March 16, 2020

Dear Parents and Students,

In recent days, I have been receiving messages of encouragement, and although I cannot respond to all of those, I want to thank you. Our faculty, staff, and the administrative team are working diligently on and off campus to deliver distance learning to our young Bulldogs. We are underway, and the ingenuity will continue to grow in the days ahead.

- I am sharing our Guide to Distance Learning at NA. This short document outlines the schedules for Lower, Middle, and Upper School learning, and it provides some general expectations and tips to help parents and students. Teachers are mobilizing, and I know that many have sent messages to students, and in some cases, to parents. We would ask you to remain patient over the next few days, as teachers continue to make the transition to online instruction.

- Because of the rapid launch into distance learning, we are relying, especially in these early days, on the platforms that students and parents already know well. Lower School is using the academic portal on the website and the Google suite as the primary vehicles for providing curricular content. Middle and Upper Schools will be using Canvas, as well as Zoom. In addition, faculty will be using other digital resources, as the curriculum necessitates. If you have any difficulty accessing our parent resources, please contact communications@norfolkacademy.org.

- **Daily Schedule and Routine - Lower School:** We are sensitive to our families’ varying abilities to structure learning in their homes, particularly as Lower School children require more direct parent oversight. We therefore invite and encourage you to adopt a flexible daily learning schedule, as you are best-positioned to define the hours and times to guide and engage your children. We suggest that you try 30-minute blocks of time per subject area. Please refer to the Guide to Distance Learning at NA for more specific suggestions.

- **Daily Schedule and Routine - Middle and Upper Schools:** We will be following an eight-period schedule from 9 a.m.-12:15 p.m. daily. Students may be doing both synchronous and asynchronous learning at that time. Please refer to the Guide to Distance Learning at NA.

- Questions will arise about how this type of learning will work. Some of those questions may relate to your family specifically; others will be more general. Please reach out to your child’s teacher(s) as the first point(s) of contact. Of course, Middle and Upper School students should be able to handle the interaction with their teachers with a great deal of independence. Flexibility and a positive attitude are our watchwords. We understand that challenges may emerge; please keep the lines of communication open.
I want to add one final note unrelated to distance learning but extremely relevant to our students’ wellbeing. It is important for all of us to adhere to the guidelines established by the CDC and underscored by the White House press conference just this afternoon, in terms of social distancing. Yes, it is so difficult to stay apart from our friends and to give up practices that we enjoy in a group. However, it is absolutely essential that we do all that health officials advise to collectively protect our community from COVID-19. That is the essence of good citizenship.

Thank you again for your support. The updates will continue. Stay safe, my fellow Bulldogs.

Yours sincerely,

Dennis G. Manning
Headmaster