



## SECONDARY COMMUNICATION

March 27, 2020

Dear Parents of Secondary (Grades 7 to 12),

Credit must be given to our teaching faculty, to you, our parents, and most certainly to our students in Junior High and High School as the implementation of the CWA Interim Home Learning program is achieving its primary goal of providing continued learning to our students. While the present circumstances are not ideal, nor pleasant, we have collectively, school and home, made the best of an unruly situation.

This past week of teaching is again characterized by high student participation and engagement. Teachers are feeling more comfortable with the new requirements for the effective delivery of their courses and they are now moving into the realm of making adjustments and refinements to achieve the most conducive learning outcomes for their students.

Throughout the week, we have been meeting with teachers collectively and individually via the powerful capabilities of technology. Needless to say, any luddites on our faculty are slowly converting to technology aficionados. The professional dialogue of these meetings is centered around the following themes:

### **Screen time for our Students:**

- We recognize that the present circumstances warrant the use of technology as a mechanism for the delivery of instruction. However, we do not want our students to be “glued” to the screen, and as such we are attempting to incorporate daily work time away from the screen.

### **Effectiveness and Efficiency of Teaching Approaches:**

- Adapting to change quickly can be stressful and fatiguing. Our Junior and Senior High teachers are not immune to these elements. As such, they are learning to be more efficient in the delivery of their courses. For instance, some teachers have tried to be in front of the students for their entire lesson. Now they are learning to give appropriate spacing to their time in front of the screen so that they give the students time to work with the material and make their own connections.

### **Assessment:**

- This continues to be the “hot” topic amongst all teachers (not just at CWA).
- Our professional dialogue is focused on guidelines for teachers as they work to assess student learning.
- Our guidelines for assessment in the present situation are:
  - Trust in students;
  - Increased reliance on formative assessment practices where feedback is given for learning;

- See assessment opportunities as a means of continuing to expose the students to the curriculum (for instance, the use of assignments as opposed to summative tests). We must be nimble and flexible in our respective approaches as this situation evolves.

This past week has also produced a fervent commitment amongst our faculty that we maintain as much of the normalcy of life as possible for the students. As such, we are adhering to our commitment that the third term report cards will be distributed to all students at the end of next week. Please note that these report cards will have marks for term three only and will not include teacher comments. Teacher feedback this week clearly indicated to us that they do not want the time used for writing comments to displace their preparation time for their teaching, which has increased with new delivery methods being implemented.

### **Post-Secondary Counselling:**

With our Grade 12 students having already been accepted into university for next year, our post-secondary counselling efforts now shift to our Grade 11 students. Mrs. Wachtler has invited all Grade 11's into her Google classroom on Post-Secondary Counselling for advanced perusal of what they will encounter next year in rendering important decisions (scholarships, program and university choice, etc.)

In closing, this past week has been most productive. As a faculty in Junior High and High School, we are learning to look for those special blessings that come our way in the midst of all that is happening in our daily lives. We'd like to extend a special thank you to the Grade 10 Math class for dressing up for Mrs. Volschenk's online class. Our students are wonderful at reminding us that we are blessed to be in this together and we are grateful for each and every one of them!

Blessings,

Darren Forrester  
Head of School