



Community Update

March 25, 2020

Dear Prep Community,

We have completed nearly two weeks of online learning. We deeply appreciate the can-do spirit and care that has marked the transition to offsite school and online learning. We are grateful for the tremendous support and encouragement we have received from students, families, alumni and friends of Prep. This challenge has fully revealed the very best of our community.

As we have noted throughout, our highest priority remains the well-being of our students, faculty, staff and families. You can expect to receive regular community updates for the rest of the semester keeping you apprised of actions and changes at the school. Our goal is to ensure that you have the timely academic and administrative information you need for your student and your family.

What We Are learning

With eight days of eLearning under our belt, we are discovering a tremendous amount about delivering effective, meaningful instruction online. We are thankful for the engagement of our students and families and appreciate the feedback and support we receive daily.

- **Connection:** Students are grieving the loss of daily connection with teachers and friends. While Zoom classes can help, we recognize this platform doesn't replace the personal connections our students are missing. To help support the need for socialization, many of our classes have stepped back from the delivery of content and designated a bit of class time to allow students to connect with one another.
- **Curriculum:** Online instruction and learning tasks differ greatly from our traditional way of teaching and learning. Adjusting to a different model of instruction has been challenging. Our faculty has continuously monitored and adjusted class workloads based on student feedback.
- **Engagement:** Engagement in learning also looks different as we work online. Our student engagement and attendance in Zoom classes is impressive. We are also aware that families are adjusting and settling in with new routines at home. Please know that our faculty are working to support individual circumstances. If there are times when your child is not able to attend a Zoom class, please be sure to send a quick email to our teachers. We will work with each student to support learning.

What We are Adjusting

As we continue to learn, we are committed to adjusting our academic plan to best meet the needs of our students.

- **Schedule Adjustment:** Beginning next week, the daily class schedule will be slightly adjusted. Class periods will be a maximum of 40 minutes, rather than 45 minutes. This change allows for a 20-minute mid-morning break each day and an extended lunch period.
- **Professional Development:** To give our faculty time to collaborate with one another and adapt their instruction based on feedback, we have designated Monday, March 30 as a faculty professional development day. **There will be no classes for students on Monday, March 30.**

The new schedule, which we will post on Connect2Prep, will be as follows:

Period 1:	8:00 a.m. to 8:40 a.m.
Period 2:	8:45 a.m. to 9:25 a.m.
Break:	9:25 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.
Period 3:	9:45 a.m. to 10:25 a.m.
Period 4:	10:30 a.m. to 11:10 a.m.
Lunch:	11:10 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
Period 5:	12:15 p.m. to 12:55 p.m.
Period 6:	1:00 p.m. to 1:40 p.m.
Period 7:	1:45 p.m. to 2:25 p.m.
Period 8:	2:30 p.m. to 3:10 p.m.

Next Three Weeks at a Glance

The calendar in Connect2Prep will be updated this week to reflect our schedule for the next three weeks:

- **March 31 - April 3:** Student classes Tuesday through Friday
- **April 6 – 8:** Student classes Monday through Wednesday (no classes on Holy Thursday or Good Friday)
- **April 14 – 17:** Student classes Tuesday through Friday (no classes on Easter Monday)

Re-enrollment Forms for Returning Students

It has been a remarkable year at Prep, even in the face of the challenges of the past several weeks. We are fortunate and grateful for the opportunity to spend our days with so many talented students, faculty, and staff. We are keenly aware that you have many other educational choices. As Prep parents ourselves, we have very high expectations for the school to deliver an exceptional and transformative experience. As school leaders, we expect to deliver on - and even exceed - those expectations. Thank you for choosing the Prep School for your children. We hope we have earned your trust and confidence.

You will soon receive materials from us asking you to indicate your intent to continue your student's enrollment for the 2020-21 school year. Families who have completed their Smart Aid application should already have received a letter detailing their student's cost of attendance for the 2020-21 academic year. Families with Variable Tuition applications still in process will receive their letter after their completed application has been reviewed. Merit award recipients will be announced in April. If

you have any questions about the re-enrollment process or any financial aid issue, please contact us. We want to ensure your student successfully continues their Prep experience!

