April 10, 2020

Greeting Highlanders,

I hope you are all doing well and have been able to enjoy the warm sunshine and beautiful weather that has brightened our days in Central Florida during Spring Break. Gina and I have certainly enjoyed getting outside for neighborhood walks, as it reminded us of how special a community we live in. However, we sorely miss our Lake Highland family and are anxiously looking forward to a return to normal on-campus activities. We also sincerely appreciate all of our families who are working hard to support the health and welfare of their fellow citizens, and a return to normalcy throughout our community. We are especially grateful for the many Lake Highland physicians, nurses, and other medical professionals who are bravely combatting the COVID-19 pandemic and putting their health at risk to serve those afflicted with this illness.

Following this week’s holiday celebrations, we will resume classes through our Learning Continuity Plan on Monday, April 13. Our broadly talented and highly dedicated teachers are excited to welcome back their students and continue with this term’s learning. We have experienced a lot since transitioning to distance learning.
operations in mid-March, and truly value the feedback provided by over 230 families completing the parent survey this past week. As you well know, the Lake Highland experience has always been rooted in its strong partnership between school and home. This relationship could not be more critical than it is today, and we always welcome your thoughtful insight. In response to the survey feedback, and collaboration with our faculty, staff, and administrators, our three division directors have carefully refined our Learning Continuity Plan.

More specifically, they have instituted a weekly overview of the learning plan and associated weekly assignments. A short video will provide these overviews for MS and US courses, and the LS will promulgate this information in morning meetings. Additionally, each course will have asynchronous video lessons complementing “live lessons” each week. These lessons are developed by the teacher and will provide a powerful tool for introducing new concepts and disseminating information. They can be viewed at each student’s best learning pace, and repeatedly, if so desired. Finally, voluntary (for the student) “office hours” will be available on a more frequent, published schedule. Please view link for more detailed information: Learning Continuity Plan Update (April 10, 2020).

In light of all the current press surrounding Zoom security issues, I wanted to assure you that Lake Highland’s Technology Department is actively following and researching known security and privacy issues. Additionally, they are implementing all prudent security measures to ensure the safety and privacy of our learning environment. First, you should know that in preparation for launching our Learning Continuity Plan, LHP purchased an Education Enterprise license for Zoom, which has additional security and user features to customize and enhance security settings and overall capability. Additionally, we have provided ongoing end-user education/training to help eliminate myriad user errors, which always aggravate security issues.

Beyond fully leveraging existing security settings and policies, our LHP Technology Department is implementing yet another layer of security to our enterprise Zoom platform. Starting on Monday, April 13, we are providing Zoom EDU accounts to all of our students. This added capability will enable us to further restrict our meetings by ensuring that “only authenticated users” can join a meeting. This is accomplished by requiring our students to authenticate by first signing into Zoom with their LHPrep credentials, and subsequently limiting sessions only to users who have logged into the LHP enterprise account. More information for all parents and students on authenticating to join a meeting will be shared on our Learning Continuity Site under Zoom Security & Policies and via your classroom teachers and grade level LMS (Learning Management System). Please view link for more detailed information: Additional ZOOM info (April 10, 2020).

This new capability also means that students can safely “host” meetings. Although our primary intention for providing student accounts is security-focused in the learning domain, this new capability provides a safe alternative for another principal Highlander value—building and treasuring “community.” We realize that many students may want to use these accounts to host study groups or virtual meet-ups during this time of distance learning. Importantly, these student accounts are locked and restricted to only allowing authenticated users to join meetings, meaning their Zoom EDU accounts cannot host meetings with attendees outside of the LHPrep domain. This new virtual capability, with its added security, and coupled with responsible user habits as highlighted in prior digital citizenship learning sessions, will keep all of our students safe. We also want to take this opportunity to remind all students about LHP’s Technology Responsible Use policy, and note that our discipline policy applies to our virtual spaces just as it does in our physical spaces.

As we continue adjusting to our “new normal,” important observances this week like Passover and Easter may also look and feel different for many of our families. Whatever the differences, we Americans are still amazingly blessed and should take the time to share our gratitude with God, family, and friends. Furthermore, Team Highland, no matter the challenges or circumstances, will continue to leverage our many strengths, compensate our weaknesses, and eagerly learn, adapt, and grow stronger. While traversing the unknown territory of a COVID-19 world, we will continue to respect our proud legacy, champion our noble values, and embrace cherished traditions and practices, even if they look and feel a bit different. As I write to you today, one of these traditions took on this new look, as Class of 2020 graduation signs were delivered to each senior’s home/lawn by
devoted Upper School faculty, staff members, coaches, and administrators! "Well done" Upper School for always remembering that the heart, soul, service, and relationships of a Highlander are what’s truly important and enduring!

Gina and I wish you all a blessed Easter, and continued safety and good health in the coming weeks and months! GO HIGHLANDERS!

Warmest regards,

Alfred G. Harms, Jr.
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy (Ret.)
President
407-206-1900 ext. 3300  |  www.lhps.org
Lake Highland Preparatory School
901 Highland Avenue  |  Orlando, Florida 32803

Celebrating 50 Years: A Tradition of Success