



Community Update

May 7, 2020

Dear Prep Community,

We have nearly reached the finish line! We will complete our final week of regular classes tomorrow. You should have received a schedule of finals for next week through Schoology. If you have any questions, please contact your student's teacher for clarification.

Graduation

Our graduation ceremony was scheduled for Saturday, May 23. We had hoped that by now we would have some clearer direction from the Governor about whether a traditional graduation would be possible on that date. However, with the extension of the shelter-at-home order, an in-person graduation is not possible on May 23.

We fully understand the importance of trying to hold a traditional, in-person graduation, one we could celebrate together. With that in mind, we have changed the date of graduation to Friday, June 19. It is our hope that by then we will have the opportunity to celebrate as a community in-person and together.

A committee of faculty and staff are putting details together for the graduation ceremony. If public health requirements do not allow us to hold an in-person graduation, we will hold a virtual ceremony on June 19 followed by a community blessing and sending ceremony in early August. Irrespective of how we hold graduation, traditionally or virtually, we will fully honor and celebrate all our students have done and become at Prep!

Fifth Grade

We recently made the difficult decision to suspend the 5th grade pilot program for next year. The COVID-19 pandemic and the closure of our building to prospective students significantly weakened our ability to sustain momentum and enrollment among new 5th grade families for fall 2020. We will continue to assess the 5th grade program as part of a larger examination of our Middle School to determine how, when, or if to relaunch it. We will make a decision about the future of a 5th grade in relation to the school's mission, its fit with our Middle School model, and our commitment to educational excellence. We will continue to offer a phenomenal 6th grade program.

Grading

The COVID-19 pandemic led to an abrupt change to our delivery model of instruction. This method of teaching and learning created challenges different from our traditional experience. Our faculty adjusted and adapted practices throughout the semester to provide meaningful instruction while also supporting the overall health and well-being of students.

With the semester approaching its end, our Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) recently reviewed grading recommendations of educational experts that address the challenges associated with eLearning. They have worked to create grading guidelines for the spring semester that recognize and reward the hard work of our students, while not placing them at a disadvantage to students at other schools. These guidelines can be found [here](#).

Community and Gratitude

In a response to COVID-19 and their desire to help, five of our students and their families from China sent us thousands of medical masks. We are deeply grateful for their extraordinary act of generosity – gifts given in kindness and compassion. These masks will help thousands of people. We will keep many of them at Prep for next fall. In addition, we have donated many to the Saint John's Abbey Retirement Center, to the Scholastica Convent serving the Sisters of Saint Benedict, to Catholic Charities of Saint Cloud, and to the CentraCare Health System.

Saint John's Prep is a global community. Our students come from around the world. The gift of these masks makes a compelling statement about the ways people come together as community from near and very far to help each other. When we work together as a community and across borders, we can achieve great things.

As we near the end of the school year, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns about your student or what's happening at school. It has been a remarkable year. It has been an extraordinary privilege to lead the school and to shape and form your students.

Thank you for all you do for Saint John's Prep!

With gratitude,

Jon McGee
Head of School

Christine Glomski
Principal