



OLIVERIAN

Dear Parents,

As I mentioned in my last note, Oliverian will evaluate options for resuming on-campus instruction every week on a rolling two-week basis. We did so yesterday and our conclusion, based on all available information including New Hampshire's recent stay at home order, is that campus will not open in the next two weeks. We will offer all families the option of



completing the term at a distance through our distance support and learning program, but will also monitor the potential for campus reopening for those who might wish to return. Even a week or two on campus has the potential to yield dividends--senior projects, end of term tutoring, reconnecting with friends and staff, commencement events, etc--and we are, therefore, keeping that option alive even though many schools have elected to simplify their operations by closing their campuses until the end of the school year. I would, trust me, love to offer more clarity on this front but, of course, we are in the midst of a giant global waiting game.

For reasons, no doubt, of both nature and nurture, I am pretty bad at waiting. It makes me nuts. After six years of working with Oli parents, I know that many of you are the same. We prefer making decisions and moving and even fighting to sitting still. But fighting this pandemic is like fighting a ghost--it's impossible to get a good grip, to make any kind of satisfying contact. So waiting, mostly indoors and with an ironic combination of social distance and

potentially suffocating familial proximity, is the only way to fight this thing.

Not easy for people like us. To that point, Beth, Colton, Liam, and I "sheltered in place" in our 480 square foot shoebox condo in Maine for 24 hours earlier this week while we waited for an unseasonable snowstorm to pass. The minute the weather cleared, I fled the condo like I was breaking out of jail. I was in such a mad hurry to get outside, out of my clothes, into my wetsuit, and onto my surfboard that I audibly and completely dislocated my thumb taking off my sock. After cursing and dancing and popping it back in place, it swelled to twice its size. I surfed anyway, mostly getting pummeled and choking on seawater in my efforts to favor my now throbbing thumb.

It took a while for me to accept the obvious lesson in that dumb and painful mistake. The antidote to all this waiting is not to hurry up, it's to get better at waiting. And I'm so bad at it! So I am trying to treat this waiting like a spiritual discipline, pausing before doing, not doing quite as much (how can I?), listening more than talking (wow!). And every time I forget myself and grab or squeeze or push too fast or too hard, my thumb is right there to remind me--not gently--to just knock it off and chill the bleep out.

In the quiet of all this waiting--when I actually do yield to it--are lots of little big gifts. More space to connect with my boy, my wife, my dog. Uncharacteristically long and leisurely telephone conversations with family and friends. Nineteen uninjured digits.

But despite my monastic efforts, I am still anxious for this break to end and for us to dive back into the process of learning and growing with your child--even if we still have a wait a little longer to do it all in one place. Until then, take it easy and watch your thumbs!

Warmly,

Will

Will Laughlin, Head of School/CEO

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