

March 25, 2020

Dear W+H Parents,

I hope that you have found ways to enjoy this spring break despite the rapidly changing circumstances forced upon us by the spread of the coronavirus. It will take all of us some time to adjust to new patterns of work and school and family life. For me, my house is filled again with five children, only they are not all children anymore. They eat a lot, make noise, bounce off the walls, go to bed way too late, and we are trying to figure out how to carve out space and time for the two W+H kids, the college-age brother, and my wife and me to work and study remotely. They miss their friends and crave more interaction, though they now understand why that cannot happen in the usual ways. That epiphany did not just miraculously arrive but was born of sometimes heated interchanges. These are not heavy burdens, and they do not even touch on health concerns and economic concerns. I am thankful for them, as they reflect necessary efforts to maintain the well-being of our communities.

When we return to classes, it will be via distance learning. We have not set an expected date to return to in-person classes because that clarity is simply not available to us. I do not expect it to be a brief interlude, and it may well be for the remainder of the school year. Our administrators and faculty have been working hard to prepare for this sea change and have engaged in this challenge with great spirit and energy.

The Distance Learning Overview will provide you with more information about how we will make this transition. We are in contact with schools that made this change as long as three weeks ago, in hopes of learning from their experiences and perhaps avoiding their mistakes. We also benefit from the wisdom of others through our state and national associations and our connections with a range of organizations that offer professional development to our teachers, administrators, and staff. It may be worth recognizing from the outset that there will likely be times when the best practices in distance learning do not align with your household needs, especially for parents of younger students who are working from home. If you are experiencing frustrations, be sure to share them with the teachers, advisors, or administrators in a spirit of mutual patience and flexibility. Please also know that our school counselors are available if students are struggling to cope emotionally with the pandemic and



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the changes it is forcing upon us.

Before the weekend, you will receive an email from your child's division head, which will further help you prepare for next week. In addition, I'd like to share a compelling set of parenting guidelines for your consideration, which I have available in a separate document. I have printed a copy for myself and intend to refer to it as the next weeks unfold.

Let teachers and administrators know how we can help ease any points of friction. Most of you will have had a check-in call already from Board and PA volunteers, and they will continue to call periodically. This year will test us in ways we did not foresee, but the strength of our community and our commitment to supporting one another will provide us with strength and resilience.

We are fortunate in that we are not aware of any student or employee at this moment who has tested positive for COVID-19. That fact should assuage our natural concerns about whether the coronavirus was circulating freely unbeknownst to us in our school prior to spring break. Still, the sudden changes to our world and the worries these changes contain can be disorienting. We will work through them with kindness and a spirit of partnership.

I wish you a peaceful and healthy remainder of the break.

Best regards,
Andy