Dear Carrollton Community,

As we settle into knowing that we will be continuing with the challenge of remote learning for the remainder of the year I write to encourage all of us to remember the big picture. This is a time to focus on the safety, health, and well-being of our families and community. Make relationships a priority. Reach out to relatives, friends and neighbors to check in, offer support, and connect. Focus on how to help your children develop the skills that will serve them for their lifetime; critical skills such as reading, problem solving, and communicating effectively, along with social emotional skills such as empathy, resilience, collaboration, and flexibility. All these skills can be enhanced and supported by finding ways to balance a sensible amount of screen time with a routine that includes time for reading, exercise, family activities, service to others and/or family (chores), exploring personal interests, and sleep. Good sleep habits include turning off the screen at least an hour before bedtime and keeping devices out of the bedroom.

Most importantly, we need to maintain in ourselves and our family hope, faith, and love. Let us be thankful for the many examples which surround us daily:

- Medical personnel selflessly risking their own health to care for the ill.
- First responders bravely putting themselves on the front line.
- Researchers tirelessly searching for treatments and vaccines.
- Grocery staff and delivery drivers keeping our pantries stocked and refrigerators full.
- Public officials crafting policies on the advice of health experts and scientists.
- Parents continuously balancing work with children at home.
- IT professionals maintaining the infrastructure that keeps us connected.
- Teachers working hard to adapt to new methods of keeping their students engaged in learning.
- Students who have transitioned to these new methods without hesitation.
- Clergy and spiritual advisors of all faith traditions who are counseling and consoling those in need.
- All who have rallied to support others with their time, talent, and treasure.

In the words of Eleanor Roosevelt, "We do not have to become heroes overnight. Just a step at a time, meeting each thing that comes up...discovering we have the strength to stare it down."

Together we will get through this, as we continue to strive to be our best for the world.

With love and prayers,
Olen