March 16, 2020

Dear DV Students and Families,

Tomorrow, we launch Distance DV for all students in all grades. The faculty has been working hard to get ready for tomorrow and we thank you for your patience. Our intent is to make the transition to distance learning at DV as smooth as possible. This message contains important reminders about Distance DV, advice on social distancing during school closures, and our ongoing communications plan.

**Distance DV**

Students in all divisions are expected to log in at 9:00 AM every day beginning tomorrow. The school day will end with the closure of faculty office hours at 3:30 for middle and upper schools and 3:00 for the lower school, though not all students will need to attend office hours every day.

Division-specific guides can be found on the Corona Virus page of the DV website. These guides provide helpful information including daily schedules, resources, hopes and expectations of parent support (we recognize that this might look different for each family), as well as other details. There are also slides provided for more detailed information on how to use our distance learning interface, Google Hangouts Meet.

Parents should remember that all online classes and one-to-one instruction will be automatically recorded for internal purposes only. Teachers will share with students who miss an online class due to absence.

We ask that parents establish a quiet, organized, and distraction-free environment for students to fully engage in learning and working with DV faculty. It is our hope and expectation that all DV students will attend and actively participate in all of their classes every day, as well as completing and submitting all assigned work. Attendance will be taken as usual. Please notify the school at attendance@dvfs.org if your student is ill or otherwise cannot engage in virtual education on a particular day. Parents should ensure that students dress appropriately for school and to be mindful that what is in view of their cameras is suitable for school.

If your student or you have difficulty accessing Google Hangouts Meet, PowerSchool or have any other DV hardware or software issues, please contact support@dvfs.org for assistance. If there are academic or instructional issues, please email teachers directly. In both cases, please be sure to copy your student's advisor or homeroom teacher on all such messages, so that they have a global view of what is happening for their advisee. In addition, Christy Zawadzskas, Jason Seggern, Jim Miller, and Allison Gill are available via email and their school phones will forward to them remotely during school hours, as well. You can access them by calling the school's main number, 610-640-4150, and then select 4 to reach the directory.

**DV Counseling Support**

Beth Gray and Christy Zawadzskas are committed as always to support the emotional health of our students. They are available by email to schedule one to one check-ins with students and to consult with parents either by video or phone. Beth and Christy will schedule these check-ins as quickly as possible. Unlike DV classes, however, these discussions will not be automatically recorded. Please remember that this support is not intended to take the place of counseling by a student's existing outside therapist. Beth and Christy have provided additional resources that are posted on DV's Coronavirus Updates page of our website.
Communication

Regular communication with our community is critical during this period of uncertainty. In addition to the ongoing conversations between students and faculty through Distance DV and the availability of our advisors, division directors, and counselors, you will hear from me every Friday at least until the school building reopens. If there is more immediate news to share, I or others in the school will communicate more frequently.

Social Distancing in a Time of School Closure

We made our decision to close our building even before the governor mandated closures for all schools in the state. We did so both to keep those in our immediate DV community safe as well as to do our part to protect others in our region and to help reduce the rate of the spread of the virus. Social distancing does not simply involve closing schools and businesses, it carries into everyday life. As a result, experts ask that families avoid exposure to playground equipment, social gatherings of students and adults, and indoor playdates, and to stay at least six feet from others who do not live within your household. For guidance on safer social interactions, tips on how to stay active during social distancing, how to juggle working from home when kids cannot be in school, and other helpful advice, please see the following article from The Washington Post.

Parenting during coronavirus: What to know about play dates, education and more

The COVID-19 pandemic is creating challenges across our society. We at DV are mindful that all families are being affected by this current situation in a variety of ways. I am deeply appreciative of our close and caring community at this time.

In Friendship

Kirk Smothers
Head of School

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