UPPER CANADA COLLEGE

March 18, 2020

Update on Continuous Learning Plan at the Prep

Dear Prep families,

I'm writing with an update on our plans to support Prep students and families while the UCC campus remains closed. We are undertaking specific measures to see the continuance of our learning program for this school year, which means delivering aspects of our academic program virtually, commencing Wednesday, March 25, until at least April 6. I'd like to thank you and our community members for your patience, co-operation and compassion as we navigate the unprecedented circumstances in which we currently find ourselves.

We are currently engaged in planning Continuous Learning. The nature of the experience will differ from Primary to Middle, to ensure that it is age-appropriate and navigable for both students and their families. These learning experiences will include:

- Asynchronous learning: recorded lessons or posted tasks and work that can be completed by the student at any time;
- Synchronous learning: when all students are online engaged in live instruction with the teacher;
- Face-to-face online chats;
- Individual or small group work facilitated by Google Meet;
- Lessons, tasks and activities posted online or emailed directly.

We endeavour to use those platforms with which families and teachers are already familiar: Seesaw, ManageBac and/or PowerSchool. Our IT team is preparing ‘quick help’ documents for all of us to reference as we facilitate online learning. If school closure is extended, we will be seeking your feedback on our early days of online learning. Teachers may begin to experiment with other platforms that engage students; we will do so with care and with the support of our Technology Integrators to ensure that students and their families are able to engage with new platforms.

In the coming days, we will outline a learning schedule and share some general expectations which we will hold for students, parents and teachers. Online learning will begin on Wednesday, March 25. On Monday, March 23 and Tuesday, March 24, teachers will engage in professional development and planning work towards continuing to offer our meaningful learning experiences for students.

There are a few things that families can do on Monday and Tuesday to prepare themselves for online learning:

- The College will be loaning iPads to SK to Year 4 students and laptops to Year 5 students for the duration of the campus closure, and your brief campus visit can be used to pick these up. Power cords will also be provided if necessary. To support the continuity of learning, our IT team recommends that students and parents will find online learning experiences easier if they are using the school-supplied device. Families are asked to take extremely good care of the devices, as we are currently unable to have them serviced during the closure.

- We encourage families to become familiar with Google Meet, and will send you instructions. It's helpful for you to try this platform with a relative or family friend before needing to use it for learning.

- We encourage you to set up a daily schedule for your family. This will vary greatly and your child care arrangements will factor into this schedule. Based on the experiences of international schools who have been online for several weeks, it seems prudent to build in time for physical exercise, outdoor pursuits, reflection, and free time, to combine with more formal learning.

Year 6 and 7 Three-Way Conferences scheduled for March 26 and 27 have been postponed.

Throughout these uncertain times, it's important to monitor our wellbeing and that of those we care about. As such, your child's Form Adviser will be reaching out to you to arrange a once weekly face-to-face online chat with your child during school closure. Members of our Centre for Learning are available to speak with your child, and you can always reach out to any member of the Prep Leadership Team.

Our Health Centre staff are available online to continue to support the mental health and emotional wellbeing of boys. For general medical enquiries and questions about health, please use the following email address: health.centre@ucc.on.ca.

Please anticipate to receive more detailed information shortly. While we are working together in these unprecedented times, we all play an important role in supporting the success and wellbeing of our boys. Our strong community has shown that we rise to the challenge in times of need, and I want to thank each of you for the dedication and flexibility you've shown in these circumstances.

Warm regards,
Tanya Sweeney
Head, Preparatory School