

STEVENSON

March 20, 2020

Dear Stevenson Community:

One week down, and it looks like a few more to go! In a world of troubling news and ever-increasing disruption to every aspect of our lives, It is important to start this note by celebrating the incredible resilience and adaptability of our students and teachers. If we think back just ten days, we were planning to have school as normal for as long as possible, knowing that there was a high probability of disruption in the near future. Within 24 hours, we knew we had to make a dramatic shift in how we teach and learn, and we had a weekend to plan for it. Learning packets were rapidly and thoughtfully constructed for our youngest students, and our middle and upper division teachers transformed their pedagogy for an online environment. Resident staff helped students and families with the physically challenging and emotionally draining task of leaving the dorms, some going home and others going to friends and relatives because home was just not an option in the current circumstances. In the past week, we have seen music, dance, and PE lessons delivered online, advisory and extra help sessions take place, and interactive [classes](#) across all disciplines a regular occurrence. We have scheduled individual check ins with the families of our youngest students, and pushed ahead with remote, real-time evening presentations on college admissions.

While we have a lot to learn about how best to teach remotely, and lots of questions remain around appropriate workload expectations, assessment, social-emotional support and how to effectively manage screen time in this virtual context, we have come a long way in a very short space of time and have continued to move learning forward without missing a single day. A huge amount of credit goes to our director of technology, Ally Wenzel and her technology team, Adil Ech-Chahi, David Meyer, Kelly Talbert, and Jim Fannin.

The best way for us all to move forward is through regular communication. Your feedback on your child's experience will help us calibrate our work, so please share your observations and concerns, large or small, with us. You are encouraged to email your child's teacher and/or advisor, or either of us to share your perspective. The more data we get, the better we can refine our plans to support students, families and teachers in the weeks ahead. We have produced an [FAQ section](#) on our website for the most commonly asked questions, and will edit this as needed in the coming weeks. Given the pressure teachers have been under to adapt curriculum, we have pushed back the publishing of midterm grades for middle and upper division students from Saturday, March 21 to Monday evening, March 23. These will be viewable on your [Pirate Page](#).

We know that school is about more than learning content, and that kids aren't just empty vessels to be gradually filled with more and more facts - it is about curiosity, joy, the camaraderie of the classroom and the shared experience of learning about the world. This is undoubtedly harder to do when physically distant from one another, but not impossible, and we are committed to the most holistic model of online schooling we can realistically deliver. We have been inundated with kind messages of support, and we want you to know that each and every one of these messages provides us with a wonderful boost for our morale. Knowing that we have your support and understanding, and that you recognize we are doing our very best for your kids in circumstances none of us have encountered before, reinforces why this is such a great community to be part of. As ever, your children are at the front of our minds and at the center of every decision we make, and everyone at Stevenson is working tirelessly to be a hub of normality and reassurance during these uncertain times.

Warmly,

Molly K. Bozzo
Head of the Lower and Middle Divisions

Dr. Dan Griffiths
Head of the Upper Division

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