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■ CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER Stephen R. Anderson, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LBA

June 24, 2020

Dear Summit Parents/Guardians/Caregivers,

This is not an easy communication to send because I know it will disappoint some of you and may come as a relief to others. Under normal conditions, the safety of your child and our staff is always our foremost concern; but it is even more critical now as we continue to deal with the impact of the global coronavirus pandemic.

Although we are making progress on our reopening plan, our leadership team, Board of Directors, and medical consultants have concluded that ***we are unable to meet the required health and safety guidelines outlined by the New York State Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control for in-person instruction for our summer session (July 13 – August 21) and will continue with virtual learning.***

Our decision is in alignment with local public schools and schools like Summit Academy. This was a very difficult decision because we understand the various concerns it may raise for our students and families. We know that our students are missing their teachers, therapists, classroom aides, friends, and the routine of coming to school. We know how much you count on Summit's services and that these past three months have been extremely challenging for many of you. But rest assured we are doing all we can to make sure that we will be back and able to help you as much as we can in the future.

As background, earlier this week, the New York State Department of Education provided guidance on Governor Cuomo's Executive Order ***permitting but not requiring*** public schools to provide in-person special education services this summer for students with developmental disabilities. To our knowledge, no district in WNY has chosen to provide in-person summer services. By extension, this guidance also permits individual schools like Summit to determine if they are prepared to meet the safety requirements to provide in-person instruction this summer.

Be assured that we are working diligently to meet the complex requirements for reopening. In addition, we know the challenges that are unique to our students, including their medical and behavioral complexities. Our team is developing procedures to work through those challenges in a manner that complies with various guidelines. We are taking this process very seriously and considering the consequences of every decision. We want to be back in full operation as soon as we can, as safely as we can.

We will continue to provide educational programming through virtual learning and teletherapy until in-person instruction resumes. **If you are not doing so now, we encourage you to take advantage of every virtual learning and therapy opportunity during the summer session, July 13 – August 21.**

As I said in my letter on June 3, we are carefully considering every aspect of your child's day – from arrival to departure – all of which will change under our Return to School Plan. We also expect to receive a plan for Returning to School in New York State from the Governor and NYSED sometime in mid- to late-July. In the interim, we are actively developing our own plan, purchasing personal protective equipment, making physical alterations to our facilities, training staff, and purchasing additional materials and supplies. Almost every detail of our operations must be considered.

We appreciate your trust, and your patience, as we continue to work toward Summit Academy's reopening.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen R. Anderson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial 'S'.

Stephen R. Anderson, Ph.D., BCBA-D  
Chief Executive Officer