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Dear Families,

I am writing to share with you that I will be taking time off immediately to care for my husband. To be fully transparent, my husband has been on a liver transplant list at MGH in Boston since November (2020) and at Mayo Clinic in Florida since February (2021). He has a rare autoimmune disorder and a donor has become available. We have spent months waiting for this important call, and over the weekend my husband received his new liver.

I have written this letter in advanced preparation and have given Kim full permission to share with families any and all updates with regard to my family situation to ease questions or concerns should they come up regarding my absence and expected return. Since this is all new terrain for me, I am navigating as I go. I expect I will be out for three weeks minimum, however, I may return remotely depending on the status of his recovery.

I want to make sure families know the process moving forward of who will be your administrative point of contact in my absence. We are fortunate to have Tim Mahoney, our assistant principal, who will serve as our Acting Principal, and Gillian Warwick will continue to serve as the other Administrator in the school as it pertains to Special Education related matters. During this time, please know Tim Mahoney is fully in charge of the day to day functions and decision-making of the school. I know Milestones will be in terrific hands. Please do not hesitate to email him anything you would typically email to me at tmahoney@advancingmilestones.com. Although you may cc:// me on all correspondences, I will defer all responses to Tim until my official return and transition period back. In addition, Kim Rockers (CEO) and Alex Smith-Michaels (COO) remain available for Executive Leadership support just as they do when I am in present.

At this time, please know I will stay in touch, I will be returning, but for right now my focus and full attention needs to be elsewhere. I have a husband that needs me as well as little kids that need their mom. In the same breath, I want our families and your children to have leadership that can give the level of focus and attention deserving and consistent with MDS. Until I return, Tim and Gillian in collaboration with additional members of our leadership team are those people and have been set up for success.

We have spent months in preparation for this call. The staff are ready and supportive. Until I return, I am forever grateful to the MDS family for all the love and support that I have received to take this time and shift my thinking elsewhere.

Fingers crossed for a quick recovery after a safe and successful surgery.

Best, Kirsten