



## Lower School Parent Letter

March 27, 2020

Dear Lower School Families,

I hope this letter finds your family healthy and enjoying the additional family time that we are now experiencing. I live in Worthington and on my daily walks I have been impressed with the creativity of the neighborhoods with how adults and children are physically staying separated but connecting socially and still getting to be active. I also recognize this is a stressful situation like we have never dealt with before and that it can be challenging as a parent as our children look for us to help reassure them.

Homeroom teachers will be sending you an email at **8:00 a.m. Monday morning** inviting you to get started with online learning. We decided to initiate online learning at this time in the Lower School so all of our faculty can be online to help assist when questions come up on this first day. Feel free to reach out to them -- we are here to help. Beginning Monday night, the lessons for the next day will be posted to you the night before so you have them for whenever you wish to begin in the morning because we recognize some of our students are very early risers! Please do not allow your child to begin working on the next day's work the night before, though. It also allows parents working from home to review the lessons beforehand and plan accordingly. We recognize the stress you are under, and those with children in multiple school divisions as well as multiple children in the Lower School have many logistics to consider. Our faculty has been preparing, learning new online platforms and keeping a growth mindset throughout Spring Break in preparation for Monday. I am in awe of my colleagues' commitment to make online learning as meaningful as possible and proud to work with such a committed group of professionals.

For the first few days, the goal is for children to get online with your support and guidance in order to complete the activities that the teachers recommend. It is important that children become comfortable with this process and, if possible, you are there to support them. If you have issues with logging on on Monday or Tuesday, it is important you email your children's homeroom teachers right away. We are all here to support families. While there will be a natural tendency to move into academics quickly, it is more important that we prepare so once everyone is ready, we can be more effective in our online learning. In addition, each homeroom teacher will be requesting that you sign up for a time to have a video chat with you and your child to check in and see how things are going. While there will be more flexibility within the day, it is still very much a school day with expectations for engaging in learning. Please ensure appropriate sleep, nutrition and exercise. Please read our **Lower School Online Learning Overview** [found here](#) for additional details.

Most of you collected your children's resource bags last week. For those who did not, there is one final collection time from 10:00-11:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 29. If you are not in Columbus, feel free to send a neighbor or relative to collect it for you. If no one is able to collect it, please let your children's homeroom teachers know so they can plan accordingly, and we will work with your family individually to make sure your child has the necessary resources.

I have been in touch with a former colleague and friend from Copenhagen International School who is now at an international school in Shanghai. She has shared lots of important information with me, and her school found this important for parents to know: *"The next few weeks will have challenges. Technology may fall short on speed and connectivity; assignments may become lost or need further clarification to understand what is expected. Virtual learning will require more self-regulation; please help your child(ren) plan ahead. Throughout it, all help your child(ren) view this period with a growth mindset. There will be lots of learning (and not all of it will be within the virtual classroom). Be open to that with your child. Give them time to reflect, express their feelings, and grow."*

If you need tech assistance, please follow these links:

- [Collated list](#) of internet providers' customer-service phone numbers
- [CA Tech Support for Families](#)
- [CA Tech Support for Students](#)

Feel free to continue using [this link](#) for a variety of resources. We add to it often, and many of the links can provide additional opportunities to learn moving forward.

Warm Regards,

Mark L. Hansen  
Head of Lower School  
[hansenm@columbusacademy.org](mailto:hansenm@columbusacademy.org)

Brelle Farrenkopf  
Director of Early Childhood  
[farrenkopfb@columbusacademy.org](mailto:farrenkopfb@columbusacademy.org)

Paul Kegelmayer  
Director of Academic Programs  
[kegelmayerp@columbusacademy.org](mailto:kegelmayerp@columbusacademy.org)