May 22, 2020

To Our Ransom Everglades Community,

On behalf of the entire Ransom Everglades Board of Trustees, I hope all of you are well and staying healthy.

This evening, Ransom Everglades will celebrate its 117th graduation ceremony and next week we will bring the 2019-20 school year to a close. This was a year unlike any other, and our pride in our graduates and students remains as great as ever. A key tenet of Paul Ransom’s teaching was adaptability to the circumstances at hand and I’d like to commend our faculty, staff, students and families for their flexibility as we’ve successfully navigated the unique challenges of this year.

Looking forward to next year, your Board of Trustees has been working closely with Head of School Penny Townsend to reopen in-person as soon as allowed and in the safest manner possible. Ransom Everglades is known for the high quality of education and strong sense of social responsibility that it instills. Now, we are determined to establish RE as the safest, most hygienic school. To do so means procedural and structural changes, temperature screening, personal protection equipment (PPE), changes to how lunch is provided, more personnel and more costs.

In preparation for these additional costs, the Board of Trustees has paused all new construction projects except for those that are currently underway: most notably, the STEM Center and parking lot on the La Brisa property. Both are nearing completion and RE’s contractor is anticipating delivery early this summer, so they will be fully open for the start of school. The Board of Trustees will also be evaluating ways to reduce expenses and preserve cash. RE’s most valuable asset is its teachers. With that in mind, RE applied for and received PPP funds, which will be used to retain teachers, coaches, administrators and staff.

Sensitive to the economic stress many RE families are experiencing, the Board of Trustees will be working with Penny to extend financial aid to families whose financial condition has changed as a result of COVID-19 and are in need.

The Board of Trustees is optimistic that Ransom Everglades will be back to in-person learning this fall and have limited interruption. But I want you to know that RE will be ready both financially and operationally for the alternatives, whether online or a hybrid of online and in-person.

Ransom Everglades is a remarkable school that has endured through countless hurricanes, World War II and multiple economic downturns. We have been able to do that in a large part due to faculty and staff members who have always risen
to the occasion and continued to steadfastly serve our students and families. Our collective response to the pandemic reveals the thoughtful and caring nature of this community, one that we now are called upon to safeguard.

Thank you for your support and understanding. I wish the very best to members of the Class of 2020 as they celebrate at tonight’s commencement ceremony, and I hope to see all of you back on campus soon.

With appreciation and dedication,

Andrew L. Ansin ’81  
Chair, Ransom Everglades Board of Trustees