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Senegal Sponsorship Program COVID-19 Update, January 26, 2021

Because of the school closures last Spring, and school starting a month later than usual this Fall, November and December were used by most teachers to simply catch students up, teaching almost no new material. Several of the schools have seen lower than usual numbers of returning students due to the pandemic, from parents not wanting to risk it with their children's safety, to financial concerns for the families. However, almost all of the children sponsored through GO on the Mission have returned.

Currently, there are several law suits in Senegal from parent committees against their children's schools. Because of the severe economic problems in Senegal resulting from the pandemic, many parents across the country cannot pay the fees for their children's education. While most private and public schools still want the children to be able to attend, they must enforce the fees so that they can pay the teachers and school staff. With little to no help from the government, the schools are having difficulty accommodating students and it is estimated that 20-30% of students have not returned to school.

The schools that GO works with, because of the generosity and consistency of the support of sponsors and donors, have been able to allow every child to return to school, regardless of their ability to pay tuition – none have been turned away. This is a huge blessing for the schools, and a strong witness among the people of Senegal.

The virus is spreading again in Senegal, and the South African variant is present in the country, so there has been a higher rate of spread and of deaths related to COVID. For these reasons, our partners believe that they schools may have to close for a short period of time again to help stop the spread. They ask that we pray for the health of the students and teachers and that a second shut-down will not be necessary.

The GO COVID-19 Relief Fund is a great way to continue to support our partners globally. They have been incredibly grateful for your support and prayers. If you are interested in donating to the Relief Fund, please visit our website at goonthemission.com/donate.