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The mission of Lake Wales Charter Schools, Inc. is to bring the best of public education to our community by providing innovation and choice within a continuous pre-school through postsecondary curriculum so that each child recognizes the benefits of life-long learning, constructive citizenship and personal happiness.

The Lake Wales Charter Schools, Inc. is an equal opportunity institution for education and employment.

To Our Lake Wales Charter School Family:

For nearly six weeks now, life as we knew it has undergone a significant change. The impact of the Coronavirus has disrupted every aspect of our lives and there does not seem to be an end to this unfortunate circumstance in sight. The recent announcement by our Governor of school closures through the remainder of the school year means we will have to continue down this uncharted path indefinitely.

To date, the Lake Wales Charter School system has worked tirelessly to put structures and equipment in place to support continued student learning, provide for the nutritional needs of students and to ensure continued support for our students that have special needs or disabilities. In this effort we have distributed more than 1,680 Chromebooks and other devices to support distance learning. Our teachers and staff use a variety of online platforms (like Google Classroom and Schoology) to provide academic instruction to students. Our school buses are going into many communities daily to provide food to our students as well as drop-off and pick up instructional materials. I encourage you to take full advantage of these services.

With everything that we are doing to make good in a difficult situation we know there are many shortcomings to our efforts. For example, distance learning can only work if you have (good) internet access. We are aware that internet access is not available in all Lake Wales communities. To address this issue, we have reached out to internet providers seeking their help and assistance. In addition, we are working to create hotspots in certain locations to assist with internet access. Currently, parking areas around the city stadium and Bok South's parking lot are hotspots where students can connect to the internet from their cars. This is certainly not a perfect solution, but we hope this will help some of our students.

As we look towards the future, there still are lots of things that we have no idea about. For instance, when the Governor made his announcement about school closures he did not indicate when schools would reopen. The unfortunate nature of this virus has made it difficult to plan too far into the future. So, at this point we have no idea when schools will reopen that's why it's important for you to stay connected to your individual schools' website, social media, call outs, email or any other means of communication that's used commonly.

With everything that I have said in this communication I know there are still lots of questions and wonderings that you have. One of the most important questions that everyone has is will there be a high school graduation? In conferring with Ms. Dunson, LWHS principal, the quick answer is yes. However, we have no idea when we will have it. She and the students are grappling with the when question. Another big event that occurs this time of year is the Teacher of The Year/Support Person of The Year banquet. Will there be one this year? Our plan at this point is to reschedule it for October/November. Like the high school graduation, this event is too important not to have it. We will have to work within the situation. There are lots of other important events and things that we are trying to figure out but unfortunately have no answers currently.

Finally, our leadership team, which includes all principals, meet several times weekly discussing the situation, providing updates on what is happening and trying to figure out our next steps. One very important issue that we continue to discuss is the lack of participation (academically) by a small number of students. We know how difficult the situation is for everyone and want to support the success of every student, even during this difficult situation. We will be providing interim reports in the coming days that will give you feedback on how your student is doing. Hopefully, this feedback will enable you and your student to know where he/she is and what adjustments need to be made. Please make sure you continue to encourage your student to work with his/her teachers. If there are things that your student is not sure about, please encourage them to ask questions. If your student still has needs to ensure his/her success, please do not hesitate to let us know. We will get through this!