



From: Nancy Mellon <nmellon@riverschool.net>

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To: Nancy Mellon <nmellon@riverschool.net>

Subject: Update and Parent Survey

Dear River Parents,

As we complete our second week of Distance Learning, I want to express my thanks to everyone for what we have accomplished thus far. I am grateful for everyone's patience, flexibility and empathy during a time of great strain and uncertainty. We wish it was safe to have your children back at school—we miss them! And, we know you wish you were living in a pre-pandemic world in which you could do your jobs and have a social life. We will get there.

The present moment requires that each of us adapt and make compromises, doing our best in a difficult situation that none of us chose. For those of you who are dealing with illness within your families, we're thinking of you and are sending healing thoughts your way. For those healthcare professionals in our community, we applaud you for your work and service to others during this unsettling time.

Before River's doors opened in 2000, we took eight months to develop our unique curriculum. We had only a few weeks to design and begin to implement our Continuity of Learning Plan, and I am extremely proud of the creativity and resiliency of River's faculty and staff. They face the same challenges and fears as our parent community, indeed some of them are River parents, too, but they remain steadfast in their commitment to deliver a superior educational experience to your children.

I have been told by other heads of school that the first two weeks of Distance Learning are the hardest for everyone as we adapt to an evolving program and the uncertainty of when and how this pandemic is going to end. Subsequent weeks get a little easier as we settle in with a new sense of normal. Please know we hear you, and we're thoughtfully considering all your ideas and concerns. I've addressed some common themes in the questions we've received below. At the end of the list is a link to our Parent Survey.

- **Regarding a date we'll return to campus:** We do not have one yet. We continue to consider DC Mayor Muriel Bowser's directives the standard of care. At this time, it looks like a return date of April 27 is not feasible. We will, of course, keep you informed in a timely manner. And, we will continue to plan for extended Distance Learning.
- **River's school year will end, as scheduled, on June 11.** Although the typical school day has been disrupted for the children, River's faculty and staff have been working longer hours, with no Spring Break, to plan, adapt and execute our Distance Learning Plan. They will need time to rest, rejuvenate and plan for the fall.
- **We're working to develop community-building virtual activities and events for the children and parents.** We hope to begin to integrate safe, age-appropriate small group sessions into the Distance Learning Plan in the coming weeks. As for parents, we've hosted Virtual Coffees this week and Dr. Adams held her Positive Parenting Workshop over Zoom last Friday. We're planning more events and encourage you to participate.
- **Financial assistance:** River's Board of Trustees task force is available to assist parents in the event of job loss or other economic setbacks. Please contact [Chris Lopez](#) if your family has been impacted in this way.
- We've issued **refunds for Before/After Care** for the time period of March 23-April 24. Additional refunds will be sent in May if necessary.
- With our **Enrichment Program**, if we return to campus in May, we'll have time to complete the classes by the end of the school year. If the date of our return to campus does not make this possible, we'll be exploring Distance Learning options or issuing refunds for the sessions your child missed.
- At this time, **we plan to run Camp River** and are accepting registrations.
- Please complete our quick [Parent Survey](#). Thank you!

I know none of this is easy, but I truly believe we can get through this together. We have a wonderful, caring community—let's remain hopeful for one another.

Stay well,

Nancy