



Flynn, Laurie <laurieflynn@wheelergmail.org>

PLEASE READ: Here's Wheeler's Virtual Learning Guide

1 message

Allison Gaines Pell, Head of School <wheelercommunications@wheelerschool.org>

Fri, Mar 27, 2020 at 1:22 PM

Reply-To: wheelercommunications@wheelerschool.org

To: "Laurie P. Flynn" <LaurieFlynn@wheelerschool.org>



March 27, 2020

Dear Wheeler Community,

Like many of you, I have been trying to exercise each day over these couple of weeks. It's not always easy, between my new Spring Break diet of video calls and starchy food, but I've found it keeps me steady and sane. As I run through the now-silent streets of the East Side of Providence, I often think of you – students, faculty, staff, parents, and guardians – and, also, of Mary Colman Wheeler's legacy of persistence, creativity, and flexibility.

Three thoughts to share on that note.

1. Sharing instructions for our Virtual Learning Term. With this email, we are linking to [Wheeler's Guide to Virtual Learning](#). Next week, Wheeler is undertaking something profoundly new, even with our years of use of Google Classroom and online learning tools rivaling the best of schools. Building on lessons from our colleagues in schools across the country and integrating the best thinking of our faculty and leadership team, our guide shares instructions about how we will bring Wheeler School's academic program online over these next two weeks. Just like anything new, we will hit some things out of the park, while some aspects will be far from perfect at the outset. Just as we are adjusting hourly to all our new realities, we will adapt as all other schools are doing based upon our own reflections, on good practices shared among other educators and schools, and on feedback from you and our students. Right now, I am grateful to be part of a community that believes in growth, models openness and fallibility, engages our students in the journey with us, and prizes creativity and flexibility. We are in this new territory, all of us, together. We will be practicing empathy and, as Governor Cuomo of New York put it, humanity, together.

2. This too shall pass. Right now, we are all adjusting to the cancellation of our "regular" lives and to new worries about the future, our finances, our global community, and our loved ones. In all of our homes, including mine, we are working out new routines, technology rules, family connections (and disconnections), and a foggy blanket of emotion reflecting the state

of the world. Today, we know we will be in a Virtual Learning Term until April 13, and we know that it could easily go on longer. But we also know that one day, in some number of weeks, things will be back to a version of normal. We know we will see each other again in the courtyard, in the student union, in the Gilder Center for the Arts – and that the greatest dangers to our global community and economy will have passed. I believe, as I've said to you, that we will be stronger, more creative, more unified, more empathetic for it. Imagining that future – an act called temporal distancing – is a helpful psychological tactic that can keep us grounded.

3. #SpiritStrong. Between now and then, there will be (indeed, have already been) moments of total brilliance, empathy, togetherness, meaningful family time, art-making, and show-stopping fun. There's so much good to see through all the noise. The flexibility, creativity, and – dare I say? – joy that we are practicing today are gifts that Mary C. Wheeler wove into the fabric of the Wheeler School for times just like this. In fact, many of the skills our students will learn during this time – from you, their parents; from us, their teachers – will be skills we could not have taught as easily in other ways. We are doing that together.

So let's be generous with ourselves and with one another as we enter this new time. The Wheeler community is our source of strength. Stay in touch with us and with each other. Let's emerge from this with a more personally connected, alive, close, attentive, artistic, creative, dynamic, values-driven, emission-reduced world. When I time-travel in my mind, that's the world I want to envision.

Take good care.



Allison Gaines Pell
Head of School

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)

The Wheeler School
[216 Hope Street, Providence, RI 02906](#)