

# STEVENSON

March 15, 2020

Dear Lower and Middle Division Families,

If you have not already, you will receive an email and/or phone call from your child's teacher or advisor (depending on your division level) this afternoon or early this evening. The faculty have been working diligently through the weekend to prepare for our initial day of remote learning tomorrow, and they are ready. I am exceptionally proud of the faculty. Their ability to swiftly pivot, engage, learn, and grow has been remarkable. They are tremendously competent professionals. And I invite your patience and flexibility as we launch into this uncharted chapter of our learning experience. I am exhilarated by what new experiences, opportunities, and learning will emerge from this time.

## **Social Distancing**

I have learned that several families are considering hiring a tutor to teach small clusters of students or are strategizing different ways to have their children gather with other students from their respective grade level to do school work together. I write to *strongly discourage* this. While I am keenly aware of the hardship this sudden shift in our paradigm lays upon each of us, we must all practice social distancing. This means, as I mentioned in the *Pirate Log* last week, no sleepovers, no play dates, no events or activities where people are clustered together. A handful of students, working together, tutored by someone is not safe at this time. According to the [Centers for Disease Control](#), we are expected to, "discourage children and teens from gathering in other public places while school is dismissed to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in the community." While someone's home is not "a public gathering place," choosing to allow people of any age to share space, whether public or private, will work to spread the virus, not reduce it. The article linked [here](#) makes it abundantly clear that choosing to allow our children to play with, hang out with, or be in the same room with other children while being tutored all work against what we need to do to help reduce the spread of this pandemic.

I have two teenage children at home. The juggle of managing my job and managing them is significant. I have stopped both of them from hanging out with their friends in groups. And while they were initially agitated, they have committed to the practice because they understand that this pandemic is much, much bigger than their immediate desires. And they are not willing to risk exposure to the virus that could eventually lead to getting someone else, or themselves, sick. Choosing to practice social distancing is choosing to help reduce the spread of this virus and is an act of protection for our entire community.

I have the deepest compassion for all of you who are attempting to manage working and making sure the day is set up for your child to succeed in a remote learning platform. And

with communication, patience, and flexibility, we can all do this. The faculty is prepared, determined, and deeply dedicated to your children. Lean on them—email them, call, ask questions.

### **Maintaining Structure and Routine**

We all know that children learn best when they are in a safe and structured environment. It is within the boundaries of routine, ritual, and structure that they evolve, get curious, and feel psychologically safe. This safety evokes intellectual discovery. This is the balance we strike every day at Stevenson. And I am inviting you to emulate it in your home while we are a remote learning community. I ask that we all uphold these simple and important rituals to help our young learners feel emotionally safe so that they can continue to thrive intellectually:

- Whatever your child's morning routine is before a typical school day, keep it going.
- Have them make their beds and get dressed for the day (don't let them remain in their pajamas on a school day).
- As we have mentioned in previous communications, create a workstation in your home, in a shared space like the living room, kitchen, or dining room.
- If you have a Time Timer at home, get it out and set it up for them (or you can download it as [an app](#) on your smartphone or Ipad). Set the time timer accordingly.
- Remember to give them breaks and provide water and healthy snacks. We suggest giving a 5-minute break, even a "body break" (stretching, sit-ups, push-ups) every 20–30 minutes (older children can go longer between breaks).
- Have markers, pencils, pens, and paper set up for them at their respective stations.
- Practice the exact same end of day rituals you normally practice. Make sure they go to bed on time and that they are getting eight to ten hours of sleep each night.

Middle division parents, we have posted updated 8-day rotation schedules for your students on your [Pirate Pages](#). These schedules show all classes in the 8-day rotation with updated times for our seven daily periods of remote instruction. Please download your student's schedule and, if possible, post at their workstation. And please refer to your Pirate Planner to confirm which day of the cycle we are on each given day. Tomorrow is Day 5.

Lower division parents, you will receive a detailed schedule and information for the week from your teachers this afternoon or this evening. Your child will follow a Monday through Friday schedule.

Your child will have questions. One of our greatest strengths as a learning community is that we foster a love of learning, a deep passion for inquiry and understanding. I want you to be able to answer the questions your child may have about COVID-19. I share two articles with you in the hopes that they may provide some information to be able to answer some of their questions:

[How To Talk to Teens about the Coronavirus](#)

[Coronavirus: Terms to Know](#)

I will be in regular communication with everyone throughout this process. Please review our [Community Updates page](#) frequently so that you may stay informed about steps the school will continue to take to attend to our community during this time. We have also posted several links to articles for parents that discuss the new remote learning experience that millions of adults now find themselves managing.

I am firmly rooted in taking care of each of you, as much as I possibly can, remotely. Our learning community is prepared to face this extraordinary new reality with grit, determination, and joy.

With the deepest respect,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Molly K. Bozzo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Molly K. Bozzo  
Head of Lower and Middle Divisions