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MAJORIS

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THE NEWSLETTER OF NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS

Daffodils bloom in the faculty garden. See more spring photos below.

GRATITUDE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

GratITUDE. I didn't expect that to be the chief outgrowth of teaching online. Perhaps, based on the letters of Paul, I should have. Separated from the new believers he carried in his heart, he wrote to them to express how thankful he was for their joy, their growth, their faith.

We are thankful for your children, and while we grieve the loss of our daily, in-person time with them, we treasure the moments we have through the magic of media and are encouraged to see them each day. Their energy inspires us in our work.

by Marion Patterson and Scott McCurley

Many of you are spending time in class with your children daily, helping them to stay on task and complete their work in ways that we, the teachers, can no longer help. Providing this accountability to your students is important at all ages, but it looks a little different in each of the three schools. In Grammar School, K-4, I'm sure that you are finding yourselves listening in on classroom teachers, watching video resources with your children, and supervising their completion of assignments. The teachers will not be collecting or grading work for fourth

continued p. 2

WHAT'S NEW?

April Campus Blooms

We took a short walk around the campus this weekend. So many beautiful things are in bloom, and we wanted you to see them (see page 3 for photos). In addition to the beautiful flowers and trees, the Gryphon Garden remains under cultivation. Developed last spring with funds from a New Covenant grandmother, Sandra van Burk (Skylar-10th; Kate-8th; Sarah-6th), the garden beds were created and planted with help from grammar and middle school students. Some things were planted just before students left for Spring Break, and they are sprouting now. The garden will be tended through the spring and summer.

THINK.

LEARN.

LOVE.

LIVE.

quarter, but it is important for children to continue to read, write, memorize and do math through the end of the school year -- to continue to sharpen the tools of learning. We ask you to require your child to invest in these activities each school day and to complete them with good effort. In these unique days, when there is extra leisure time available to them, they may find learning a pleasant and grounding portion of their days.

Middle school students are growing in independence, but most will still require parental supervision to make the most of their educational opportunities. Many have already explored and exploited features of our online classrooms that we are still dabbling with, like the ever-changing backgrounds we see behind them. Teachers have reported that the chat box feature has been very effective in drawing insightful responses from students who tend to be very quiet in class. There's no disputing the computer savvy that the children are gaining day by day.

During these days of social distancing and staying at home, you can expect that middle schoolers will spend fewer hours in live classes, viewing recorded resources, and completing assignments on their own than they would normally have spent in school and on homework. Yet they can benefit from having structured times of study and work each day. They will have more independent work than we assign when they are in school all day and busy with sports and activities afterwards; they will need to embrace the idea that reading assignments will be longer and testing will be less frequent. They will turn in assignments through RenWeb once every week or two, depending upon the class, and those

assignments will be graded on a pass/fail basis. You can help them make the most of these challenging days by requiring them to attend class, view recorded videos, and complete all assignments with thought and care.

School of Rhetoric students also need some accountability at home. Though these students are showing remarkable flexibility and resilience as they adapt to on-line education, we must acknowledge the increase in self-directed learning and thus the greater likelihood that they will need help adjusting to this experience. Although we are seeing just how amazing technology can be when used properly as a tool in service of some larger end, we don't want to forget that the world wide web and thus the devices that connect us there can be an enormous temptation to distraction and wasted time. Your students might need help with that!

An effective tool, especially on days when they do not have live classes, is to help them set a schedule of study times and stick to it. One idea – focused effort for 45 minutes followed by a fifteen minute break in which the student gets outside for fresh air and a fresh glass of water and then back to their studies for another 45 minutes, etc. As many of our students will be headed off to college one day, it's not too early to learn this sort of self-disciplined study habit. Too much time in front of a screen is not healthy, so if your student is moving seamlessly from Zoom to Xbox, make sure you require them to get outside for fresh air and exercise as well.

Parents, we appreciate all the support you are giving your students. Your efforts are key to helping them make the most of every learning opportunity!

E T C E T E R A

EVERYONE

Please note that we will follow the Master Calendar through the remainder of the year. This means that school is closed for Easter break. **Please note, however, that all classes in the online format that meet on Thursday will continue on that day.** In other words, we are continuing through Thursday.

Here is a list of classes that will meet after noon on Thursday if you would like to refer to it:

Middle School

5B Lit/Wirt
6B Latin (test due)
7B English
8B Algebra I
5B Math
6B Math
7B Math
8B Latin (test due)
5B Latin
6B Lit/Writ
7B Latin
8B English
School of Rhetoric
Grade 9 Western Civilization I

Grade 10 Rhetoric II

Grade 11 Math for Liberal Arts (8th period section)
Grade 12 Environmental Science

No classes meet on Good Friday or Easter Monday

Cupola behind Redbud



Cherry Blossoms in front of WFH



Iris in the faculty garden



Fruit trees in the Gryphon Garden



Left:
Luna
relaxes
in the
vinca
of the
faculty
garden



View of the Varsity patio



Cool weather vegetables sprout