



WORKING TOGETHER WHILE APART

May 9, 2020

Dear Ivymount School Families,

I am writing to discuss the news we recently received regarding school closures but first, I want to thank you for the amazing contributions you and your children made throughout the PTA-sponsored Staff Appreciation Week. You helped make the week special and your efforts are greatly appreciated. Here are the links to the amazing videos you made:

- [Monday PTA Student Video - Cheer for Staff!](#)
- [Wednesday PTA Student Video - Inspiring Words](#)
- [Friday PTA Student Video - Learning from Home](#)
- [Directors Staff Appreciation Thank you Video](#) (by Ivymount directors)

All of us at Ivymount are so appreciative of your collaboration, flexibility and partnership since we closed our doors in mid-March and transitioned to Remote Instruction. It is hard to believe we are still living, educating, and working from home two months later. While uncertainty has been our one constant, on Wednesday, we received clarification on at least one immediate detail. The Maryland State Department of Education announced that **students will not return to campus for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year.**

While we knew this was probable, we are disappointed that our students will not return for the end of the year. We wish our students could be back in our classrooms and participating in both the normal rhythms of school as well as milestone events like prom and graduation. We also recognize the incredible effort it takes to support your children with their programs while also caring for your families and working. **We will extend the school year into the week of June 15.** We will let you know the exact date of the last day as quickly as possible.

We will continue to work with you to make the remote continuity of learning experience as impactful and stress-free as possible. We will send you a survey next week to gather your feedback on the platforms, assignments, and communications thus far. Remote Instruction is new territory for all of us and we will continue to invest in the services we are providing. Thank you for your partnership; it is amazing how far we have all come together.

Students who are transitioning will continue with their projected timeline, though we will individualize this based on each student's needs. This includes students moving up by age within a program, those moving from one Ivymount program model to another, students

leaving Ivymount for a public or private program, and students who are graduating this year. Plans are underway to hold virtual moving up ceremonies and graduation. We are excited to share details and dates with you soon.

It is hard to imagine what the new school year will look like but we are hard at work to ensure we can meet the needs of our students within the established parameters. Maryland has issued the following guidelines: [MD Recovery Plan for Education](#). We will continue to follow MD mandates and work with our Local School Systems to make the best decisions for the Ivymount community, recognizing that the health, safety, and wellness of students, families, educators, and staff are the highest priority.

Thank you again for the many ways you and your children have recognized our staff this week. We find joy in seeing each message, photo, and video and are reminded how wonderful it will be to see everyone in person once again. Until then, we shall continue working together, while apart.

Sincerely,

Susan Holt,
Executive Director