March 20, 2020

Greetings Raiders,

I hope you have been able to get outside over these past few days and enjoy this beautiful spring weather. It is so important for our health to get outside as much as possible during this time when we are asked to stay home.

Well, Raiders, we did it! We successfully completed an entire week of TeleSchool! With only one day’s notice to prepare, our faculty figured out creative, meaningful ways to ensure our students continued to learn while at home. I was blown away with the high level of learning that occurred this week! Thank you to our teachers as well as our students for engaging in teaching and learning in the midst of such uncertainty.

Thank you to our parents as well! We know that it is not easy on our families, and we appreciate every bit of support being provided by our parents! I’m exhausted! I thought I would get a “break” being at home, but I was so mistaken. As a parent with two students in “Tele school,” I, too, am learning to juggle teaching, working and parenting. (Today was very special for me, though, as I got to spend the day with my younger son on his 14th birthday! We engaged in his WBMS Social Studies lesson together learning about Civil Rights. We had such great conversations! And, the lessons were so organized and easy for us to follow! Go WBMS! #OneAlpharetta)

We also know that our AHS TeleSchool plan is not perfect! Our administrators and department chairs dropped in on numerous virtual classrooms all week and asked for feedback from both students and teachers each day. We learned a lot and will be coming together – virtually of course! - at our administrative meeting on Monday and Cabinet meeting on Tuesday to debrief. We may begin making adjustments to our plan as needed. Any large scale changes will be communicated directly by me. In the meantime, students should plan to engage next week on the same schedule as last week, roughly 2 hours per course.
~ Monday 3/23 – English Language Arts
~ Tuesday 3/24 – Math
~ Wednesday 3/25 – Electives (World Languages, CTAE, Fine Arts, Health/PE)
~ Thursday 3/26 – Science
~ Friday 3/27 – Social Studies

~ Every Day – Reading, Exercising, Sleeping & Social Distancing

Standardized Assessments:

End of Course Tests - Georgia Milestones will likely be canceled this year; as such

Teachers will be making adjustments to their syllabus and how final grades will be calculated for classes with an EOC

AP Exams:

Here is a summary of the latest information from the AP website:

~ The College Board has decided to shift the administration of AP exams to an at-home, online exam.
~ There will be two possible test dates for each exam. These test dates will be announced on April 3. More information is forthcoming with how exams will be scheduled.
~ For AP courses that require a final portfolio instead of an exam, due dates and requirements have been adjusted. Details for those exams can be found on the website above.
~ The College Board is working to ensure that every student is able to access the testing materials and ensure that the materials remain secure.

IB Exams:

IB is still planning to hold the examinations in May per the published schedule. For now, teachers are continuing to prepare students for these examinations. If IB should make any changes or updates, I will be sure to communicate those out as well.
School Governance Council Voting:

Only 156 parents (4.4%) have voted in our SGC elections. Thanks to all our parents who have stepped up to serve. All eligible parents should have received a reminder e-mail to vote this morning from an e-mail address associated with bigpulse.com. Please access the bios of our parents running to serve and please vote:

http://school.fultonschools.org/hs/alpharetta/SiteAssets/Pages/School-Governance-Council/Alpharetta%20HS.pdf

Finally, tonight, I want to share some of examples of the amazing, positive parent and student feedback shared with me this week! I am so thankful that our community recognizes the hard work and expertise of our faculty during this difficult time in our Nation!

~ Bless These Teachers. We are the luckiest of the lucky. Please let our teachers know that we appreciate and love them. No one is working harder than our teachers. Right now is crazy but they are making this so wonderful for our kids. This is why I moved my kids to the Alpharetta school district from Johns Creek. God Bless you all!

~ @AHS PrincipalK, I truly appreciate the morning robo calls to the entire school each morning. It gives me a feeling like we are still at the school facility. I listen closely to your announcements. Thanks for all you do!

~ Thank you so much for such an amazing transition so far! I know this is new territory for all your teachers but I’ve been so impressed with my kids teachers and the amazing job they have done! I’m so grateful for all the communication we have had from you and the teachers in navigating this transition!

~ AMAZING JOB! Well Done!

~ Love hearing your voice on my phone every morning. Please stay safe out there. Praying for you!

~ I forwarded this email from my son's teacher as an example of the high-quality interactions that your teachers are offering during this time. [They] have prepared well thought out approaches to helping students adapt to the virtual world...Having access to their teachers is tremendously comforting. These teachers are...truly Rock Stars!

~ They really are the best. You are leading the best team!

~ Hi Dr. Kersey, I just wanted to say thank you for all the GREAT preparation, communications and support you and the teachers of AHS have provided kids and parents in this crazy time. I know that all of this is new to everyone, but the teachers have been encouraging, supportive, and flexible. The communications have been amazing to help us all navigate through this new way of learning and living right now...I have many teacher friends in other states and their kids and classrooms are ‘on break’. I am thankful my kids are in Teleschool right now to continue some semblance of normalcy and staying on track with schooling. Just wanted to say thank you and that all that you and the teachers are doing is much appreciated!

~ I am very impressed with our staff at AHS that are providing meaningful opportunities to learn. We are being very mindful of the lockdown and thankful my kids get along so well. Their mandatory PE time has also meant mom is getting dragged out for exercise as well. No doubt we will be a better, healthier family mentally and physically
after this. Mom is keeping positive. I also find it so inspiring that my son’s soccer coach is sending 'training' videos every day for the boys to use for solo training. So everyone is adapting and learning thru this process.

Raiders, I have been leading Alpharetta High School for close to a decade! And, I am prouder than ever to serve this amazing community. As expected, we are leading TeleSchool with excellence as we do everything in Raider Nation. I am honored to serve as your principal and stand beside you in this global challenge we have together at this time. Please contact me with questions!

With Raider Pride,

Shannon N. Kersey, Ph.D.

Principal
Alpharetta High School

Creating Opportunities for Excellence in Academics, Arts, Athletics & Altruism.