



Attempt the Extraordinary

Friday 27 March 2020

Dear Carey Baptist College Families

As you will now be aware, the school service provision for your child's learning will be moving to an online platform. This is by government direction, due to the need to shut down community engagement as far as is possible so that together, we can cooperate with health professionals and each other to overcome the virus.

There have been a number of parents who have asked if Carey Baptist College will be offering a discount on fees given that students will not actually be on site. This is a complex issue and one that we have considered carefully.

A need to support a community

We recognise that this is a profoundly disruptive time and we want to be able to support the whole community so that we are able to come out of this time together. There are many families at the College who are in the fortunate position of having reasonably certain employment during this period. This is a blessing. There are, however, many others who have or will experience, through no fault of their own, job losses, business failures, or significantly reduced hours with devastating short term financial consequences.

It is always our desire to try and support families in our community as we are able, but we recognise that in these extraordinary circumstances, coming together as a community is critical. The last thing we would want to see at this unsettling time is a family who has lost their income, needing to face the challenge and distress of removing their children from the school community due to financial difficulty, at a time when so much has been removed from them already.

For this reason, we are creating the capacity to support those families whose income has been significantly impacted by the Coronavirus to enable them to stay as part of the school community. If we were to provide a discount to all families due to the change in the platform of learning, it would significantly decrease our capacity to support the families who really need it.

Staffing

The College will still need to keep all its staff employed to provide ongoing support for your children's online learning platforms, and to ensure that our staff are able to regroup on campus with your children at the first opportunity to continue their on-campus education. It is uncertain at this point when that will be, so we need to be prepared for all eventualities.

We are extremely proud of our staff. For a number of weeks, on top of their normal load, they have been increasingly providing online content for students who are at home, while also continuing teaching in class. They have needed to develop an online curriculum capacity in a very short time and have been planning for a variety of possible outcomes to ensure, as far as is possible, the continued and uninterrupted education of your children. In a situation that is constantly and rapidly changing, staff have continued working to adjust arrangements for the year's activities, while prioritising the emotional and educational wellbeing of your children and their health.

In addition to the above endeavours, the College has needed to apply additional resources to implement significantly greater cleaning activity and hygiene regimes. This has been to ensure, as far as possible, the safety and protection of children, families and staff as we remain open. The College will need to continue to apply resources to ensure flexibility to respond to the unfolding demands of this crisis.

A time to stand together

The world has changed in a very short period of time and despite the challenges, an enormous amount has been achieved across the globe as people and nations have come together to respond. This is a time for cooperation not negotiation. As Brene Brown, well-known author and speaker noted, it is time to move from "I to we", from "mine to ours", and from "them to us". We can see in supermarkets, the outcome when we do not come together as a community and care for each other. The Bible calls us to "love our neighbour". This is what we are trying to do for each of our families as we navigate the way forward in these uncertain times.

For all these reasons, the College will not be offering a discount to fees on the basis that the learning is being delivered online while students are at home. This will enable us to provide the maximum benefit to those who have been most impacted by the current crisis. We are committed to doing all we can to partner with you to support your children's continued learning, and to be a positive and proactive presence in our community as we walk this journey together. We invite you to join us through the challenging days ahead and see what we are able to achieve together. Carey's motto is "Attempt the Extraordinary". If we come together, we can do just that.

Our staff and leadership are praying for you and your families at this time and count it a privilege to be part of your community.

Financial Assistance

Please be assured that we are continuing to identify mechanisms we can use to increase the level of financial assistance that can be made available to families whose financial situation has changed because of the current crisis. Our desire is that all of our Carey families can keep their children in our schools, and we do not want concerns around finances to be a reason to leave. To this end, if your financial situation has changed and you need assistance regarding your fees, please contact our College's Accounts Department at accounts@carey.wa.edu.au and discuss how we can assist.

Kind regards

Mr David Kilpatrick
CEO/Director of Ministries

Mrs Jennifer Argue
Executive Principal

