



OLIVERIAN

Dear Parents,

Right now I am sitting in my truck, watching the Maine ocean roll under a bright spring sun. For the moment it is as if this superilluminated world is back to normal; better than normal. Shockingly warm and blue and perfect. And so it is. For the moment. I am pausing to take that in, to put this moment in my treasure chest.



On Tuesday, your child will transition from the weirdest spring break of their life to what I suspect will be the great relief (for you and for them and for us) of connection and learning and routine. On our end, we are counting the minutes until we get to reengage your child and start our distance support and learning program-- aka school!

We spent this week working out the kinks and refining the details of our very robust program of academic, social, emotional, and recreational content and support. We had a group of faculty and students beta test the program on Wednesday and, by all accounts, it was awesome and all systems are go!

I deeply believe (and there is plenty of research to support this belief) that discomfort precipitates growth and, more tritely, that necessity is the mother of invention. This has certainly been the case for us during these weeks of discomfort and necessity! Because I am blessed with a team that would do

anything for their students, this remote support effort has not felt like a jerry-rig or a stopgap. It has felt like a profoundly creative and smart effort to meet a great and evolving need. Having reviewed the distance programs of many other schools, I am all the more proud and pleased by what we have created for your child and, as importantly, for you.

Knowing that anything new requires an iterative approach, though, we are aware that even a well crafted program will have its fits and starts. As such, we are employing a "gains only" approach this term, meaning that our delivery and grading system is designed to maximize learning and credit gains and minimize penalties.

Part of this approach will involve designating less than successful distance-learning efforts as "incomplete" rather than assigning a permanent letter grade (i.e. no "F's"). We will also provide a generous amount of support, flexibility, and individualization to our students while also supplying clarity and structure. Our ears will be wide open to your feedback along the way and we will work to provide what you indicate, collectively, that you most need from us.

As you might assume, we will provide distance-only support and learning for the at least the next two weeks (i.e. until April 18) per our two week rolling notice. As soon as we determine that we can responsibly reopen in-person instruction, we will give you two weeks notice to that effect while continuing to also offer this distance option for the balance of the term. Depending upon demand, we may offer distance support and learning as an ongoing option.

Time for me to drive back to my shoebox condo to balance family and work while sheltering in place. I might even turn on the news to set the appropriate ambiance. But I have my treasure of moments tucked away for when I need them, and I hope you do too. What is rarest makes us rich.

Warmly and richly,

Will

Will Laughlin, Head of School/CEO

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