



Magnolia Heights School

Dr. Marvin Lishman, Headmaster

March 19, 2020

To the Parents of Magnolia Heights Students:

As president of the board of trustees of Magnolia Heights, I have been asked to address you, the parents of our students, concerning our plans for dealing with the school closure during the Corona virus pandemic. This is a time for which we, as a nation and as a world, were not prepared, but we are now faced with having to develop ways to prepare ourselves and our children. Our school motto is “Not just a school, a family.” This is the time for us to prove this is what we live—not just what we say. Since the end of last week, our board, our administrators, and our faculty have been working to find a way to deliver the quality education that is the business of Magnolia Heights. We feel that we started somewhat ahead of the curve. All students in grades 7-12 have a personal MacBook and are well-versed in using Canvas, an online learning management system designed to facilitate online teaching and learning. Through Canvas our teachers can not only assign work but also add video clips, links to other online sites for further information, and connect with multiple support/information programs and literature. The faculty have also learned how to use Zoom, a real-time video program which allows teachers to communicate with students via live, real-time sessions. The teachers will be available each day at set times in the morning, afternoon, and evening on Zoom and are always available through email or text. Grades 3-6 teachers have had a rigorous two-day training period on Google Classroom, which will allow them to set up online lessons for their students, as well. This is something they have never done before, although they are well-versed in using iPads and Smartboards in their classrooms each day. This has been a sharp learning curve for them, but they have worked diligently and have adapted to their new normal with enthusiasm and confidence that their students will not fall behind during this time. In grades 3K-2, the teachers have prepared packets of work to send home with students. These packets include basic practice exercises in core subjects in addition to innovative, engaging work to encourage imagination and creativity—such as a journal for the 4-K students to draw pictures of various items that follow the lesson themes of that day. As always, RenWeb is available for all parents to access grades and use to communicate with teachers.

The threat posed by COVID-19 is real. The evidence is overwhelming that social distancing can help to slow/prevent the spread of the Corona virus and thereby save lives. We cannot know how long this threat will last, nor can we guarantee that our current plans will not change as we go forward. We ask that you be patient as we face this unprecedented time in history. You can be sure that the board, administration, and faculty of Magnolia Heights have the safety and health of our “family” foremost in our minds. We pledge to do our best to deliver the excellent education that has come to be associated with Magnolia Heights. Although our delivery system may have changed, our goals have not.

Sincerely,

William L. Alford, D.D.S.
Chairman, Board of Trustees