

GARRISON FOREST SCHOOL

300 GARRISON FOREST ROAD • OWINGS MILLS, MARYLAND 21117

Dear Lower School Parents,

I am writing to follow up on Mr. Hughes's email about our move to online learning beginning March 26. Below, I've outlined our plan, but before we jump into what the expectations are for our community during this online learning period, we want our families to know that we understand that this time is fraught with uncertainty. While we've worked hard to develop the online learning programs you will be seeing, we understand that families may be dealing with different circumstances. This likely will not be a perfect process. We ask your understanding--and give you our's--as we work together to make this as seamless and productive as possible for our children.

The goal of moving to an online learning solution is to ensure your student is able to continue making academic progress even though she is not able to attend classes.

Online Learning Plan

Lower Division (PreSchool and Lower School) students will be required to participate in Online Learning Days. Teachers will email you each morning by 9:00 a.m. with instructions and/or assignment postings including those assigned by Specialist teachers. Teachers will also be available for questions by email. Students with accommodations who may need extra support please reach out to Chrissy Grant (christinegrant@gfs.org). Students should expect to complete work (times will vary according to grade level) and there will be no homework assigned. Questions about online learning and tech access should be directed to Chris Shriver, Digital Learning Specialist (christineshriver@gfs.org).

Student Roles and Responsibilities

- Follow consistent daily routines and timetables (ie: 8:30 a.m. wake up, 9:00 a.m. start, etc).
- Identify an effective work environment.
- Reduce all distractions in your workspace (ie: no cellphones, television, etc)
- Prioritize work to meet timelines and due dates.
- Be proactive! Communicate with teachers or advisors if you require additional support.
- Collaborate and support your classmates in their learning.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

- Students are expected to complete assignments with academic integrity and honesty.
- Students are expected to follow Garrison's Acceptable Use Technology Policy.
- Students are expected to take proper care of their devices and 3rd and 4th grade students must return them in the same condition in which they were given.

Parent Roles and Responsibilities

- Begin each day with a check-in w/your daughter.
- Make a plan for consistent daily routines and timetables.
- Encourage times for breaks and physical activity.
- Help your daughter identify an effective work environment.
- Encourage your daughter to communicate with her teachers (for our younger students this might be writing a note to their teacher, for our older students- encourage them to advocate for themselves if they need clarification, building strong learning habits for the future).
- Be aware of how much time your daughter is spending online.
- Set clear rules on social media times.
- End each day with a check-in w/your daughter.
- Make sure the device is charging each evening.

While this is certainly uncharted territory for all of us, I am confident that our excellent faculty, staff, students, and families will work together to ensure that teaching and learning continue as the situation unfolds. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to your daughter's teacher, to me or to any member of the Lower School Administrative Team listed below. We will also continue to send Parent Notes throughout this time to keep you updated with information, and the school will send updates as they are needed. You may, at any time, also refer to the [GFS COVID-19 RESPONSE site](#), which includes a FAQ.

- Ashby Thoeni, Curriculum Specialist, ashbythoeni@gfs.org
- Shondra Cowling, Lower Division Counselor, shondracowling@gfs.org
- Chris Shriver, LS Digital Learning Specialist, christineshriver@gfs.org
- Chrissy Grant, LS Academic Resource Coordinator, christinegrant@gfs.org

Schedule Changes

In addition to this information about online learning, I did want to confirm the following schedule changes that we know of:

- 3/26: Lower School Logic Land Math Festival is canceled.
- 3/27: Third-grade field trip to the Maryland Historical Society: Every effort will be made to reschedule this event.
- 3/28: Garrison Girl Gala: Every effort will be made to reschedule this event.
- 3/31: Chipotle Night: This event has been changed to Tuesday, April 21 (Pikesville from 4-6 PM)
- 4/13: Grandparents and Special Friends' Day: This event is canceled.

We will continue updating you about schedule changes as the situation progresses.

Please enjoy a restful Spring Break with your families. You will hear from me again before March 26 with a reminder and any additional information.

Warmly,

Gail Hutton
Head of the Lower Division



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