



St. Gregory the Great Academy

A Ministry of the Church of St. Gregory the Great

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 17, 2020

TO: All Parents, Faculty, and Staff

FROM: Dr. Jason C. Briggs, Principal

RE: **COVID-19 Status Update #9**

What we have learned

One of the most interesting aspects of the situation in which we find ourselves is how we are all learning at the same time, including students, parents, faculty, and staff. So, as these days unfold we will undoubtedly continue to grow and adjust. All in all, I think we did pretty good for our first day! A few things that I learned today might be helpful to consider:

1. Teachers are still learning how to gauge the expectations for home instruction, including the “sweet spot” between not enough work/activity and too much work/activity. In the classroom, teachers can immediately see when students struggle or master an activity. There are also a variety of learning needs in each class. None of this is easily adjusted in a remote setting. (This is why we need schools!) For example, a child who deals with attention issues is going to have a very difficult time in the current setting. If you are finding that you are having a difficult time with what is being assigned, or that your child is racing through it, please reach out to the teacher. They are here to help!
2. Another issue that is cropping up, and I fear will only continue to increase, is the time demand between helping one or more child with their school work while also trying to take care of their own work responsibilities from home. For those of you who have mastered this balance today, excellent job! For those of you who are struggling with this (LIKE I AM!!!), you are not alone. I learned today that I may be a decent principal, but I am a lousy home instruction teacher! To those who may be having similar challenges, hang in there!
3. Our teachers are doing a great job using the tools that we have available, and in searching out new ones for us to use. Our main platform is Google Classroom, supplemented with our



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conference call meetings. Some teachers are working on using a variety of other platforms, including Zoom, Google Meet, Classroom App, Skype, Freckle, BrainPOP, etc. Again, some take some getting used to. Having thrust this new reality on the teachers, we did not have weeks to plan for training in remote instruction, and as a result, teachers are using what they know and/or what they feel most comfortable with. Students are learning to use some of these tools for the very first time. It will get easier.

4. Yet another issue that has been thrust on many parents is that they have possibly not worked with some of the specific concepts that their child is learning in long while. If you have no idea what “magic E” is, what caused the Sumerian civilization to fall, or what $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ means, do not fret. Email the teacher for assistance, see if you can find some examples or information on YouTube, or see if the teacher included notes in the Google Classroom.

Tomorrow are the first of our scheduled conference calls. I attached a copy of the schedule; please review it so that you know when your child should be calling in. Please call in 5 minutes prior to the start of the conference; you should hear music playing until the teacher calls in. There are probably some conflicts if you have multiple children; if you do not have more than one phone available then do what you can for this week. Next week’s schedule will have more opportunities calls, so missing one due to a conflict will become less of an issue.

Also, I do not want our Preschool families to feel forgotten about. It is taking a bit longer to get everything in order due to two of the teachers being out of commission for the past couple of weeks. By next week, it is my plan to set up opportunities for morning meeting conference calls each day so that the teachers and students can touch base, have prayer, and have morning meeting. This will be on next weeks conference call schedule. Also, materials will be coming home via mail in the near future.

As conditions continue to unfold and change, we will learn and grow together. We are one SGGA!

Be well!

Thank you.



(my attempt at a little festivity)

