May 8, 2020

Dear DV Families,

I want to start this Friday Update with a big thank you to Michelle Yard and the Families Association for arranging such a wonderful celebration of our faculty and staff for Teacher Appreciation Week. Thank you to all of the students and parents who contributed to the video that was shown during Meeting for Worship, as well as those who shared heartfelt messages and photos on the Padlet and during Meeting. We are truly blessed with amazing faculty and staff who have adapted to these difficult times.

The DVFriends COVID-19 Response Team continues to meet regularly and has turned its full attention to planning for the fall. Members of the team include David Calamaro, Justin Wheeler, Jim Miller, Jason Seggern, Christy Zawadzkas, Judy Sheridan, Lisa Howell, Scott Davis, Chris Bedard, and myself. Based on what we know now and what we are hearing and seeing from other states and countries that have started reopening school campuses, we are looking at all aspects of a number of most likely scenarios for fall. Our goal is to be able to share some information on our plans before the end of the school year.

Thank you also to the families who completed the COVID-19 Parent/Guardian Financial Impact Survey. About 60% of families participated and your responses are helping us to gain a clearer picture of some of the effects this pandemic is having on our school community. If you did not have an opportunity to respond, the survey is still available at the link below.

COVID-19 Parent/Guardian Financial Impact Survey

Finally, through discussion and feedback from our seniors and their families and thoughtful planning from our Upper School administrative team, we have developed a plan for Graduation of the Class of 2020 that, while not the same as previous ceremonies, preserves the spirit and significant aspects of the experience given the ongoing restrictions on public
gatherings and physical distancing. We will hold a virtual graduation in which the seniors give their traditional speeches not from their homes but one-by-one from the historic Race Street Meeting House at Friends Center, the original location of our ceremony. A professional videographer will record the speeches, add the student's chosen music, and put together a high-quality video to be presented the morning of June 8, our original graduation date. We are grateful to Friends Center and many others for making this celebration possible for our seniors and families this year, and we will plan an in-person celebration of the Class of 2020 as soon as restrictions on gathering allow and at a time which fits with the graduates' summer and college schedules.

Happy Mothers Day and have a wonderful weekend!

In Friendship,

Kirk Smothers
Head of School