

January 17, 2021

Dear Members of the Lincoln School Committee,

The Board of LEAP would like to formally request a 50% reduction in rent for the 2020 - 2021 school year to ensure ongoing stability of the LEAP program for future years. We recognize that the rent is already fair and reasonable, but felt that given this year's unprecedented circumstances, we may be able to approach the committee with this request.

Prior to school re-opening, we worked through the difficult task of budget projections with so many unknowns. We have had to reduce our capacity of enrolled students by over 50% given EEC's COVID-19 guidelines requiring social distance and smaller student cohorts. Additionally, the COVID-19 guidelines require LEAP to staff a higher teacher/student ratio (than in non COVID times) due to the smaller cohorts and social distancing. Overall, our income would be drastically decreasing while our expenses were increasing.

Assuming that we would be able to remain open throughout the year, we calculated that we would be required to raise the tuition for the program by approximately 30% to cover operating costs. However we also recognized that many parents rely on the program, some are also under financial strain during these times, and that this tuition increase would likely be too great a burden. Therefore, the Board approved a budget with a plan to increase rates by 10% (our typical annual increases have been ~0-3%) and operate at a loss for the year to continue to support the community and the program's mission. Thankfully with responsible financial control over the past few years, we are able draw on our reserves, though these are being quickly depleted. With our current burn rate and monthly tuition accounted for, and assuming we are able to remain open throughout the year, we will see a loss of approximately \$80,000 for 2020-2021.

As you consider our request, we wanted to provide you with an overview of our accomplishments this year. We opened our doors to students on September 21st and have been able to successfully remain open. While things look different at LEAP this year, there is no doubt that students are still learning and having plenty of fun! Our staff here at LEAP are incredible and have quickly adapted to the new normal. They continue to work hard keeping our space safe and students engaged. Key activities and adjustments this year include:

- Re-engagement of our spectacular staff - Last spring the LEAP Board voted to pay our staff through the end of April although we were not receiving tuition payments. This was done to treat our staff as well as we could afford, as well as to ensure available staffing if or when school was reinstated. We are thrilled that we were able to re-engage most of last year's staff, ensuring the high quality of care and providing continuity to our students.
- Encouraging enrollment and continued interest – While reduced, LEAP has an encouraging number of students currently enrolled. and we continue to get inquiries from interested families now that school has been in session for a few months.
- Individually staffed and attended grade level cohorts – Keeping students in their own grade level cohorts ensures no mixed grade level and limited staff interaction. In the event of a confirmed case, tracing and notification can be done easily.
- Right-sized staffing and activities planning – LEAP's previous staffing and activities structure was unable to be followed this year. As such we require a higher number of staff than we would have in previous years even with reduced enrollment numbers. We believe the program is

staffed adequately to ensure staff can self-isolate if necessary and still be able to run all programs for students if a staff member stays home as a precaution.

- Air filtration and ventilation – Due to its age, the LEAP facility does not have an HVAC system capable of adding the recommended HEPA filters for COVID-19. The LEAP program has purchased large capacity air purifiers with HEPA filtration for all of our classrooms. This will allow us to close windows and doors during the cold weather.

We have been so thrilled to be able to keep LEAP open to the Lincoln community, but have been watching our budget and spend quite closely. Given the uncertainty of how the remainder of the year will go, we recognize there is a potential our program will need to close for an extended period of time. Depending on circumstances, the worst-case scenario for us would be an extended closure period where we would not receive tuition payments but also require paying staff should we be able to reopen.

We are happy to join an upcoming school committee meeting to discuss the potential for rate reduction, or provide any additional information that you may need as you consider this request.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

The LEAP Board

Julie Graves (president)

Andy Wang (treasurer)

Anne McLaughlin (secretary)

Jen Brown, Tammy Rip, & Sara Morneau (parent representatives)