Dear Parent,

First of all, please know that we are so impressed with and so grateful for the work you did this past week to help your students as we all became accustomed to Distance Learning! I hope you all are relaxing this weekend and can settle into what seems like our new temporary normal on Monday.

This upcoming week will be another four day week, with classes Monday to Thursday. Friday will be another professional development and planning day for our faculty and staff, and a day off for students and parents to follow your own schedule! Going forward, we will renumber our “Number Days” as necessary, skipping any days we need to use as planning days such as Friday, March 27. Below you will read some of the new updates for next week!

**Introducing Live Class Meetings**
As we came to the end of the first week, we recognized more and more the need for live interaction between teachers and students. Sometime this week our K-8 and Montessori 5 teachers will be using Zoom for Education to meet with your child at least twice during the course of the week. We have developed guidelines for both our students and our teachers to follow during live classes. Please review the student guidelines with your child. A copy of the student guidelines will also be posted on either the student’s Google classrooms for grades 3-8 or on the teacher’s webpage for grades K-2, as constant reminders of the behavior expected from a Waldron Mercy student.

Parents of K-2 and Montessori 5 students will receive a Zoom link in an email from their child’s teacher. Students in grades 3-8 will receive a Zoom link through Google Classroom. The first session will be a very brief “Meet and Greet” used primarily to introduce students to this new form of interaction and to clear up technical issues. All students will have at least two live interactions with their teachers this week, as we discover the best uses across all our grades for this platform. Sessions are recorded if your child is not able to attend the scheduled time.

**Community Gathering**
While creating distance learning plans and now introducing live interactions are critical steps in continuing our WMA students’ education from afar, another step is finding ways to reimagine the pieces that make Waldron so distinct. Therefore, this week we will also be introducing a virtual Community Gathering! On Wednesday, please make sure to head to our Virtual Community page for a video version of Community Gathering led by our administrators and art, music, and phys ed teacher. If your student is interested, you can submit videos of your child reciting our Community Gathering standards: our Mission Statement, the Pledge of Allegiance, and Catherine McAuley’s Suscipe. Be sure to watch the video for details on how to get involved!
Support
If your child is struggling and needs assistance to complete assignments, our WMA resource teachers are here to help. If this is the case for your child, please email lcox@waldronmercy.org. I do need you to be aware that no teacher is permitted to be online with a single student without an adult present in the room, for both the student and the teacher’s safety.

Connect with Us!
You can connect with our community on our Virtual Community page, Facebook and Instagram! Please continue to send us photos of how your family is Distance Learning so we can feature them on social media and the Virtual Community page - just email them to wma@waldronmercy.org. Share your successes with us - and we’ll share them with the community as a whole. We have loved seeing all the photos and videos our families have sent in so far! It’s wonderful to see our students’ smiling faces as they tackle these new learning challenges with an open mind!

A School Day
PLEASE keep in mind that no teacher is giving, nor should be giving, your children 7 hours worth of work. We all need to get up and move multiple times during the day! The lessons are designed so that all students can finish them each day; that may mean your child finishes early if they are the very focused, task-oriented type of learner. Those students can read on their own, exercise, or create something tied to their learning or their imagination!

In closing, I have no knowledge yet as to how long the closure will go on, but I can imagine it will be longer than the previously stated two weeks. Our staff is planning for a longer closure, and hoping for a shorter one. If we are still closed the week of March 29, we will follow the same four days on and then Friday off to be used for more planning by teachers. By that time we should have more information from health and government officials.

And finally, as always, keep God in your thoughts and prayer in your daily lives. If you have someone you want us to pray for specifically (yourself or a friend or relative), please go to the Prayer Intention page on our website. I would especially ask you to specifically pray for several members of our Waldron Mercy community:

- Our Sisters of Mercy who are older and therefore at risk
- Our family members who are first responders
- Our family members who work in the medical field
- Our family members who work in pharmacies, stores, delivery services, or other essential businesses

If you fall into one of the above categories, please know you are loved and our Waldron Mercy family is grateful for all you are doing.

Stay safe and healthy!

In Mercy and Prayer,
Ann Marie