

Dear Parents,

As businesses prepare to re-open, and as some of you get ready to go back to work and others continue working from home, we want you to know that we are listening to you and doing our best to support your efforts in regard to your children's distance learning during this stressful time. About 40% of our school families responded to the survey we emailed last week to gauge your perceptions about how distance learning is going thus far. Your responses affirmed what we have been hearing from most of you, which is that everything we have been doing is "just right". Having said that, we know that there are still some for whom the amount of work and communication is either not enough or too much.

To address this, we are streamlining things a bit and you should notice the following changes beginning this week:

- Teachers will consolidate information and send fewer emails regarding assignments.
- Grades K-6 teachers will send one weekly assignment email and weekly Zoom schedule emails unless the schedule is already established. Grades 7 and 8 students and parents may check assignments on Gradelink and/or Google Classroom. Assignments can be found on the homeroom teacher's announcements page to centralize communication.
- Assignments will be posted in Gradelink and/or Google Classroom only.
- Assignments will be posted on the weekend to help you and your children plan more efficiently for the week.
- We are adapting expectations for our specials classes. We asked you to evaluate how valuable you feel these subjects are during this particular time, and we received significant feedback. Of those responding, approximately 33% said specials are not valuable at all during this time, approximately 52% said they are somewhat valuable during this time, and approximately 13% said they are very valuable during this time. Your comments made it clear that, in general, you value specials classes, but that during this particular time, the additional work being given presents extra challenges for families trying to cope with daily life. We believe our specials teachers and subjects are extremely valuable to our St. Hilary community and to the complete educational package we provide at St. Hilary School. However, it is physically impossible for our specials teachers to engage interactively with every class via Zoom during this time, which is why specials assignments have been presented in the manner they have. In addition to this, we respect your opinions and we also know that many of you are doing activities at home that mirror the philosophies of these subject areas. Therefore, specials classes will be **OPTIONAL** for the fourth quarter. Those who do choose to complete the assignments will receive feedback from teachers as well as a certificate of completion, but those who do not choose to complete the assignments will not be penalized in any way.

Having said this, we want to note that making specials classes optional during this time is not intended to set a precedent as to what may happen if we are required to use distance learning again in the fall. We are planning for a variety of potential scenarios this fall, and will need to re-evaluate the situation as

we know more. Additionally, we are still evaluating how fourth quarter and final grades will be handled, but please know that all elementary schools, high schools and colleges will be treating grades during this time with great leniency. Finally, for the remainder of the school year, our specials teachers will be available as resources to assist students and will be proactively checking in on students we know are having difficulty.

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to respond to our survey and offer candid feedback. We hope that these adjustments will improve the situation for your families as we complete the fourth quarter and this school year in a distance learning format.