



Timothy J. Seeley
Head of School

GSA July Report

Planning for next year

Like everyone, we are in the midst of earnest planning for next year. I have formed a committee of 15 people from every area of the school, including a parent, to look at every aspect of our operations. As the hybrid model is the most complex one, that is what we are working on. We can adapt to whatever conditions are present come the end of August. Our hope is to have as many students on campus, as many days each week, as is safely possible.

To that end, we are looking at how we might adjust our academic schedule to make it work equally well whether we have everyone on campus, some on and some off, or everyone off. That way, if we need to switch between models during the year, it will be as least disruptive as possible. Our plan is that, regardless of whether students are on campus or at home on a given day, they will have a regular schedule.

We are also looking at every protocol and procedure we need for safe distancing, and cleaning and disinfecting, while we have people coming to campus. As you well know, there is not a single aspect of school that is not affected by this.

Increasing equity in our program and curricula

The other big thing we are working on is our response to the Black Lives Matter movement, and the desire to better educate our students about equity issues of all sorts in our country. Below is a letter I sent to all constituents about this on June 17. I have charged departments to begin this work, and we dedicated part of our June in-service days to it. We will continue that over the summer, so we have meaningful elements in place come September, and will continue that work during the coming school year.

My letter:

Advancing Social Justice

Perhaps, like me, you too have been struck by the number of institutions, businesses, and organizations across the country moved to speak out against the abhorrent killing of George Floyd and so many other black Americans. What about GSA? How should GSA, a school, respond to the horror of George Floyd's death, to the protests it has sparked, and to the larger issues of systemic racism raised by Black Lives Matter?

We respond in the first place by cleaving to our mission as a school: to equip students with knowledge and skills, in this case, to understand the roots of racism in our culture, and to learn about and become sensitive to the structures that are still in place today that support racism and oppression, whether intentional or not. Our goal as a school must be, as always, not to tell students *what to think*, but to teach them *how to think well*; to give them the information they need to make responsible choices; to nurture in them the motivation to make the world a better place, and the confidence and courage to do so.

And at this time we need to do even more. We must modify teaching and learning in light of these profoundly concerning issues. When GSA opens in the fall—whether remotely or in person— every department and program will be incorporating into its curriculum materials and lesson plans that raise matters of racism, gender bias, and other issues of social justice. While these issues need not become, in every case, the main focus of a course, they must be unmistakably present: in some of the books students read, historical events and figures they will discuss, problems they will work to solve, topics they will write about. Every corner of our program needs to find ways to grapple with thorny issues of social justice. GSA courses will bring to the fore an issue of social justice about which we may have been silent in the past, using it as the ground upon which we teach the knowledge, skills, history, and attitudes of all the disciplines our curriculum comprises.

In moving beyond mere statements of support for greater justice in our country, we can as a school do something that helps bring about greater justice. Otherwise, all we are teaching our students is that there is nothing we can do.

For my comments and addresses to students during these past months, look in the right column of [this page of our website](#). As always, please feel free to write me with your questions or concerns.

This is a very challenging time to be a school leader. We are suddenly thrust into the role of public health official. Thank you for all you do for the young people of our peninsula.

Respectfully,



Timothy J. Seeley
Head of School