March 12, 2021

Dear HRIMS Families,

After extensive research and with guidance from our Independent School Management Pandemic Briefings, I would like to give you updates on our procedures for the remainder of the school year.

I am, first, excited to say that most of our staff has received their second dose of the Covid-19 vaccine. Second, we have been planning modified activities for our annual Spring Fair. However, after much deliberation with specialists and the continued statewide mandates, we will unfortunately need to cancel our event for this year.

Our weekly live Pandemic Briefings are led by Dr. Rubin (Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia), Dr. Altmann (American Academy of Pediatrics, CA), and Dr. Bravo (Medical Doctor, VA). They recommend that current protocols continue to be followed by private schools as shown by the 50,000+ cases of Covid-19 daily. The state of Virginia also maintains a limit of 25 people for outdoor events, and our vendors are unable to participate due to this mandate.

Although we are extremely disappointed, we want to focus on the fact that we have had such a safe and healthy year so far for our community.

Looking forward to next year, I know that there are still many unknowns. However, I do have the following information:

* The Moderna and Pfizer vaccine trials for ages 12 and up are fully enrolled and happening now.
* The trials for ages 5-12 are currently being planned.
* It is believed that high school students will be able to be vaccinated during the fall of this year.
* They are hopeful that ages 5-12 will be able to be vaccinated beginning in 2022, but trials may take longer if they look for full FDA approval rather than emergency approval of the vaccine for that age group.
* Studies regarding social distancing in schools continue to be ongoing, but preliminary data is promising that Covid-19 is not being spread at the same rate as in adults, and social distancing guidelines can be reduced.

With this information, we are looking at the following procedures/policies for next year:

* We will not be requiring vaccinations next school year for students.
* We will continue to require masks for staff and students.
* We will continue to offer distance learning as necessary.

As information continues to become available, I will keep you updated on our policies and procedures going forward. Thank you for your continued support of our Covid-19 Community Commitment and the health and safety of our students, staff and families.

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Head of School

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