



# CHRISTIAN BROTHERS ACADEMY

850 Newman Springs Road • Lincroft, NJ 07738-1698

Good Afternoon CBA Students & Families:

As we conclude this first week of online instruction I wanted to let all of you know that you remain in my daily thoughts and prayers. In these uncertain times, it should be comforting for all of us to know that we are blessed with this loving CBA community. Regardless of where we are physically, we are united in common purpose; the Human & Christian education that our Founder, St. John Baptist de La Salle, called for continues as we support each other through this distance learning endeavor.

It seems evident that our world will continue to be turned upside down as the coronavirus (COVID-19) spreads in our nation and communities. Based on the current outlook, CBA will now be **closed the week of March 30 through April 3**, which takes us to our regular Easter vacation. We will remain closed through the scheduled Easter vacation making our earliest possible return date **April 20, 2020**. Whether or not we can return on April 20 will depend on how things develop over the next four weeks.

Online instruction will continue during this additional week of closure before Easter vacation. As the length of time for distance learning increases, so does the necessity to evolve as an educational community. We realize that there has been some difficulty with the PowerSchool Learning LMS; they apparently were not prepared for the significant increase in traffic as the entire nation went online. They are reportedly working on upgrades, but the CBA faculty and administration have been communicating and working on alternatives to bring students a better experience. Many teachers will begin rolling out various different methods going forward.

In addition to some basic adjustments in the delivery of material and assignments, we will be implementing scheduled video conferencing with students and teachers two days per week. The "A" day schedule will be used to meet periods one through four on Tuesday mornings and periods five through eight on Wednesday mornings. These sessions will provide some live interaction with teachers and a forum for questions, explanations, problem solving, and dealing with issues that will inevitably arise. Recognizing the psychological effects that this isolation can have on our young men, we hope this live conferencing will interrupt the isolation, while still allowing for a mostly flexible weekly schedule, which accommodates the complicated home life families are now dealing with.

Further changes are unfortunately needed in our extracurricular program as well.

- All off campus trips are cancelled for the remainder of this year. Information about rescheduling and/or refunds will be made available by the trip moderators as it is received.
- Senior portraits have been postponed.
- The CBA Service Program has been temporarily suspended. No students should be concerned with completing service hours at this time. Once it is safe for students to visit service sites, the service program will resume. In the meantime students who have completed hours may submit their summaries at any time using the regular procedure.
- The Junior and Senior Proms will not occur on the scheduled dates of May 1 and May 8, respectively. Even if we can return to school, we may not be able to have large social gatherings such as these. We are working to secure alternate dates, later in May or even June.
- Graduation - given the rapidly changing realities we are facing, there is no decision about our graduation date at this juncture, but we are committed to holding CBA commencement and are looking at alternative dates, should it be necessary.
- Athletics remain suspended indefinitely for the time being, but our athletic director, in consultation with other A.D.s, has developed a program to keep our athletes engaged. He will be communicating the webinar and Zoom session schedules following this notice.

- Our strength coach is working on some “home safe” workouts to send out for kids to have the opportunity to maintain their bodies as well as their minds.

We realize that these are very difficult steps to take, particularly at Christian Brothers Academy, where we place such value on the strength of our on-campus community. Being together is a large part of who we are. Because of the close bonds that we share, we are all finding these circumstances challenging.

The earliest Lasallian schools were rented apartments in Reims, France. These schools were rustic environments without any of the comforts of Newman Springs Road, but the earliest students still thrived, just as ours today will in this time of distance learning. Previous generations here at CBA have endured the tumultuous time of the Vietnam War era, September 11, 2001 and its aftermath, the 2007-08 financial crisis, and Superstorm Sandy. We too will persevere.

As CBA is one large family, be sure to appreciate the time you now have with your own families. Remain comforted in knowing that the CBA family will be a source of support as we navigate this together with a common heart, a common Spirit, and a common purpose.

May God bless you and all of us, and may He guide us during these uncertain times.

Sincerely,

R. Ross Fales