



January 12, 2021

Dear Families,

On Thursday, in Eunice and Ruben's morning meeting, one fourth grader typed into the chat that she was "shocked" to see adults behave so dangerously. Then, seconds later, a classmate offered a timeworn observation: if Black people stormed the Capitol, they would have been killed. These children sound both as if they've seen nothing like this, and seen it all before.

My first impulse was to tell them that this is not how things used to be. But the truth is that mobs with nooses and Confederate flags is *exactly* how things used to be. In elementary school, I learned to trust in peaceful transitions of power. Then again, my elementary school taught me that Civil Rights struggles 'ended,' with a happily ever after.

Today, unfiltered footage is everywhere, so children try to make sense of unfiltered truth. "It was hard to watch when the window was broken," said one of Marilyn's children who saw video of the Capitol, "but I wanted to see what would happen."

CPE1 children are confronting painful truth, so we have to inspire them with *facts*. For example, to understand voter suppression, Simone's students have been reading and discussing how Fannie Lou Hamer to Stacey Abrams organized against voter suppression. On Thursday morning, K-1 students lined up down the hall and chanted, "Our voice matters!" Children find their voices and their power in a group.

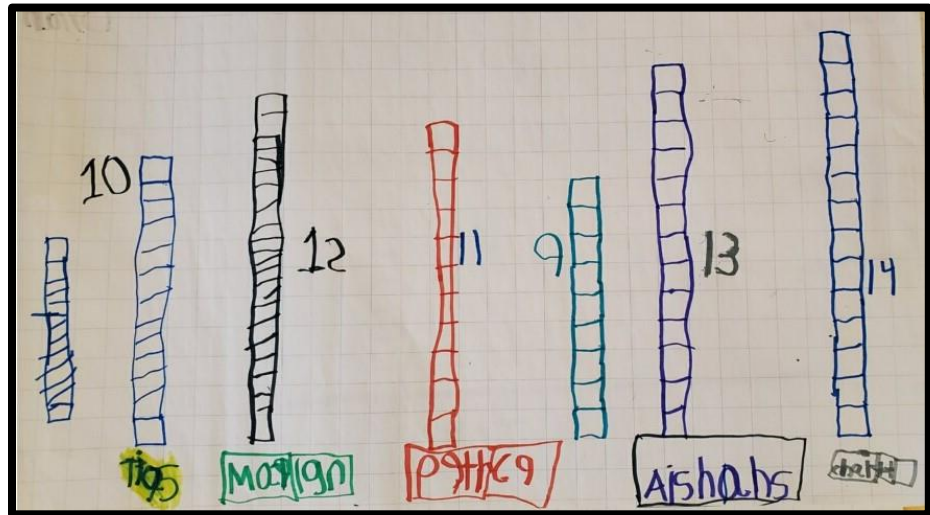
Sadly, our children will keep having to metabolize shocking events. We won't sanitize facts of the past, and that helps children change the facts of the future.

### **Vaccines, Testing, and Math**

Educators now can sign up for COVID-19 vaccinations. Some want more time to find out about the vaccines' safety. Others are starting their vaccinations. Personally, I am uncomfortable getting a shot before people with higher health risks. But I'm getting

my first vaccination next week, because that makes me one less person who could spread the virus around our community.

These first vaccines do not take away the need for regular testing. When schools reopened after the November shutdown, Chancellor Carranza wrote that weekly testing “is a crucial part of our plan to keep all schools safe.” As the city has moved from monthly to weekly testing, there are seeing new limits on the number of adults and children tested. This week, our target was only fifteen people. “That’s only one more than this class,” noted a kindergartener who charted our in-person classes. It’s true. Charlotte’s class has fourteen children, and fifteen is only one person more.



Fortunately, yesterday, our testing technicians tested *everybody* in first grade and up. That was my demand after testing technicians failed to show up at all last week. ‘Get our whole school tested Monday morning,’ I threatened, ‘or I’ll send a letter to the mayor and chancellor.’ Extra technicians were sent, and we tested dozens of people. That should happen no matter what.

I appreciate the value of random sampling. Comprehensive testing seems safer. If we need to raise our voices to test more people in school, I’ll let you know.

### Opening on School Leadership Team

Our next parent association meeting is this Thursday at 5:00 P.M. At the meeting, there will be a quick vote for an open parent seat on CPE1’s school leadership team. If you would like to be a candidate for SLT, please be sure to come (virtually) to Thursday’s meeting.

## **Enrollment Update**

January 19 is NYCDOE's deadline to apply to kindergarten for September 2021. Applications to every public school, including CPE1, are online at [www.myschools.nyc](http://www.myschools.nyc).

We are hearing that there will be no test to qualify for gifted and talented programs. Entry into gifted kindergarten will be by random lottery for families who put gifted programs as their first choices on their [www.myschools.nyc](http://www.myschools.nyc) kindergarten application. CPE1 does not have a gifted program.

Enrollment will be the heart of the agenda at the next District Four Community Education Council. Here are the details:

**When:** Wednesday, January 13, 6:00 P.M.

**Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84779090508?pwd=cWl2eWdqNi84c3RCSkVpYVh5akJBdz09>

**Meeting ID:** 847 7909 0508

**Password:** 056061

## **Rent Relief Program**

New York State has re-opened its rent relief program. This program helps New Yorkers who lost earnings as a result of the pandemic.

If you rent, you might qualify. It depends on your income before March 2020, and the number of people in your household. For example, if you have a two-person household, your combined income could be up to \$72,800. A four-person household could qualify earning up to \$90,950.

You can apply up until February 1. To find out more, go to <https://hcr.ny.gov/rrp>. You can get help with a rent relief application by calling 833.499.0318, or emailing [covidrentrelief@hcr.ny.gov](mailto:covidrentrelief@hcr.ny.gov).

## **Child Mind Institute Workshops on Raising Children in a Pandemic**

The Child Mind Institute supports caregivers in understanding their children as learners and as people. Child Mind is offering a promising series of *free* workshops on raising children during these times.

[Click here to sign up for Promoting Positive Behaviors](#), which includes sessions on managing screen time and on getting motivated for remote learning.

[Click here to sign up for Coping During COVID-19](#), which includes sessions on managing grief and on fostering resilience within your family.

[Click here for Supporting Learning at Home](#), which includes sessions on supporting your child's executive functioning and on reading at home.

For additional resources, please visit <https://childmind.org/coping-during-covid-19-resources-for-parents/>.

This is a lot to know and stay on top of. Thanks for all of your work.

Gabriel

