

Special Edition: Coronavirus Communication 23

April 9, 2020

Good Evening:

This has been an interesting weather day for Flint and Genesee County. The day has morphed from sunshine to snow, to sleet, to rain, to snow and back to sunshine. We seem to be getting all of Michigan weather in one day. Wow!

I had the opportunity to participate, along with Vice President for Student Success Services Jason Wilson, in a portion of the monthly Genesee County Superintendents' Association meeting. It was very interesting listening to the discussions, which centered around local school districts that are charged with developing State Continuity of Learning Plans for their students' success utilizing virtual strategies. VP Wilson and I shared with the group MCC's desire to support school districts in meeting state requirements. MCC will be utilizing our summer bridge programming experiences to enhance and expand offerings that give quality programming options to fill local school district gaps. We are pleased that some federally funded programs have moved temporarily to allow greater eligibility for youth participation due to the pandemic. Our message to the superintendents was that MCC stands ready to support their needs during this challenging time.

MCC received a message from Ascension Genesys Hospital today requesting donations of sanitizing surface wipes, particularly Clorox and Lysol brands. Those wanting to donate, please either drop off at Ascension Genesys Hospital in Grand Blanc or contact Nadia McCann nadia.mccann@theresourcegroup.com for a scheduled pick-up.

I participated in Bear Pause today. Thanks go out to Kristi Dawley, Human Resources Manager, and Stephanie Pomper, Human Resources Payroll Coordinator, for an excellent job leading the session. Today's presentation was about HelpNet, MCC's designated company to assist employees and their household members in meeting family and life challenges. HelpNet is a confidential national employee assistance program that employees can contact by phone at 800-969-6162 or online at: www.helpneteap.com. The presenters were truly impressed with the supportive team we have at MCC. I am pleased that over 80 participated in today's session to learn more about gaining support during challenging times. Below are things I learned from attending Bear Pause:

- HelpNet offers household members the same services that they offer to the MCC employee. The household members must reside at the same address.
- HelpNet offers five free counseling sessions to unpack situations per calendar year, per topic. Telephone and video sessions are offered for these sessions. If you do not have a good interpersonal connection with the counselor, then you can change to a new person without losing a session.

- HelpNet offers legal assistance which includes 30 minutes of free legal consultation with an attorney per topic for an unlimited amount of new topical areas. If you do not have a good interpersonal connection with the attorney, then you can change to a new person without losing the 30 minutes spent on that topic.
- HelpNet offers financial assistance which includes unlimited times you can speak to a financial advisor to receive help with creating a budget and getting financially well.
- HelpNet offers a Work-Life website that shares information about various topics like improving coping skills, managing work remotely, etc. The site is password protected. The password for MCC employees is **mott**.

The representatives gave me pause when they discussed that we, as a nation, are under extreme stress and our concentration is compromised. Our focus is hard to keep because high levels of anxiety are impacting our ability to perform. As we attempt to be hypervigilant and follow all of the steps to keep safe, it creates physical exhaustion. We are tired. Here are some tips they shared to give ourselves the freedom and permission to care.

Working Remotely

- Create a routine for work that you are most comfortable following.
- Structure your day daily and build in time for movement. Movement can mean stretching, walking, shaking yourself off, playing with a pet, dancing, etc. Make yourself get up and spend some time moving around.
- Drink enough water to keep your body hydrated.
- Chit-chat with colleagues through Facetime, texting etc.
- Be honest with yourself and leadership and share your needs during this stressful period.

Social Distancing

- You have to remain social and connect with people.
- Call people and have conversations, Facetime family and friends, send a text.
- Check-in on people who you know live alone.
- Call someone whom you know is in a tough family situation.
- Provide support to those who are caregivers through a kind text, email or call.
- Reach out and support others.
- Set a timer for participating on social media and watching the news.
- Participate in your passion—like listening to music, reading, shopping online.
- Give yourself room to have a bad day.
- Interact with your co-workers by hosting Zoom gatherings, sending work-appropriate memes across your platform, and playing work-appropriate games like Animal Crossing: Pocket Camp, GooseChase, etc.

Coping with Stress and Change

- Use mindfulness exercises.
- Shift your thinking from “what if” to “what is.”
- Cut off the negative self-narrators in your mind.

- Remember you are safe and the people you love are safe.
- Always gently pull yourself to experience the now.
- If friends or family members are in the hospital or sick, then remember you are doing the best you can right now.
- Be satisfied with what you can accomplish today.
- Use meditation apps like Headspace, take long deep breaths, take self-compassion breaks, listen to music, pray and take it one day at a time.

Well, it just stopped raining and sleeting and it is back to sunshine, so I am going to take my own self-care advice and enjoy my dog, Ms. Maggi Mae. Have an awesome evening!

Looking forward,

Dr. Beverly

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President