Thursday, November 5, 2020

Dear Great Hearts Families,

I trust you are looking forward to some cooler weather as we all prepare for the Thanksgiving season. Perhaps, in a year like 2020, we need time to pause and think about our blessings more than ever. Personally, I have been incredibly grateful for your continued trust and support as we worked to bring students back to our classrooms while also providing distance learning to many wonderful families.

Our teachers and academy leadership have been the true champions of this work. I am proud of all they have done – under incredibly difficult circumstances – this semester. In addition to sharing my gratitude, I would also like to begin to share information regarding the upcoming semester.

As we plan for semester 2, we will build on what we have learned over the last several months in providing distance learning for students. Since August, our school leaders and teachers have been put in the unsustainable position of effectively operating two schools at once – an online school and an in-person school. This work was undertaken while also placing several additional responsibilities on teachers in order to keep our campuses safe for students. For their sake and the sustainability of both in-person and distance learning**, the second semester may see some significant changes for students electing to stay online**.

The in-person experience for students will remain fairly similar to the experience so far. Our COVID protocols will remain in place. These have protected our communities from outbreak and spread on our campuses. The in-person learning experience – even when limited by COVID – is the substance of a Great Hearts education. Despite the incredibly low risk of COVID for children, we do realize that some students and those they live with are genuinely vulnerable to the virus. We want to accommodate those concerns for the coming semester, however those in Distance Learning will see three changes – changes that will allow our schools to properly serve all of our students without placing undue burden on our teachers.

First, starting in January, students will have to remain in their selected path of learning for the full semester. In order to construct the right plan, all families must indicate their preferred full-semester 2 learning path by **Friday, November 20**. After this date, families will not be permitted to change their decision regarding their child's learning path for semester two. Neither will they be permitted to move between paths once the semester begins. The commitment made by November 20 is binding through the end of the school year.

This change does not include any situation where a school would need to close due to a concerning rise in cases on campus. Were that to happen, all students would be provided distance learning.

Second, it may be that students in distance learning will not have their same teacher(s) from semester 1 or teachers from their specific campus.

Third, depending on grade level and subject, there **is a possibility** of less synchronous learning (i.e., live instruction) than in semester 1.

As mentioned, in order for our schools to construct a plan that will provide the highest quality possible, we ask that you please elect one of the following plans for the entirety of semester 2 by **Friday, November 20**. Knowing the actual numbers of students at each school and in each grade that will be utilizing distance learning in the second semester will help us find the best optimization of support for families. If you have any questions, please reach out to your school leadership.

To make your selection, please follow the steps below:

1. Please log into the Great Hearts Enrollment system using your username and password. If you do not remember your log-in information, please click on the "Forgot Password" and follow the instructions. If you continue to experience issues, please reach out to ghenrollment@greatheartsaz.org.

2. Once you are in the enrollment system, click on the Second Semester Learning Survey Button to access the form.

3. Complete the Second Semester Learning Survey for all currently registered students in your household.

4. To submit, click the "Finish" button.

5. Once you submit the form, you will receive an email confirmation to the email registered in the enrollment system.

***If you experience any technical difficulties with the form, please reach out to ghenrollment@greatheartsaz.org.*

Thank you, again, for your continued partnership in providing an education worthy of our children.

Very best,
Erik Twist
President, Great Hearts Arizona