Dear Carrollton Community,

I trust that you are all well and practicing social distancing to the best of your ability. Some days I feel as if I cannot write fast enough to reply to emails or send out updates in a timely way, as things are changing so quickly. I write to thank you all for your flexibility and cooperation as we shifted from school on campus to remote schooling. After a full week of remote learning, I am pleased to report that the vast majority of emails we have received have been very positive about our transition. That said, our teachers are constantly looking for ways to improve the student experience and learning from one another and teachers throughout the world as we all share our experiences in this new environment.

**Assessment vs. grades**

Some of you have asked questions about assessment and grading during remote learning. It is important for us to separate the two. **Most important to us all is that our students continue to learn and grow in their skills and understanding.** Our teachers will continue to assess their students. Assessment helps them evaluate what their students are learning and retaining. That said, teachers may look at different ways to measure the learning and growth of your daughters in a remote environment. Grading is a separate issue. It is a measure that puts a value on the growth in understanding and skills of individual students. As our school heads conference regularly with their faculty, grading is one of the topics being discussed. Grading will not be an issue for most of our students, as the vast majority of our students will continue at Carrollton, where teachers will share assessments with one another. For the Upper School, where transcripts are a necessary part of college applications, rest assured that our policies will remain thoughtful, deliberate, and measured with input from peer schools and organizations, and colleges and universities. It is likely the 2019-20 academic year will be asterisked on entrance applications in the future. For now, the most important thing is to focus on engaged learning as we continue the Carrollton tradition of strong academic preparation.

**Seniors**

We are monitoring and communicating with testing agencies and colleges and universities, and we will send information as necessary. Please understand that you have my greatest sympathy as you wonder about the likelihood of missing some of our cherished senior traditions. We will do our best to either maintain or reschedule milestone events. In the meantime, please know that you have already made a strong positive impact and impression upon Carrollton and given us indelible memories of your uniqueness. I share with you this poignant reflection from a young teacher who “lost” his senior year in high school as a result of Hurricane Katrina.

**Returning to an open campus**

Some of you have been asking when we anticipate returning to an open campus. I want you to know where I stand. My letters to the community have never mentioned an end time because I believe schools may be closed far longer than the “few weeks” that other schools initially announced. I would love to be wrong about this, but I have seen that other schools are now changing their messages to state that they anticipate returning to remote learning after their spring breaks. **We know, that per the directive of our governor, we will not be able to open our campus until after our scheduled Easter Vacation.** As the situation evolves, I will be regularly updating our community. In the meantime, it is important for us to work together and pace ourselves as the situation forces schools to become the innovative institutions they are meant to be.

**Communication**

Make sure that your email is set to accept all emails from the carrollton.org domain. The increase in mass emails from us this past week may result in some algorithms of mail clients identifying our mail as spam or junk. Additionally, we plan to regularize and decrease the number of emails you receive from us. You should expect to receive a weekly update on Wednesdays from the School Heads, and on Saturdays from the Head Master. Individual teachers and our technology office will communicate as necessary.

Last but not least, I continue to urge you to get your information from reliable sources such as the CDC, not chats and social media. Increasing conflicting messages and uncertainty will likely increase any anxiety you may already be feeling. Our children take their cues from us and need to see and experience us as calm and collected. Let us keep calm and provide excellent models supporting Carrollton’s mission of forming young women of confidence, courage, compassion.

With love and virtual hugs,
Olen