

March 23, 2020

Dear St. Anne's School of Annapolis Families,

During our week away from one another on spring break, I have reflected daily and with gratitude on the strength of our St. Anne's School community. Our School is founded in our Episcopal tradition of compassion, care, and courage. Our shared resolve to support one another in promoting safety and transitioning bravely to distance learning is both humbling and emboldening, and I thank each of you for your efforts. We are acutely aware of the challenges for families, and we are committed to entering this time in a thoughtful, responsive, and understanding manner.

Some of you have inquired about when the school building will reopen. We are following the guidance of state and federal health officials. To date, the Governor and State Department of Education have called for school buildings to remain closed through the end of this week. As we learn more information and that guidance changes for schools statewide, we will respond accordingly.

Launching Distance Learning on Thursday

I just left a Zoom meeting with your children's teachers. Their dedication to serve your children and you and their quick pivot to the medium of distance learning and the work ahead has been extraordinary. They are working tirelessly to develop programming that is robust and meaningful and which promotes the connection and experiential learning that defines our School. Tomorrow, you will receive a detailed letter from your child's teacher about the schedule for their learning that begins on Thursday, March 26.

As we move into distance learning, I ask that we all approach this time with patience and flexibility. Because it is new to all of us, there are bound to be frustrations as well as exciting discoveries. We intentionally have structured this week to move forward at a measured pace, allowing us all to ramp up slowly on Thursday and Friday. We know that if we are all patient as we embark on this, our children will feel safe and confident and best prepared to tackle the challenges of this new medium. With this in mind, our administration has created a Parent/Student Virtual/Distance Teaching and Learning (VDTL) Manual.

The Parent/Student Virtual/Distance Teaching and Learning Manual

The Parent/Student VDTL Manual was developed to provide guidance as we launch into distance learning. Please take time over the next few days to familiarize yourself with this manual, which provides guidance on everything from how to log on to Zoom to supporting your child during these uncertain times. Know that we are taking into consideration the changes to family schedules, access to technology, and learning curves as we have developed our plan. As we move forward, we will likely refine or change some of our approach to best serve you—thank you in advance for your understanding and flexibility in this light.

We look forward to hearing from you and your children about what is going well and what can be improved as we begin our distance learning. Please send suggestions and accolades to the teachers, program heads, or me. Working together, we will get even better.

This year, we have often spoken about our commitment to being a partner on your journey. We have emphasized joy and wonder in all of God's works—particularly in our work together at St. Anne's School. We are eager now, to take your child by the hand—albeit virtually—and walk boldly and with genuine excitement into the weeks ahead. We will seek to capture their curiosity and natural spirit of adventure as we forge ahead, just as we continue to foster the culture of safety and belonging that defines our school. I recorded a quick hello for you to share with your children, if you wish, to remind them that everyone at St. Anne's School has them in our heart every moment as we move forward.

I will write again soon and, as always, thanks for your support.

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