



Dear CTA parents,

An integral part of the success of a school is the partnership with its parent body to educate our children. This partnership is more critical now than ever before. CTA is so fortunate to have such thoughtful parents. The conversations I have had over the last few months have been insightful, honest, and sometimes downright funny. Thank you for going above and beyond. Parents across the United States, and especially at CTA, should give themselves a pat on the back for being amazing.

The CTA "At Home Learning" continues to get stronger using these 5 guiding principles: **community, rigor, purpose, individualized instruction, and simcha**. Last week, we launched SeeSaw for grades K-4, a user friendly platform with great tools for teachers to provide feedback on student work. Since beginning to use SeeSaw two weeks ago, the platform has generated over 1,500 posts (CTA students submitting their work) with 1,200 comments (CTA teachers giving their feedback) and counting. Teacher office hours have been successful in creating opportunities for students and teachers to connect further for small group instruction. Several enjoyable community building programs have been offered such as a well-attended "Chopped Competition" for grades 3-6, Spa Night, virtual Color War for high school students, Yakar Honor Society progress, and a "1000 additional hours of Torah learning" challenge for Upper School students. Lastly, the high school AP courses are moving full force in preparation for the exams that are being administered with an entirely new format. Way to go CTA Lions!

Ending 2019-20 on a high note

We plan on a strong finish to the school year. We fully intend to offer classes and instructional materials to the end of the academic year on June 11th. However, just like when we're in the school building, when Spring hits and the weather improves, teachers will incorporate some more interactive and experiential components that might be less academic and more lively.

Please remember that although your child's academic growth is important, their social and emotional well being is even more important. As stated in a previous email, several parents have expressed concern about their children's ability to stay motivated or focused while doing assignments. Please remember the most important thing for each of us to focus on is a healthy home. We all choose our battles with our children; we caution you about letting school work become a major battle ground. We don't want you to risk your relationship with your child or the peace in your home over schoolwork. If you are experiencing undue difficulty with your child, please contact either your child's teacher for guidance, or Lacey Drake in the Lower School, and Eliza Delman in the Upper School. As always, we are committed to partnering with you to achieve success for your child.

End of Year culminating events

Please mark the following traditional End of Year events on your calendar and plan to attend. All events are being planned with new expectations in mind and virtual invitations.

Thursday, June 4th, 7:30 pm - FRESHMAN SPEECH Celebrate as the Class of 2024 as they make their first presentation as high school Freshman. A link will be sent out to the entire community.

Sunday, June 7th, 12:00 noon - HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION Help make our Seniors graduation more meaningful by showing your support. The Class of 2020 will commence their years at CTA during this specially designed virtual presentation. A link will be shared with the entire community.

Wednesday, June 10th, 10:00am - KINDERGARTEN CELEBRATION Our kindergartners will end their first year at CTA with a special celebration.

Thursday, June 11th, 10:00am - UPPER SCHOOL AWARDS CEREMONY Students in grades 7-12 will culminate the year with a ceremony to recognize and award achievement. A link will be shared with the entire community. Last day of school 12:00 noon dismissal

Returning School Items/Picking Up Personal Belongings We are working on a plan during the last week of school for returning textbooks, computers, Chromebooks and other school items as well as any personal student belongings. We will share more details as we have them.

Planning 2020-21 with all options in mind

The immediate goal of the CTA leadership team is to make sure the current academic year transitions as seamlessly and effectively as possible into the start of school in the Fall. We are laser focused on creating a healthy learning environment and providing our students with the rich CTA education despite the challenges the COVID-19 pandemic presents. All of our planning is predicated on the need to be aligned with any and all K-12 education orders and recommendations from the state of Ohio. To achieve our goal we will be establishing the two advisory committees described below.

- **CTA Building Health and Safety Council** : The primary responsibility of the CTA Building Health and Safety Council is to develop a plan to ensure that CTA is aligned with the recommendations of the Ohio Department of Health for schools in Ohio. Norm Leist will chair this committee. He will work closely with the CTA Medical Advisory Committee and David Bernzweig, a CTA parent and City of Columbus Fire Department Battalion Chief. David manages the Health and Safety program for the Columbus Fire Department, which includes their infectious disease program. He played a key in the fire department's response to COVID-19. CTA faculty and staff will be involved to give input to the Council as they review all current procedures, determine which new protocols need to be in place to reinforce social distancing and make recommendations for which Personal Protection Equipment is needed.
- **CTA Adaptive Learning Task Force** : The obvious challenge we currently face is not knowing what the future will bring. At this point, we still do not know when Governor DeWine will permit us to welcome our students back into the building or if spikes in the virus will necessitate another closure. For these reasons, we are creating the CTA Adaptive Learning Task Force. The Task Force will outline strategies and develop contingency plans, allowing us to adapt our educational model to several possible scenarios. The Task Force will explore various financial models to effectively fund every option, consulting with experts in education and technology. Parent input and a forum for feedback will be an important part of refining plans going forward. We want to know what worked best for your families and in what areas we could improve. I will directly be leading the Task Force in partnership with our Principals, select teachers, and with Gary Blumberg who was designated by our Board President, Bob Wolf, to be the Board Liaison. At certain points in the process, when needed, we will be creating sub groups to help us accomplish our goals.

CTA has a clear academic vision which is dictated by our mission statement. Over the last few years we have introduced new curricula, implemented 21st century academic strategies, and mapped out a plan to build a designated space for innovation in the Upper School to actualize our goals. We have every intention to move forward, advancing our school to prepare our students for lives of meaning and success.

Summer and the start of the next school year : I have been asked by several parents if there is a possibility of changing the start date of the next school year. At this point, we still do not have enough information to answer this question. When we receive the Governor's orders in addition to guidance about social distancing in schools, we will be in a better position to make a decision. I understand that we all need that information as soon as possible. Our goal is to have contingencies developed so when orders are given, we can proceed quickly.

If you have any questions, comments or simply want to talk please feel free to set up a time to talk.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Avrohom Drandoff
Head of School