March 27, 2020

Dear Highlanders-

Link to inaugural session of “Highlander Squares”

https://livestream.com/lhps/events/9060333/videos/203597325

With each passing week of this global COVID-19 pandemic, we learn more and move further along that telltale curve we all very much want to flatten through adhering to our health experts’ recommendations – from social distancing to frequent hand washing to testing and treatment when symptoms occur. I continue to pray that all Highlanders – current students, employees, family members, alumni, friends and others – stay healthy and safe. I also hope that our families can discover renewed joys and strengthened relationships during our community’s new Shelter in Place mandate.

In the midst of this or any crisis, it is uplifting to celebrate jobs well done! That said, I applaud our extraordinary faculty members and support staff for their energizing creativity, courageous leadership, and steadfast work ethic during the past two weeks of developing, training for, and launching LHP’s Learning Continuity Plan. This was not an easy transition for anyone—students, parents or teachers, and yet how amazing that unlike many other schools in our area, across the state and nation, LHPS never had to close down. Yes, we have closed the physical campus to comply with and actively support social distancing protocols; however, for our principal educational mission, we never missed a beat and merely transitioned from classroom learning to distance learning within just a couple of days. Throughout this process, we have truly appreciated your emails which provide constructive feedback for improvement, and offer widespread and well-deserved encouragement to and praise for our great teachers and their remarkable efforts. Your feedback is helpful and important to us as we strive to improve our capabilities, refine our operations, and offer the best remote learning plan in the country.

I also want to applaud our students for their hard work, ingenuity, and positive attitudes about learning in new ways. I’m amazed at the videos and photos displaying our students’ impressive grit and imagination! Throughout history, extraordinary times have compelled new, creative solutions. In that vein, our amazing students make me extremely proud of their resolute efforts and unwavering determination in these unusual and challenging circumstances as they master new methods of learning, solving, growing, and achieving new heights of excellence.

Our continued focus remains centered on fulfilling LHPS’ mission by providing your children with an exceptional learning experience. In late March, and early April 2020, for the first time in our 50-year history, the storied LHP learning experience will be a virtual learning experience. Although I wish we knew when we will be able to return to teaching in our classrooms, I rest easy knowing that the experience remains overwhelmingly authentic and outstanding—only the delivery method has changed. The curriculum, the ingenuity, the challenge, and the teachers’ dedication remain as strong as ever.

Several of you have emailed or called about student fees and tuition payments, and whether we are considering reimbursement for any programs or services that we, or our vendors, are unable to deliver while the campus is closed. Please be assured that we are evaluating all programs and associated fees
and will soon make decisions about which programs can be rescheduled or fees refunded. As always, we will be as fair and transparent as possible during this effort, and we will email all families about those decisions when finalized.

Interestingly, on the topic of tuition payments, a few families have opined that we should consider a tuition surcharge in recognition of the amazing work done by our faculty and staff to smoothly transition from legacy in-class instruction to leading edge on-line learning. We intend to do neither—no tuition refunds and certainly no tuition surcharge. We do not intend to offer any tuition refund for our educational experience has and will continue unabated at the highest levels of excellence. Similarly, no matter how much extra effort we expend in the coming weeks, we will not apply a tuition surcharge for LHPS considers each school-student relationship as a covenantal one—the student/family promises to pay a set tuition fee and abide by various school guidelines; and the school promises to provide each student a top quality education...period.

Thank you for your incredible support, being a loyal and supportive partner as we navigate tumultuous waters together. My prayers are for you and your families to stay safe and healthy.

Warmest regards,

Alfred G. Harms, Jr.
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