Message from the Head of School to Students

Yesterday, we sent the message below to all Prep students. In the event they did not share it, we have included it with this note. These are trying times to be sure. But they are not without hope. Our students still have much to look forward to despite an unimaginably disrupted year.

Contact Us

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. You can access staff and faculty email addresses [here](#). Please visit our [website](#) for updates and additional information.

We are both deeply grateful for and proud of our Prep community. We appreciate your continued patience and support as we navigate, together, the coming weeks.

Sincerely,

Jon McGee
Head of School

Christine Glomski
Principal

From the Head of School

You cannot swim for new horizons until you have courage to lose sight of the shore.

William Faulkner

Some days, doing the 'best we can' may still fall short of what we would like to be able to do, but life isn't perfect – on any front – and doing what we can with what we have is the most we should expect of ourselves or anyone else.

Mister Rogers

Dear Prep Students,

We have sent you many messages recently, mostly describing changes we have enacted at school in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and describing how your classes will work in the coming days and weeks. We have tried to prepare you for what clearly are significant changes to your school life. All of that is well and good. But we have not yet written directly to you as young people wrestling with how to deal with changes you never wanted. And I apologize for that.

I apologize that your year has changed so dramatically and abruptly. None of us imagined anything like this. Just a few weeks ago, social distancing was unthinkable. Then it became inconvenient. And now it is life-changing (and, just as much, life-saving). You – and our seniors in particular – are entitled to grieve for what could have been or should have been. Our faculty and staff grieve with you.

This is my first year as Head of School, the greatest job I have ever had. It has been a remarkable year. You are amazing. Smart. Curious. Talented beyond anything I could have dreamed of at your age. Funny. Engaged. It is a great privilege to have the opportunity to be a part of your lives. Like you, I too feel robbed of the happy year-ending we all expected as a matter of course.

This pandemic will have long and far-reaching effects. It will in many ways redefine our lives. That happens with all great historic moments. But if you look beyond the loss of the familiar or expected, you will see that you now have a choice. You can let this moment define you. Or you can define this moment for yourself. I encourage you to choose the latter. Choose this moment to reflect and learn and grow. Keep four things in mind as you do:

- **Courage**. I have lived long enough (though I might not be as old as you think) to know that life very often is what happens in between our plans. It's rarely a straight path. It takes courage to live, to navigate the forks in the road. In the face of fear and uncertainty, choose to live with courage and conviction. Live as if your life matters as much today and tomorrow as it did yesterday. It does.
- **Compassion**. Without doubt, this pandemic will impact many people in many different ways. The Rule of Benedict provides wonderful guidance for us: "Never give a hollow greeting of peace or turn away when someone needs your love." (RB 4:25-26) Think kindly of others. Reach out to those who need you. Focus on empathy rather than judgment. Live compassionately. Leave the people you meet better off for having encountered you. Love something greater than yourself.

- **Gratefulness.** It is very easy to get lost in what we have lost, what should have been, what was rightfully mine. Find your way out of that kind of thinking. This also is a time to reflect on all that we have, all that is good, and all that is wonderful – and hopefully find space in our hearts to simply be grateful. For family, friends, our homes, our lives.
- **Hope.** This is perhaps the greatest tool you have for moving beyond the fears and challenges of the moment. Saint Benedict’s Rule calls us to wake up and “run while you have the light of life.” (RB Prologue) You have decades and decades of living in front of you. Now is not the time to stop imagining and dreaming. Dream away. Everything remains possible. Live forward. Keep running toward your future. It’s waiting for you to make it.

Like you, I grieve what we have lost. Like you, I sometimes find the changes and challenges of the recent days frightening. But I am convinced that far better days await. Try not to make this your scariest hour, but rather your finest hour. The flame of your future will burn as brightly as you stoke it. And know that our support and prayers will be with you throughout.

With Hope,

Jon McGee
Head of School