Please help us by sharing this letter with other families as we understand that the email list is not complete. Also, a separate email message will be sent by your individual program director in the upcoming days. Thank you.

Dear Garezers families,

Since its founding in 1965 Garezers has served as a place for friendship, fellowship and celebrations and is often referred to as our Little Latvija. Our children and youth eagerly await each summer to once again be with their friends from across the country. Latvian culture and traditions are joyously celebrated, songs are sung around campfires and language is taught. Our programs have given generations a solid foundation on the road to establishing their latvian identity.

We have stated before in our letters during this pandemic, that providing a safe and healthy environment for all campers and staff has been of utmost importance and a top priority. Evaluating the federal and state mandates, as well as the impact on local healthcare resources, has been a continuous and ongoing process. The COVID-19 task force together with the Board of Directors have identified numerous tipping points that would preclude Garezers to maintain our goals and priorities. While we are deeply saddened and many tears have been shed, we have methodically and with moral and ethical integrity come to reach an extremely difficult decision.

GAREZERS IS SUSPENDING 2020 ONSITE CAMP PROGRAMS THROUGH JULY 4.

THE DECISION ON ANY POSSIBLE ON-SITE PROGRAMS AFTER JULY 4 WILL BE MADE BY MAY 15.

ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMMING is being worked on for **all** our summer program participants regardless of the session for which you had registered; Latvian Gateway, Latvian Courtyard sessions, GBN, GBD, GSS and GVV. We feel that by making this decision now we are placing the safety of our program participants and staff first. We believe it is respectful of the serious nature of the pandemic; and we are acting out of care and concern for everyone involved. It affords you an opportunity to make adjustments to your summer schedule and plan accordingly. It also provides us time to evaluate and create new programs tailored to our current environment.

In order to make a determination on any possible on-site programming after July 4 we await the next set of guidelines from the State of Michigan Office of the Governor and the first set of guidelines from the CDC and American Camp Association which are scheduled to be available in early May. To be fully transparent, these anticipated guidelines will in all likelihood be restrictive, taking into account social distancing restrictions, quarantine requirements, movement and group restrictions and more, each of which poses its own set of challenges for the Garezers camp areas, classrooms and living quarters. Ensuring adequate critical resources (medical staff and supplies, maintenance supplies, food) continues to be a concern which will need to be constantly evaluated.

Thank you for your patience. Thank you for your understanding. Thank you for your support. Let us be grateful for our blessings, resolve to be optimistic about our future and believe that we will soon be able to join our hands and hearts in Garezers.