

Dear Camp Families

It is with heavy hearts that we share our decision to cancel the summer of 2020. While we have continued to plan, prepare, and hope for another transformative summer, the risks posed by COVID-19 threaten our most sacred value – the health and well-being of our campers, staff and community. These risks also compromise our ability to provide the excellence in programming, community building and camper care that are characteristic of Camp Dark Waters.

Our ongoing dialogue with local, regional, and federal medical authorities, the Center for Disease Control and many leaders in camping, has led us to the difficult conclusion that **there are too many known and unknown risks for us to create an acceptable pathway forward for camp to run this summer, so we are cancelling all summer sessions.**

We believe that you and your children deserve clarity that, while painful, allows for grieving, healing, and moving forward towards hope, joy, and better days ahead. While this news about camp is devastating, we also acknowledge the global suffering caused by COVID-19 and are sending our thoughts and holding you and your communities in the Light. We know that the many weeks/ months that we have already been sheltering-in-place and the related emotional challenges that all of us have faced have been incredibly demanding. We hope you take a moment with your children to express sadness together; listen, embrace the loss, and reflect on positive memories of the camp community, which will continue through the summer and will sustain into the future. We are sending another email for you to specifically share with your campers. **We know that our campers may want to reach out directly to their friends for support, but please ask them to wait until tomorrow so that all our families have the chance to share this information appropriately.**

This is a heartbreaking decision for us to make. We have been planning excitedly for the summer, hiring staff, and doing our best to make sure that camp was going to be special. Above all though, safety and wellbeing must come first. We can only run our program if we are confident we can keep everyone safe, and unfortunately there are so many unknowns that we cannot guarantee that for this summer.

For payments already made we would like to be as flexible as possible given the current situation. We would like to offer a few options:

- Donate all or part of your tuition credit to help Dark Waters with this summer's financial loss.
- Apply all or part of your tuition credit to next year's tuition.
- Receive a refund of all or part of your tuition from this year.

Please find the link below and let us know how you would like us to handle your tuition credit from this year. If we do not hear from you by June 15th, we will assume that you would like your balance returned. Please allow us sometime to process these refunds. If you are in urgent need your refund, please reach out through email and we will try to expedite it for you.

[2020 Tuition Intent Form](#)

Those families who are registered this year will have priority in enrolling for the summer of 2021. Our campers who are graduating out, and our TICs and TACs are at the forefront of our thoughts. With so many disappointments and rites of passage taken away from kids this year, we want to give a proper way for them to say goodbye to camp. Because of this we will be extending our age limit for traditional

camp to 15 next year and all our TICs and TACs will be given the opportunity to return for the summer of 2021.

If you would like to discuss this with us in more detail, we are happy to chat further about our decision-making process or tuition options. We hope you understand that in the wider context of what is happening in the world, we must be part of the effort to keep everyone safe and healthy. We know as we continue to heal from the COVID-19 pandemic, our camp community will remain a haven of love and acceptance for all into the future. We work hard to create an environment for our campers that is care-free, full of fun, friendship and kindness, away from the normal pressures and worries of everyday life. While the summer of 2020 is not possible for us, we hope you and your family are willing to wait another year for a summer of adventure with Dark Waters.

Yours in Camping

Timothy Eager

Executive Director