

# GARRISON FOREST SCHOOL

300 GARRISON FOREST ROAD • OWINGS MILLS, MARYLAND 21117

Dear Middle School Parents,

I am writing to follow up to Mr. Hughes's email about our move to online learning beginning Thursday, March 26. Yesterday afternoon, I had the opportunity to meet with all Middle School students to outline our Online Learning plan, answer questions and provide students with a checklist of materials to bring home. Students were also able to meet with advisors to assess their technology readiness and prepare their materials. I was incredibly impressed with the many thoughtful questions that were asked and the sense of community and empathy that was clearly evident.

As we look ahead and prepare to transition to online learning, it is important to acknowledge that there is still a lot of uncertainty around the situation. 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 for your understanding--and give you ours--as we work together to make this as seamless and productive as possible for our children.

## Online Learning Plan

Beginning Thursday, March 26, all Middle School students will be required to participate in Online Learning Days. Teachers will post assignments for each class scheduled to meet that cycle day by 9:00 a.m. in an "Online Learning" folder on their course's Schoology page. Teachers will be available for questions by appointment via Google Hangout, Google Meet or by email. Students should expect to complete 25-45 minutes of work per class that meets each day and will not have outside homework. Advisors will check in with advisees electronically twice a week and Counselors/ARC Support will continue to be available electronically by appointment. Questions about online learning and tech access should be directed to Lindsay Kelland, Director of Educational Technology & Libraries ([lindsaykelland@gfs.org](mailto:lindsaykelland@gfs.org)).

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## 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 work space (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.

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## Parent Roles and Responsibilities

- 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 and advisors.
- 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 with your daughter.

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While this is certainly uncharted territory for many of us, I am confident that our excellent faculty and dedicated students will work together to ensure that teaching and learning continues as the situation unfolds. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to your daughter's advisor, to me or to any member of the Middle 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 also refer to the [GFS COVID-19 Response site](#), which includes an FAQ, at any time for updated information.

- Lauren Anderson, Middle School Dean of Students, [laurenanderson@gfs.org](mailto:laurenanderson@gfs.org)
- Lisa Fleck, Director of Counseling & Middle School Counselor, [lisafleck@gfs.org](mailto:lisafleck@gfs.org)
- Lindsay Kelland, Director of Educational Technology, [lindsaykelland@gfs.org](mailto:lindsaykelland@gfs.org)
- Emma Parsons, Middle School Academic Resource Coordinator, [eparsons@gfs.org](mailto:eparsons@gfs.org)

## Schedule Changes

In addition to this information about online learning, I did want to confirm that we will be canceling Grandparents and Special Friends' Day. We will continue updating you about schedule changes as the situation progresses.

Thank you for your continued support,

Shannon Schmidt  
Head of the Middle School



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