



Update from the Lower School Division Head

March 17, 2020

Dear Lower School Families,

I hope this finds you well. Please know that each and every one of you is in our hearts and on our minds. I am sure that your children are missing their friends and their teachers immensely. We are missing them too! I am reminded so frequently throughout each day of the joy that the children, families, faculty, and staff bring into this space, and there is truly a void without everyone's presence. With that said, I know that the decision to close the school and practice social distancing is in everyone's best interest right now. Adhering to these guidelines will help us to flatten the curve, as they say, and bring us back to a sense of normalcy sooner rather than later.

I want you to know that all of our teachers, staff, and administrators have been working diligently to prepare and plan for an engaging and enriching distance learning experience for our students. Because so much of what we do here at St. Anne's involves collaboration and hand-on activities, you can imagine that a move to online and remote learning is challenging. We are exploring a myriad of tools and learning platforms like Google Classroom, Zoom, Google Meets, Flipgrid, etc. trying to determine which will be best for each grade level. Additionally, we are looking at gathering materials like textbooks, workbooks, journals, etc. that we will make available for you. If you have not already done so, please take a moment to fill out the [Distance Learning Survey](#) that was sent out via email yesterday. This information is vitally important to our planning and will allow us to know how we can best support each individual family.

I am working very closely with our entire Lower School faculty to have materials and resources available to share with you as soon as possible so that your children can continue their learning at home during this time away from school. In the meantime, we want to provide you with some options that you and your child(ren) can access immediately. Many of these links are being widely distributed among educators across the country via social media and other digital platforms. We will continue to send additional resources in the coming days and weeks. We also plan to post and share videos of teachers and administrators reading aloud, conducting devotions and other valuable experiences that are part of the fabric of our school community.

Here are just a few resources for you to explore right now:

[Museums offering virtual field trips](#)

Become a published author...write your own book!

Movement and Mindfulness Activities with GoNoodle

Adventure Learning (Two months Free with code: LEARN60)

All Kids Network

Easy Math Games to Build Number Sense

Bedtime Math

Spanish Children's Stories

Students in Grades 1-4 can also continue to practice their math facts using [Reflex Math](#).

As educators and parents, we know that young children thrive when there is a sense of structure and predictability, and we encourage you to set up a daily routine filled with learning, discovery and play. Additionally, children are curious by nature and may have many questions about what is happening as well as some very real fears and worries. The National Association of School Psychologists has some [good tips](#) for talking to children about the Coronavirus outbreak. You can also consult information and guidance provided by the [Common Sense Media](#) website, in particular, the [COVID-19 resources](#) with your children and your family as you navigate this difficult time. You will find advice on how to understand the news coverage and to stay calm for yourselves and your children, as well as other resources to use with your children.

As you look at how to build a routine and schedule for your child(ren) during this time away from school, consider some of these simple ideas:

- Read together. Here are some [cool ideas](#) to keep reading exciting and fun.
- Play board games and/or card games
- Work on jigsaw puzzles together
- Get crafty, create various works of art with whatever you might have on hand - think recycled materials, glue and your imagination!
- When possible, get outside to play, run, hike, bike, or simply explore - just be sure to follow guidelines for social distancing
- Look for creative ways to connect with friends and family - Facetime or send notes and letters to each other. Rediscover the lost art of pen pals.
- Take advantage of letting children take on some age-appropriate chores. Here are some [great ideas](#) to try.

Because of our present situation with COVID-19, all of our school events scheduled in the next two weeks (through March 30th) have been put on hold, including our spring conferences. As we have a better understanding of the circumstances, we will communicate plans. Our [School website](#) will continue to be

updated and is a good place for news. Questions can be directed to COVID19@stannesde.org, me or your child's homeroom teacher.

Please know that we are here to support you in any way that we can. These are uncertain times, but - our commitment to our students, families, and faculty remains firm. Together we will get through this!
#HeronStrong

Warmest regards,

Valerie