

APPROVED FOR RELEASE

SUBJECT: Weekly Wednesday Update from the Great Hearts AZ President 4.15.20

Audience: Great Hearts AZ Faculty & Staff, Families

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Dear Families,

Thank you so much for your ongoing support and coordination with both the network and your individual academy throughout the past many weeks. I know it hasn't been all rainbows and butterflies.

Everyone is working incredibly hard to ensure that students continue to learn during the closure. Both parents and teachers have found themselves out of their comfort zones. None of it's perfect. All of it has its challenges. However, what I have seen is everyone stretching to make it the best it can be. I suspect we will all get better at it as we roll through April and May.

One thing we must remember is that our children will be fine. I say this as a fellow parent. They are going to learn this quarter. They are going to be ready for the fall. More importantly, our teachers will be ready for them. Anything that's missed, we can make up for. Don't fret. We have the very best teachers, tutors, counselors, SPED coordinators, and staff in the state. They are relentless, and they love our kids.

Let's also not worry too much about the extended free time. Let them play. A lot. We should remember this too and play with them.

This reminds me of that great quote from Chesterton. A bit sentimental, but what the heck:

It is not only possible to say a great deal in praise of play; it is really possible to say the highest things in praise of it. It might reasonably be maintained that the true object of all human life is play. Earth is a task garden; heaven is a playground. To be at last in such secure innocence that one can juggle with the universe and the stars, to be so good that one can treat everything as a joke — that may be, perhaps, the real end and final holiday of human souls.

Hang in there. If there is anything you need from us that you aren't getting, don't hesitate to let us know.

Survey Results

While we were only a few days into Google Classroom, last week's survey showed most families (83%) having an initial favorable experience with the online platform. 73% of families thought the amount of work being asked was "just right," while 17% of families noted it was "too much." The remaining 10% said it was "too little." The sample size was small with only 1,253 families participating, and these percentages are consolidated across all 23 academies. Individual academy results varied.

We will survey you again next Wednesday, April 22nd. We hope everyone will take a few minutes to give us feedback on how things have been going. Next Wednesday's survey will be

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an important benchmark for us as we will have a few weeks under our belt with the full implementation of online learning and support.

Zoom & google classroom security

In a time of uncertainty, rapid change, and the challenge of learning to use new technologies, parents are absolutely right to be concerned with protecting their children online—concerned about safeguarding their privacy, about keeping them in a safe and focused environment where they can learn, and about shielding them from the worst of human nature, which always seems to be just a few clicks away on the internet.

1. How can I know G-Suite is safe?

Schools configure their user accounts and Google Classrooms so that only official school accounts for students, teachers, and administrators can access the Classroom. Student accounts do not have access to Gmail features, and Google Classroom does not contain any advertisements, so students should only access the curricular content provided by their teachers when they log in and begin using their Classroom. To help maintain the safety and security of student accounts, **never** share login information or display it somewhere others can access it. Be sure to change student account passwords when they first log in, using a password that is not easy for someone else to guess.

2. How do we know Zoom is safe?

Students should not create Zoom accounts and should only join meetings with parental consent from the link provided by their teacher. We are following strict norms in our use of Zoom to keep our students safe, including the following:

- A prohibition on any recordings or screen-captures of students in a Zoom session
- Teacher control of video and audio feed
- Disabling of the “chat” function that would otherwise allow students to “pass notes” privately to each other
- Required teacher use of the “waiting room” feature to keep intruders out
- Disabling of file transfers through Zoom
- Only posting Zoom links in private spaces (i.e. Google Classroom or parent emails—no public websites)
- Ability to remove participants immediately from any session

Just as Great Hearts promises a safe and orderly classroom culture, we will ensure that the Zoom classroom or tutoring experience is the same.

3. How are G-Suite and Zoom FERPA or COPPA compliant?

G Suite for Education supports compliance with both FERPA and COPPA and has signed the Student Privacy Pledge. You can read more about how G Suite for Education secures information [here](#). Zoom provides features to help teachers maintain secure meeting spaces, protects data in transit and at rest, and does not monitor, view, or track the video or audio content of video meetings and webinars. You can read more about Zoom’s compliance [here](#) and their FERPA compliance guide [here](#).

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You can access the full FAQ doc [here](#) or by visiting the AZ parent resource page:
<https://www.greatheartsamerica.org/azresources/>.

Sincerely,
Erik

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