



Friday, April 24

Dear Friends,

Yesterday, NGFS students and teachers completed their fifth week of remote learning. When we embarked upon this journey, I don't think any of us anticipated that we might not get back in front of our students, teachers, colleagues, teammates, coaches, and friends before the school year ended. This afternoon, Governor Cooper, in consultation with the North Carolina Dept. of Health and Human Services, declared that K-12 schools throughout the state are to remain closed through the end of the school year. As much as we are longing to get back to our community in person, we have determined that we will act consistent with the public schools and continue teaching and learning remotely through the balance of this academic year.

This was a difficult decision to make but our commitment to social responsibility is unwavering. For almost 50 years, New Garden Friends School has been guiding students to appreciate the interdependence of community life and how their attitudes, words, and actions affect others.

For many of us, these last four weeks have been a blur of adjustment, uncertainty, and rapid immersion in an entirely new paradigm of work, education, and family life. We are extraordinarily appreciative of the patience, flexibility, and generosity of our families and our staff. New approaches to teaching and learning reveal new strengths and vulnerabilities, and your feedback is crucial. We are paying close attention to what works, why it works, and what can be improved. This is where NGFS teachers, division heads, and learning specialists shine; their concern for meeting students where they are is fueling robust inquiry and research into best practices and the optimal balance of synchronous and asynchronous learning.

Whether students are learning in our classrooms or their living rooms, these challenging times only strengthen our resolve to honor the gifts that each member of our community brings, to be constantly alert to providing the right balance of support and challenge, and to continue to listen deeply, with our minds and our hearts.

Let us continue to hold all affected by these challenging times in the Light,

Kim