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**Notre Dame Students Continue Daily Instruction Through Distance Learning**

*Faith and Academics Thrive with Community Support*

**RIVERSIDE, CA, March 27**- Notre Dame High School students are continuing with remote classes daily amid the COVID-19 pandemic. While some schools are forced to rely on at-home learning resources, Notre Dame’s community support has allowed teachers and students to continue with class curriculum and instruction as planned via Distance Learning.

“We launched our Distance Learning Protocol on the morning of March 16, 2020, with an introduction video for our students,” said RaeAnna Ashton, Principal at Notre Dame High School. “We welcomed families to the week, introduced our Distance Learning Protocol, and explained what our new environment’s expectations were.”

The school, along with the surrounding county institutions, were forced to close their doors Friday, March 13, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many students attended class as usual that Friday with the anticipation of seeing their friends the following Monday. When the administration received notice that schools were to shut down for at least two weeks, they wanted to ensure students were able to maintain some normalcy in an uncertain time.

Three years ago, Notre Dame transitioned to a one-to-one managed iPad platform. This monitored system allows students to take home their iPad daily while limiting the device to only school-approved content. Class books, applications, and course-material are distributed via the school’s Mobile Device Management (MDM) system.

“We can see what students are doing in class, what websites they have visited, and provide a safe and secure learning environment for instruction,” said Ashton. “We are extremely grateful for our iPads, online services made available to schools, and our teacher’s innovation. These resources allowed us to transition to Distant Learning without creating an entirely new instruction platform,” she said.

Even as a technology-ready school, transitioning to online classes would require adjustment and planning, especially for classes that need in-person class time. As a result, the school Administration and a team of teachers worked together to design a Distant Learning model that would best serve their community.

As the school reaches its third week of remote instruction, administrators, teachers, and staff members engage with students daily via their Learning Management System (LMS) Schoology, website, social media, video meetings, class discussions, and pre-recorded lectures. For each class period, teachers take attendance, introduce the day’s lesson plan, and remain available for student questions the entire period.

Students are greeted each morning with prayer, school announcements, and daily challenges. This week, the school is celebrating a virtual spirit week in honor of their spring sports whose seasons were canceled. The theology department expects to organize a virtual celebration for Holy Week (April 5, 2020-April 11, 2020) after their Living Stations of the Cross assembly and community performance were postponed.

“Although Distance Learning has its challenges, our community coming together allows us to continue a culture of faith and academics which provides some normalcy for our students and staff,” said Ashton. “While so much is still uncertain, schools, teachers, students, and families need support. For us, providing a caring, Catholic educational environment for our students is at the heart of our school community. We hope we can provide this same support for neighboring schools and teachers because we’re all in this together,” she said.

The hallways on campus are quiet for now, but the voice of the Notre Dame community remains strong. While the health and safety of each student take priority, the school looks forward to welcoming students back and continuing with scheduled events.

Notre Dame is a private, non-profit, coeducational Catholic high school in Riverside, CA. Students focus on faith formation, scholastic- success, and community involvement through coursework, athletics, and co-curricular activities. Home of the Titans, Notre Dame, was founded in 1956 and currently serves an average of 500 students annually.

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