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Jeff Zmuda, Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor

To: Juvenile and Adult Facility Residents and Family Members

From: Jeff Zmuda, Secretary

Date: January 12, 2022

Re: Coronavirus and KDOC updates

We recently lost a member of our KDOC family through a tragic incident in Larned last weekend. Shala Smith, a long-time employee at Larned Correctional Mental Health Facility, and her young son, Carver were victims of an apparent double-homicide and suicide. Shala began her career at LCMHF in November 2003, was promoted to Program Provider in October 2017 and then to Corrections Counselor II in June 2020. She was a bright, energetic professional who was committed to making a difference in the lives of those she worked with. Please join me in lending your thoughts and prayers to Shala's family, friends and all those at LCMHF during this difficult time.

On Monday, January 17, 2022, our nation will pause to observe Martin Luther King Day. Authorized through legislation signed by President Ronald Reagan in 1983, this day commemorates the life and achievements of Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King led the fight for equity in the 50s and 60s before his assassination on March 29, 1968. His life and this day remind us all of the responsibility we have to confront injustice and speak up for others.

In her State of the State address last night, Governor Laura Kelly outlined priorities for this legislative session. We look forward to working with the Governor and the members of the Kansas Legislature to accomplish great things for Kansas in 2022. We will learn more about the Governor's plans in the week ahead, and as that becomes available we will share it with you.

As mentioned in last week's message, I would like to share with you a few thoughts on how we plan to move forward with our strategic plan, Pathway for Success. Through our five strategic implementation teams - Employee Environment, Population Environment, Communication, Resource Deployment and Grant and Resource Attainment Literacy - a tremendous amount of progress has already been made. Moving into the second full year of the plan, many projects are fully implemented, others are in the pilot stage or ready for implementation. Each team also has a list of great ideas that they will be working on in the coming months. We will continue to share updates in the coming months.

I'm sure you have noticed in the data update memos sent to you on Mondays and Thursdays that our COVID-19 positive numbers are on the rise among both our staff and residents. The same thing is happening in our communities. Please continue to take the necessary precautions to protect your health and the health of others. Vaccinations and booster shots remains a critical part of managing this pandemic, and I encourage those who have not yet been vaccinated to seek out information and consider the advantages. Please contact your facility staff for more information.