

Dear Parents,

Sitting this morning, pretty much self-quarantined, my own children a thousand miles away, and clueless as to what today will bring, waves of fear washed over me. And like most people, I can't stay away from watching the news, reading Twitter, and following social media. There is lots of advice right now that says stay away from it all, it will only raise one's anxiety. There's a lot of truth to that and for some people it is indeed good advice. As Head of School however, it would be irresponsible of me to do so, as of course it is critical for me to be aware of and up-to-date as much as possible on current events.

As I watched and read, and as at first my own fears only heightened, something else started to happen. I was multi-tasking and also ordering items online, reading about possible checks arriving from the government, and thinking about both our community and reading about the larger US and world. And it suddenly hit me: My fridge is actually packed, I can order almost anything I need, my own kids are taking care of themselves better than I could ever help them now, I am in the position of not needing a government check, I am very healthy (despite what I may look like....) my electricity, heat, internet are in working order, I have hot and safe water to bathe, my cell phone connects me to everyone, and in general, I am far safer than most.

What happened is my realization that it is time to stop focusing on fear, and start truly recognizing those who are far more threatened both in our community and the world, than I am. ACS has many health care and front line workers in our parent body—nurses, doctors, people deployed across the world—some of whom have had to stay away from their own children to take care of the rest of us. Some leave their own children and homes each day, knowing they will be at risk, so they can protect other families, other children. Some parents are losing their businesses right now, losing their income, taking care of their own elderly and vulnerable parents. We have some students who have compromised immune systems and their parents are trying to figure out how to best protect them. Our teachers have their own families, children, parents to worry about. Some of their spouses may also lose their jobs and income. Our teacher's worlds are as upside down and difficult as everybody else.

When I think about all of this, my fears for myself disappear. It puts the internet failing, the geometry lessons missed, the Art class postponed, or the tablet not working into serious perspective. If something is not going right during the online day, well then, it just isn't going right. Do something else. If you have food, water, a home, a car, an income, and a healthy family, you're way ahead of some of our families, and they need our help. We need to reach out in any and every way to others who have far more problems, and who have fears that are hitting home in ways that transcend the little things in life. I don't have the answers yet as to what actionable things we can do to help. But I know that is what I hope all of us will begin to think about. Maybe even engage your kids in the conversation—what can they, we do to help our brothers and sisters right now. I have no doubt that many are already doing this! I just ask that

you spread the word. What we all do in this regard will forever be more important than worrying (too much) about a homework assignment.

I promise we will continue to do everything we can in terms of the school day and support. Lisa and Anna continue to communicate with you with the many details of our efforts, and those efforts will not dwindle!

Thanks for listening. I told members of my team I need to add a disclaimer that I am home alone, without my team serving as my “filter” or editors--so please don't get too upset with me if my messages go off point once in a while.

Thinking of all of you,

Paul Druzinsky

Head of School