

July 23, 2020

Dear DC Scholars Families,

As we shared last week, our team has been working tirelessly to simultaneously plan for a safe return to in-person learning in August, together with our preparation for a fully virtual learning model. This approach was designed to prepare us for multiple school-opening scenarios.

Over the last week, we have received important feedback from you through our survey regarding returning to the school building at the start of the school year. In addition, a number of decisions about school opening plans have been announced recently, with other districts (Fairfax, Arlington, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties) and other DC charter schools sharing their decisions regarding re-opening this fall. After reflecting our community's feedback, decisions from other schools/districts, and recent health trends and Covid 19 data, **we have decided that DC Scholars will start the 20-21 School Year in virtual learning mode.**

We will use an on-line only model through November 6, 2020 (the end of the first academic quarter), and we will continue to monitor the trends and seek input from our DC Scholars community and share our plans for the second and third quarter in the middle of October, after re-assessing the safety of reopening the school in person. We are also prepared to shift our plans at any point in time if needed.

Nonetheless, we are committed to providing scholars with a high quality and equally rigorous learning environment. Additionally, we want to ensure all scholars have access to the resources and support they need in order to attend, participate, and effectively engage in our virtual learning model. For this reason, we are providing technology (tablet/laptop) to all enrolled students PS-8th grade. Please be on the lookout for communication in the next few weeks regarding technology pick up, training, and on-going technical support plans for you and your scholars.

Our actions are guided by our deep commitment to the health and safety of our community. As we respond to this global pandemic, the safety of our community is our most important consideration. Many circumstances remain out of our control or have yet to unfold. This unpredictability and sense of uncertainty provide their own set of challenges as we seek to define our approach to teaching and learning for this school year, and yet we are confident that with the input and support from our DC Scholars staff and families, we will provide the best educational program possible for our scholars. We commit to provide as much clarity about our plans as possible, while we continue to track, anticipate, and respond to the ongoing and serious threat that the pandemic presents to individuals and to communities.

This was a tough decision. We know it is extremely challenging to meet all of our scholars' needs in a fully virtual environment. This fact obligates us to be creative about how we respond to our current reality. And I know we have the staff to rise to this challenge and support our scholars and families in our virtual start to this new school year.

Don't forget, we have two town hall sessions scheduled for Thursday, July 23rd and Monday, July 27th at 5:30pm. Register for tonight's session at:

[https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_XnopXtqBTiu9ebEXBaEXFQ](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_XnopXtqBTiu9ebEXBaEXFQ)

Warmest regards,

LeAngelo Emperor

School Director

