

Schools & Students

On March 12, 2020, the faculty and staff of **Green Hedges School** saw its students in Preschool through Grade 8 for the last time of the 2019 -2020 school year. At the time, the School wasn't quite sure when the students would come back, but we knew that there needed to be a plan in place to continue teaching over 150 students for the rest of the school year...from a distance. It was a daunting task to say the least. March 13, 2020, the day before the School's Spring Break, the faculty gathered for the last time as a group for a morning meeting and spent the rest of the day familiarizing themselves with terms and technology that we now are all too familiar with...Zoom, Distance Learning, Google Classroom, Seesaw...and the list went on. Were they scared? Yes. Were they overwhelmed? Yes. Were they ready to take on a new challenge? Always.

After Green Hedges returned from Spring Break, we hit the ground running with distance learning. By that point, the School knew that students would not be on campus for the remainder of the school year. The first day of distance learning, students and teachers logged on and there was nervousness, but also a hint of excitement, at the thought of venturing into the unknown. Each day after that, we logged on and we did it over and over again. Teachers began adapting and teaching in innovative and creative ways. They slowly became more familiar with the technology, and what we thought might be impossible...all of a sudden became possible. Not only did our students survive in distance learning, they thrived. It is safe to say that the resilience of our students was not lost on any of the faculty and staff of Green Hedges School and their ability to adapt was a thing of beauty to behold.

COVID-19 changed us all, but the community at Green Hedges School helped us get through it. Yes, there were tough days, but we dare to say that it made us stronger and more prepared than ever to take on new challenges. We saw what the heart and soul of our community, the students and teachers, were capable of and although traditions and events like graduation looked different last spring, they still went on--a true testament to our determination to carve out moments of joy and celebration in a pandemic.

A year later, it is now spring 2021. The sights and sounds of a campus full of children has returned. Green Hedges School has been in person continuously since September. When you look around, you see children who are thriving and who have never been happier to be at school. The same goes for our teachers, whose "can do" spirit we can all learn from. Are there hard days? Yes. Are there days where we wish the pandemic was over and we could just see our student's faces without masks on? Yes. Are we hopeful that there are brighter days ahead? Always.

Green Hedges School, Head of School
March 2021



As a **high school senior** who graduates in June of 2021, this year has been interesting to say the least. And as much as it's been horrible and I would never have asked for this pandemic to have happened, there have been some positive aspects in my life that wouldn't have happened without it. Because of the COVID 19 virus, my high school's spring show and my work lineup had been cancelled in the summer of 2020 which left me with a lot of time on my hands. I had left a few things off to the side that I would never have had time to earn my Gold Award or go to the International Thespian Festival online. In fact, I wouldn't have been able to travel to Indiana for this festival because our group had decided against it at the last minute. The pandemic led them to revamp the festival online and there I participated in college interviews with schools around the country, including many that I ended up applying to and gaining acceptance. I firmly believe that without the accessibility of a virtual conference, I wouldn't have known of half the schools I ended up applying to. The pandemic also helped me realize which people in my life cared about who lives or dies because of this virus, and who in my life wasn't going to put a piece of cotton fabric over their mouth to save lives. You don't always realize the content of people's character until times are tough.

High School Senior
February 2021



Life in COVID-19

My Friends

My life in coronavirus has changed a lot. I have been meeting up with my friends on the playground on Wednesdays and Fridays. I have also seen them after school on my friend's cul-de-sac. We play a lot of soccer, football, and manhunt. I have also met some new kids who are friends of my friends who go to my school.

My School

I go to Cunningham Park Elementary School. I am in fourth grade this year and have been doing virtual school, but we have started going a few days in person. I have a super nice teacher. I really like seeing my friends and teacher in person and I have a lot of friends in class. Some things that are different than other years are social distancing, wearing masks, and eating lunch in our classroom.

Things I Have Been Doing During Coronavirus

There have been many different things during Covid such as not being able to go into the houses of my friends and not going out to eat. There are also some things that have stayed the same such as playing soccer. We have also still been going on some trips, but not on an airplane and not going to crowded places.

The Best Things About Coronavirus

One of the best things about coronavirus is spending more time with my family. There have been a ton of other silver linings such as getting much better at chess and soccer. I have also been doing a lot of fun online things like drawing with Mo Willems and online camps, such as Smithsonian camp and NASA camp. I know that there are lots of things during covid that I may have never been able to do in regular times.

Conclusion

This last year, I have learned that there are lots of good things in this world and lots of bad things in this world. There are also a bunch of things that I have gotten to do recently that I probably would have never gotten to do such as going to Florida for a several weeks during school, VYS winter soccer league, and gaming outside with friends are some examples. There are also a lot of things that I did not get to do such as go on our summer vacation to Alaska, see my grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins, and go to the movie theater. Covid-19 has taught us a lot about how we can persevere in this world.

Tyler McCarty
April 2021



Ghost Town

The once loud and bustling morning halls of James Madison High School have become a silent ghost town. Masked strangers walk past each other in the silence, leaving nothing but the tap of their shoes against the cold floor. The once packed classrooms are now filled with just a handful of students and a teacher, isolated in their own 6-foot bubble. Friends are saying goodbye through phone screens, after over a year of not seeing each other. Some teachers have spent the whole year at home, without meeting their students. The laughter and talking that once echoed through the halls are gone. Much of the life and learning of the classroom is lost behind plexiglass shields, computer screens, and masks. And yet, the world continues as normal, leaving us behind in the dust, just tumbleweeds rolling through a ghost town. We have been forgotten.

High School Student
May 2021



March 12th- the day everything changed. Before March 12th, everything seemed normal. School was in session and high school sports were just beginning their spring season. For me, March 12th started out with me just going to a normal day of school and then having my second high school soccer scrimmage that night. I remember in my last class of the day my teacher introduced a project to us in preparation that we might be out of school for a week or two while FCPS tried to figure out how to control this “Covid-19.” Shortly after introducing the project, a girl in my class was called to the athletic office to be informed that

there would be no state championship basketball game because of the illness and that the team would be co-state champs. After hearing that we might have a couple weeks off and then hearing about the cancellation of the basketball game, I knew something big was coming. That night, after my team won our soccer scrimmage, we were told that spring sports would be cancelled until after Spring break. We were all devastated and in disbelief because we never thought that this game would have been the end to our season.

Fast forward to April 2021, it was the first time we were able to meet as a team to begin preparation for the new high school season. It had been over a year since everyone had last seen each other and our team didn't have the same dynamic as before. We were all forced to wear masks, stand 6 feet apart, and fill out Google forms saying that we had no Covid symptoms. As the season began, we were still required to wear masks and the team still didn't have the same chemistry as before. Since we were unable to do any team bonding activities or go to dinner as a team, we had to find new ways to connect everyone on the team and figure out how we could best get to enjoy the season with all the new restrictions in place. Every practice, we partnered up with a different teammate and shared fun facts about each other, began having team dinners outside, and former players tried to make the season as normal as possible compared to past seasons.

This soccer season has been far from normal, however, I think my team has been able to adapt just fine. With all the new traditions we have made this year due to Covid, I hope that next year we can carry forth some of them, along with adding previous activities to make the 2022 season the best season yet.

High School Student
May 2021

