



University Liggett School

Dear University Liggett School Families:

I hope this note finds you well, healthy, and safe.

It has been so wonderful, in this moment of global challenge and uncertainty; to see the smiling faces of our students appear on our screens this week as we have commenced our Remote Learning Plan. The return of routine, learning, and, especially, connection – to teachers, to friends, and to school life – has been an absolute joy in my own household and, I trust and hope, in yours as well. I must acknowledge the incredible creativity, flexibility, and optimism of our faculty and staff, and the many hours they invested over their Spring Break period, in preparing to launch this model. I am proud, every day, to call them colleagues, but even more so in this moment of adaptation.

This morning, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer issued an [executive order](#), under broad emergency powers, prohibiting in-person instruction in Michigan schools, including non-public schools like ours, through the end of this school year. While we hoped for a more staged approach to school closures, we understood this step was likely given the complexities large public school districts face in transitioning to different learning models. K-12 sports activities and in-person extracurricular activities are also “suspended while any state of emergency or state of disaster prompted by COVID-19 is in effect.” We anticipate pronouncements from the MHSAA related to the spring season to follow no later than tomorrow afternoon.

The order does leave the possibility that students could return to physical schooling “if restrictions on public gatherings and use of school buildings are lifted before the end of the 2019-2020 school year.” Obviously, we will hold out hope for such a return to normalcy and will be prepared to quickly return to normal operations in such an event.

However, for now it appears we must continue with our Remote Learning Plan through the end of school on June 4th. We developed our Remote Learning Plan knowing that such an extended closure was possible and are, indeed, well prepared to continue supporting students’ learning and growth through the end of this year in a fashion that fully prepares them to proceed to the next grade level in September, as appropriate.

I am sure this decision elicits significant emotions for our students and our families. Disappointment is assuredly high on that list, especially for our Seniors whose final semester at University Liggett School has been so unfairly disrupted. Rest assured, we will do everything in our ability to find ways in which to celebrate them as they have so rightfully earned. In particular, we are committed to hosting a fitting commencement ceremony and will do everything in our power to do so.

I am sure there are many, many questions about this decision and its impact on University Liggett School. We will do our best to answer them as we move forward through proactive and regular communication through all the channels you have come to expect; emails from division

leaders, our weekly newsletter, social media feeds, etc. We'll even try a new channel tomorrow, as I'll debut a video message in the weekly email.

I ask for your continued patience and support as we, ourselves, navigate a truly unprecedented situation.

Thank you, so much, for your continued partnership.

Bart