workers in a few weeks.

NPR released a [new poll](#) that shows 83% of K-12 teachers are concerned about in-person teaching this fall and 77% of those polled are worried about risking their own health. Concerns range from contracting COVID19 in school to PPE supplies to online learning.

There are many resources our Jewish Day Schools can turn to for support:

- On July 27th, the Houston Federation held a [Q&A webinar with summer camp directors](#) for advice on opening this fall
- The Jewish Federations of North America will hold a similar webinar on August 10th titled [“Reopening Advice from Experiences of Summer In-Person Activities”](#)
- Meagan Friedman, Director of the Bertha Alyce School, wrote [“Five Lessons I Learned While Running a Childcare Center During Covid-19”](#)
- Kveller’s article, [“School Decisions During Covid-19: Balancing Our Needs and Our Jewish Values”](#) helps shed some light on school reopening, COVID19 and social justice.

Finally, [we all have a role to play](#) in ensuring our schools remain a safe place for our children:

- We can vow to always wear a mask when we are around people outside of our household
- We can practice social distancing and proper hygiene
- We can promise to stay home if we are not feeling well and to get tested if we think we might have been exposed to COVID19, and
- We can lead by example and encourage others to do the same

No matter the protections schools put in place, if we all don’t do our part then it will be impossible for our school administrators, teachers, and children to be safe from COVID19. Successfully reopening in the fall is a community effort and it is up to each one of us.

Hurricane Season 2020

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has updated its [2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook](#). NOAA is predicting 19-25 named storms, 7-11 hurricanes, and 3-6 major hurricanes. This includes the nine named storms so far in the season. [There’s no time like the present to prepare](#) for Josephine (the next name on the list) or any of her brother and sisters that follow.

Security

Zahra Jamal, associate director of Rice University's Boniuk Institute, is predicting [an increase in religious-based hate crimes](#) in the fall. She cites re-openings and the election year as reasons for this rise.

The Houston Federation has teamed up with the Southwest Division of the ADL to present a Zoombombing refresher ahead of the fall's online school options and virtual High Holiday services. The national team from the ADL will be presenting this webinar. We hope to "see" you there!

This is a great resource for any congregation who will have a "Zoom Master"—whether it is an IT person, volunteer, lay leader, or staff—running the fall's online programming.

You may [register online](#) for the August 11th event.

In Other News...(ear buds in, volume up!)

Jewish father of four, Adam Shain, recorded a parody song to *Hamilton's* "You'll Be Back" to reflect what [we are all thinking about back to school](#) this fall. This one is for our amazing teachers!

Take care today and support our teachers by wearing a mask,

Jackie

Jackie Fisherman | Director of Government Affairs

Jewish Federation of Greater Houston

5603 S. Braeswood Blvd. | Houston, TX 77096

Main: 713.729.7000 ext 325

jfisherman@houstonjewish.org | www.houstonjewish.org