



**David J. Beare**  
*Head of School*

March 17, 2020

That which [the] most . . . maintain as a truth in profession only, we must bring into familiar and constant practice . . .

John Winthrop (1630)

Dear Members of the Middlesex Community,

Over the next days and weeks, we will be communicating all sorts of school-keeping details with you: how we will go about learning and teaching from a distance, when we might be coming back to school, and if we will be hosting the accustomed school events this spring.

My purpose this morning, though, is not to talk about the details. There will be plenty about that later. My purpose is simply to talk about the human impact of the coronavirus pandemic on our community – our families, our friendships, our patterns and accustomed ways of living – and the opportunities that arise from an unexpected challenge.

I want to acknowledge that the upcoming period of time will likely be a difficult one, particularly if we end up having to go into an extended period of school closure and distance learning. Many of your families have older siblings now home from college or younger siblings home from school. Many of you will be working from home while trying to manage the added responsibilities and challenges that will inevitably come with responsible social distancing. Many of you, if your job depends on working on site, will not be able to work at all. Our students fear for the potential loss of games and classes and Circle time. We all fear the possibility of COVID-19 befalling our family members and friends.

This is all true. There are both small inconveniences and more substantial hardships coming our way. This is precisely why the Middlesex community, with its ethos of recognizing and nurturing the sustaining power of relationship, matters so much.

Even as I write this, a group of faculty members and administrators is busily working on the best ways to organize school from a distance and provide our students with the best possible learning and community experience. Even as I write this, a group of Middlesex parents in Asia is organizing a shipment of face masks – including smaller sizes for faculty children – for use on campus and with our Health Center staff. The School has received numerous offers to house students who might not be able to travel home. The housekeeping staff has been cleaning and recleaning surfaces to make sure the campus is as safe an environment as can be and ready to receive students on their return. The “all-in” response to challenge from members of the community – parents, alumni, faculty, staff, students, and trustees – has been tremendous.

It is important to recognize the goodwill and positive action of the community, even as it is important to acknowledge the difficulties that will, inevitably, arise in the weeks to come. The values of mutual trust and shared responsibility articulated in our mission live in the persons who embrace them and make them real in the world.

It is when we are hard-pressed that finding our promise is most meaningful. We can begin to find that promise individually and collectively in our patient, energetic, and sustained application to challenges and in the care we extend to members of our community, and beyond.

I so look forward to greeting you next time we meet.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David J. Beare". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

David J. Beare  
Head of School