April 3, 2020

Dear DV Families,

I want to thank all of the parents and guardians who attended the coffee that David Calamardo and I hosted last evening. We appreciate your time and engagement, and the questions and ideas you shared with us. One question we asked was how families were successfully keeping their kids active when their social worlds and after school activities have been impacted by social distancing. I also asked faculty. Here were some of their answers.

- Partnering with a neighbor’s house of close friends, a "COVID" family, and allowing the kids to play together when you know with certainty that both families are limiting their interactions to just the two households
- Using FaceTime for kids to be connected purely socially at a distance
- FaceTiming while watching the same Netflix show or movie together
- Requiring an hour a day of mandatory "outdoors" time to get kids off the couch and active
- Students challenging each other to video-based fitness challenges. See examples here: [Fitness challenges to do with friends under quarantine](#)
- Doing extra PE sessions from Jalal and Carole and using the Strava app to track your route and distance
- One swim coach is sending a question of the week, "Why do you swim?" and drydock exercises
- Fortnite with friends (not all parents’ favorite suggestion, but these are unusual times and battling loneliness is important for many kids right now)
- Online board games that can be played at a distance with friends
- Family dog walks
- Family chore lists (2-3 things to do in a day) -- spring cleaning
- Nightly family bonfires
- Concerts with families in adjoining backyards
- Having kids rearrange their rooms
- Baking at home
- Chopped-like challenges (cook with seemingly random ingredients)
- Making art
- Making a family Tik-Tok

Our division directors have scheduled similar informal Zoom conversations for next week. Please RSVP to attend by clicking the links below.

**Lower School Parent/Guardian Coffee: Tuesday, April 7th at 7:00 pm**

**Middle School Parent/Guardian Coffee: Wednesday, April 8th at 4:30 pm**

**Upper School Parent/Guardian Coffee: Tuesday, April 7th at 7:00 pm**
Distance DV began again this week with some adjustments implemented by the academic administration based on important feedback from parents, faculty, and students. In addition to the continuation of academic class meetings, this week a number of clubs and physical education opportunities provided some much needed community-building, social engagement, and physical activity. I want to thank our administrators, faculty and students for their energy and creativity around maintaining our community spirit during this time of physical distancing. We will continue to seek input from parents, students, and faculty about how Distance DV is going and will make adjustments in our delivery of the program as time goes on. It is important that we do not make too many changes too often and so for the immediate future we will not be making significant changes to our schedule or delivery.

One of the highlights of the week for me, and I have heard the same from other community members, was our first virtual Meeting For Worship. Yesterday, 185 community members gathered in two virtual meeting rooms for silence and centering. It was heartwarming to see so many faculty and student faces and hear from our friends about how they are coping at home, what they miss about being together on campus, and how appreciative our students are of the heroic efforts of our faculty to keep not only the learning but our community going.

Have a wonderful weekend, stay healthy, and enjoy what promises to be a warmer weekend with some sun.

In Friendship

Kirk Smothers
Head of School

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