

May 27, 2020

Dear Live Oak Families and Friends,

I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication that the student, parents, and staff have demonstrated during this time. No one asked for this and we are all in this together. Thank you for your patience and sharing your kindness with others as it is surely needed in the world right now.

I acknowledge this is a long email with many different components and I urge you to read it completely to the end! I am putting the Live Oak Distance Learning survey front and center because we would like your timely feedback. Could you please take 10 minutes to complete the survey now and then come back to and finish this letter as you see fit.

Survey link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YRS37HS>

Please complete by **Mon, June 1** so we may use your feedback in upcoming planning.

End of Year Activities

8th grade:

At the end of the year we traditionally celebrate the hard work and dedication by our 8th graders. Despite challenges associated with Distance Learning, Ms. Leah has made several preparations and hallmark acknowledgements to commemorate the culmination of this year.

We will have a private promotion ceremony that follows the County's social distancing guidelines. This is a live event that will take place on Sat, June 6 at 5pm. It is for the 8th students and their families. Students will have one last chance to enter the Concourse as Live Oak students and receive their official Live Oak promotion certificate, take a special commemorative picture, and of course revel in the celebration of taking their next and last step in junior high education; going onto High School. Also, the 1st buddies, under the direction of Ms. Amy, are contributing to the "rose ceremony" by making a special rose in the form of an elegant card adorned with roses for their buddies.

Each year students undertake an 8th grade project and those are now finishing. The intent behind the project is to understand the steps in a long-term project and either deepen student's knowledge in an area of interest or branch out into something unknown. Slideshows of the projects will be presented via Zoom next week with students and their parents invited to watch and celebrate the successes and challenges of their journeys.

Additionally, 8th grade students will be recording their promotion speeches and a compilation will be provided to their families. This is meant for 8th grade family viewing only and not to be made public due to privacy protections of students. Thank you to parent Robert Williams for his help with this project.

Lastly, Ms. Leah and parent David Levison are teaming up to create an 8th grade documentary that chronicles the Live Oak journey. A copy of the documentary will be given to each student and, as following the sign of the times, Ms. Leah will host a viewing party via Zoom! Way to go Ms. Leah and the Middle School team! Thanks for making this year's promotion a memorable and festive event despite the challenges and hardships of distance learning!!

6th grade:

Congrats to Ms. Osner for organizing the first ever social distancing Knighting Ceremony and students for creating videos for their knighting task. Students completed their service projects at home, made their shields and tabards, and filmed a knighting speech. These speeches were compiled with the help of Moca and Caetano. Ben created a website to share the video and student work, and families received a cookbook of medieval recipes created by Summer and Kalika. On Knighting Day, the class gathered at the fairground for a parade to display and celebrate their work, then returned home to watch the video and make their knighting vow while sharing a medieval feast with family.

5th grade:

Fifth graders will be making part of the transition to Middle School by having a Zoom transition meeting Wed, June 3 at 5 pm with Ms. Mann and Emily Riley (the new 6th grade teacher). Then, later in the evening with the fifth grade parents. More details coming from Ms. Mann.

4th grade:

Ms. Lois and Ms. Leah had a class meeting with the students and parents in anticipation of Ms. Leah who will be teaching next year's fifth grade. Fourth graders interviewed Ms. Leah for their weekly newsletter which will include Ms. Leah's bio.

2nd grade:

The students in second grade will be interviewing Ms. Mann on Friday. Also Ms. Mann and Ms. Kulkarni are in the process of coordinating a parent meeting.

Incoming 1st grade:

Our current Kindergarten students are "flying up" to first grade. The traditional "Fly Away" ceremony will be put on hold until the fall. Tonight parents will meet their new first grade

teacher, Ms. Lois. Ms. Amy will join to talk about the developmental changes of a first grader and help parents understand what to expect in their first year.

Reports

The reports will be mailed to families **Mon, June 8**. Teachers have made adjustments to the grading and content. In accordance with the guidance from the CDE, students were held harmless when it came to grading. The grading cycle is based on the work the student did from January to Spring Break and no negative impact will be reflected in the student's grades due to distance learning. However, if the student did show signs of progress throughout their participation of distance learning, the teacher will note this, and it will be reflected in the student's grades.

Start of next year

As we close out this year, we take our learning of the past months and apply it to making preparations for our next academic year. Currently, we plan to start school on Aug 17, 2020 which holds true to our 2020/21 calendar start date. The summer gives us valuable time to make preparations that we didn't get the chance to have when distance learning was suddenly everyone's new norm. As we begin thinking about opening in the Fall, our planning focuses on three main scenarios: 1) in person learning 2) a continuation of distance learning 3) a hybrid model which is a combination of in person and distance learning. We want parents who may prefer only distance learning to have some choice in how their student learns in the Fall and are investigating scenarios to accommodate individual cases.

We are planning for multiple scenarios because regardless of what the future brings, we are dedicated to your child and their continued academic growth and social emotional well-being. Regardless of the learning scenario, we want to provide stability and be flexible. We have been meeting with State and local leaders on the safest way to open and we will continue to follow any recommendations and guidelines from the State and County officials.

Here are some critical safety questions we will seek to answer so we can plan appropriately:

1. What will social distancing look like for children?
2. How many students can be on campus?
3. How many students can be in a classroom?
4. What happens if a student gets sick? How do we quarantine?
5. What PPE (personal protective equipment) do staff or students need?
6. Which public education State requirements may change?

Moving forward, we reflect on the following in order to learn from our distance learning efforts.

1. Any causes and conditions inside the home/community that impacted learning.
2. The types of online learning that had the most learning and student engagement.
3. The different learning needs of students with independent practice.
4. Best practices regarding online and distance learning.

To that end, we would like to ask you for your feedback and help by completing the distance learning survey. Please refer to the beginning of this letter for a link to the survey.

Last but not least, I know there is a lot on everyone's mind regarding public education and the uncertainty of these times. We recognize that there are questions that people will want to have answered before summer ends, I assure you email updates will occur periodically during the summer..

In the meantime, I will be hosting a Zoom style Town Hall meeting **Tues, June 2 at 6pm.**

Please think about any questions in the following four areas:

1. Looping model
2. Budget 2020/21
3. Next year academics
4. Why Live Oak in 2020/21

As always, you are invited to attend the next Board of Directors (BOD) meeting which is scheduled for **Thur, June 11 at 6pm.** Zoom link and agenda to follow.

Looking forward to seeing many of you next **Fri, June 5** at the pick up/drop off materials and if I don't see you, have a great summer!!

Best,

Justin