

April 1, 2020

Dear Parents,

Oh, how I wish this email and these crazy times were just a terrible April Fool's joke. Unfortunately, the world is experiencing a terrible tragedy right now and we must all come together in prayer and unity to do whatever we can to prevent the spread of this disease. Attached to this email is a letter from our Superintendent which announces the extension of school closures until May 4, 2020.

We now know that this devastating virus has infiltrated its way into the homes of our school families and brought loss to those we know and love. While we have not had any reports of students contracting the illness, we do know families who have grandparents devastated by the disease. Please continue to pray hard for an end to all this pain and separation.

In spite of the pain and anguish our world is enduring, it is quite remarkable to witness the unfathomable light and love being shared across the globe: song and music from balconies; ingenious creativity among neighbors seeking connection while social distancing through window walks and scavenger hunts; more couples and small families spending quality time outdoors; and the much needed social connection via online virtual platforms! We are stronger together and it shows.

#### **Distance Learning Options: Low Tech vs. High Tech**

Our faculty and staff have been truly incredible. Their sole concern has been for the care and welfare of you and their students. They have worked tirelessly to figure out ways to provide the best distance learning possible and continue to come up with better ways of reaching out and working with you. We want you to know that we are here for you in whatever you need. We know families are struggling to figure out this new way of life and we want to help you in any way we can. We will continue to find ways to make it all easier while still ensuring students have the opportunity to be engaged in learning. If at any time you start feeling frustrated, we get it and totally understand! Just reach out and we are here to help. Please also remember that we have two options for distance learning, a low tech option with take-home packets and a high tech online platform. If the online version becomes too much to try to manage, just let us know and your teachers are prepared to provide individualized packets instead.

#### **Report Cards and Grading:**

As we will be operating through distance learning protocols during the 4th quarter, we have adjusted our grading guidelines to be more flexible and centered on student progress. We know families are struggling with working parents, childcare, school work and trying to make sure it all gets done! Our goal is to monitor progress in the most flexible, supportive manner possible. We want to make sure the students are learning the information, not just submitting the work.

Therefore teachers will be looking for student work to be completed with at least 80% mastery and asking students to redo work as necessary. We do not want this to be an undue burden on workload, so teachers will calculate an **average** of work submitted each week and enter one cumulative grade of at least 80% or higher. Teachers will reach out to any students who do not master the content at 80% or higher and reteach the material and allow them to redo the work or complete another Content Mastery Assignment until they reach a score of 80% or higher. Thus, parents will only see ONE cumulative grade posted in RenWeb each week. Grades will no longer be weighted, 100% of the student's grade will be determined by the weekly cumulative grade. We will not have tests or finals for the remainder of the year. Teachers will continue giving daily feedback on all work completed online. The daily assignments help ensure that students are mastering the content of the weekly lessons.

Second semester report grades will be re-calculated without finals in Junior High. Final grades for the 2019-2020 will consist of averaging first and second semester grades.

### **Extra-curricular Activities and Events**

As I have mentioned previously, we are reimagining many of our planned school events for the remainder of the year. Even if we are not able to come together in person, we WILL find a way to celebrate achievements, recognize outstanding efforts and join in fellowship together... even if we must do so VIRTUALLY! Look for more details to come!

### **Community Support**

We are here for YOU! It takes a village and we are your village! Please reach out to us if you have any needs, concerns or great ideas for bringing us together during this pandemic (virtually of course!). I have had so many wonderful families already reach out with offers of help should we have anyone in need...thank you!! You are the lifeblood of our St. Theresa family! I am truly blessed to be in this family with you. May God bless us all and heal us from this disease.

### **Melissa Ilski | Principal**

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