

UPPER SCHOOL

9TH GRADE THROUGH 12TH GRADE

Dear Upper School students and parents,

Can it actually be the middle of July already? After a cross-country move with my family and several weeks spent working with my wonderful new TVS colleagues on our school reopening plan, one part of my brain is telling me that far too little of the summer remains. Another (somewhat louder) region of my cerebrum is very eager to get back to “business” so that I can meet all of you!

Students, the stories I am hearing of your many talents, fine personal qualities, compassion, and love for your school are reaching mythic proportions. I can't wait to experience our Upper School community for myself! Though I may have to imagine for the time being what the lower halves of your faces look like, I am certain that we have a great, if unusual, year ahead of us. How do I know this? History tells us that great people have a way of rising to the occasion, and I am convinced that a certain level of adversity can really help individuals and groups to focus their energy on what is most important, reexamine the status quo, and dig deep to find extra reserves of effort and empathy.

And we certainly have some “occasion” surrounding us, don't we? Being in the midst of a global pandemic with unprecedented societal, interpersonal, and economic impacts is almost beginning to seem like old news. Simultaneously, we find ourselves with a generational opportunity to take a good, hard look at the long history (and current realities) of racial and social iniquity, privilege, and frequent injustice that shape our individual and collective experiences. When I think about your talents and character, the dedication and expertise of your Upper School faculty, and the extra measures of love, authentic communication, and intelligent citizenship demanded by such a moment, I am inspired. You will continue to do great things and make great progress in the classroom and in your co-curricular activities, but we will also grow and evolve into an even more powerful (and empowering) community in the process.

Parents, many of you have asked about the possible availability of technology-aided access to a TVS education this year. As you have seen (or will see) elsewhere in today's communications, we are gauging your interest in what we are calling Trojan Learning Connection (TLC). The complexity of an Upper School schedule, which features groups of students in different disciplines and levels forming and reforming every period, undoubtedly makes it challenging to combine students learning on campus with those doing so from home. Still, we are committed to doing our very best to provide a quality option to those students and families that might benefit from it. It will help us tremendously in our planning for you to take a moment to fill out the brief survey about TLC and return by the date requested.

Please enjoy the slower pace of these days, and stay well and healthy.

Sincerely,

Kyle Kahuda
Head of Upper School