

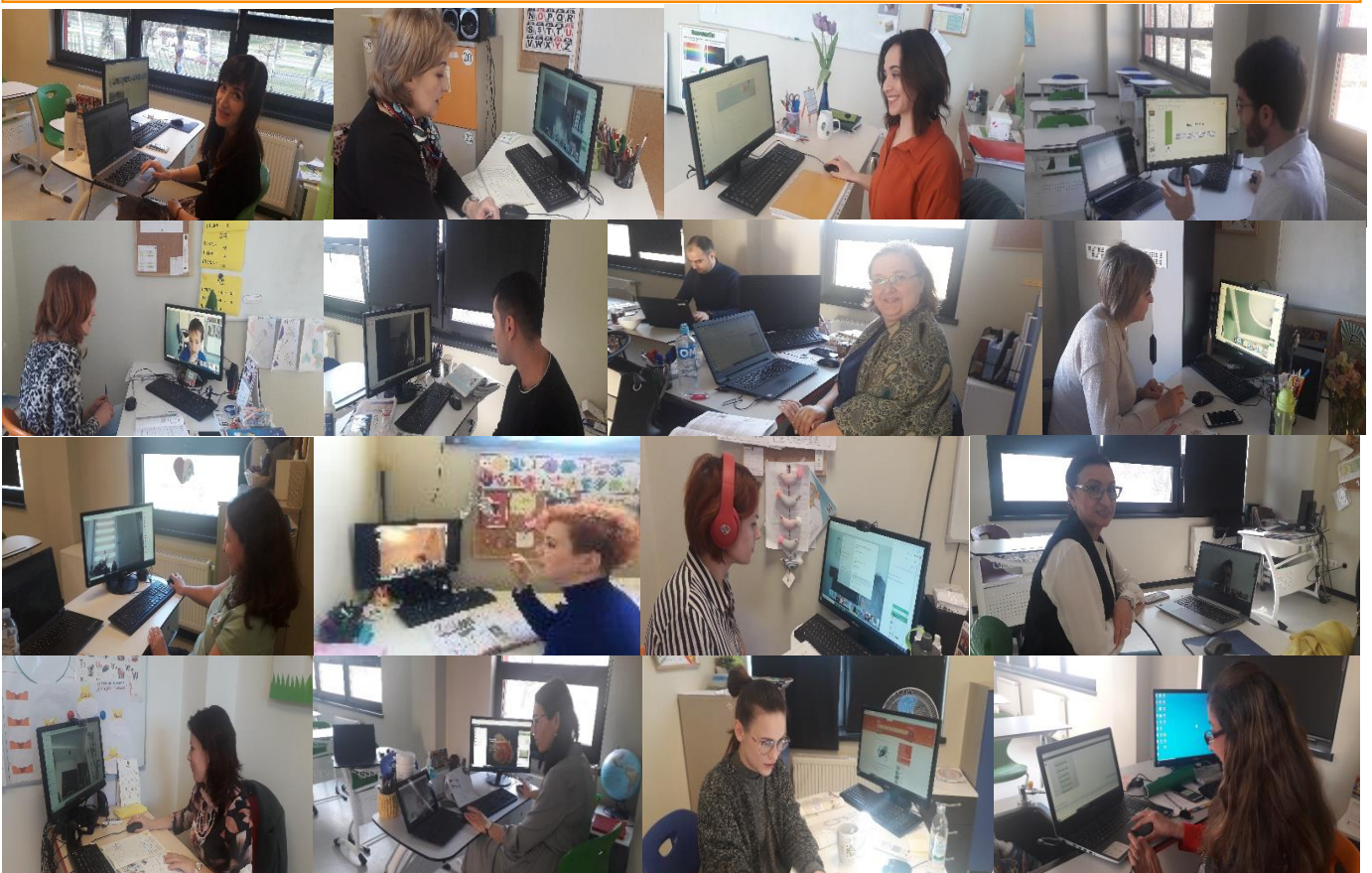
# THE INTERNATIONAL HERITAGE HERALD

March 13, 2020

## THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

*“Our very survival depends on our ability to stay awake, to adjust to new ideas, to remain vigilant and to face the challenge of change”*

**Martin Luther King Jr.**



## GENERAL

*This has been an extraordinary and unprecedented week in the life of our young school. I write this completely without hyperbole and with 25 years in education; half of these as a senior leader leading schools and working with schools and their communities around the World. The entire school community has responded in a calm, positive and constructive approach to ensure we have planned for all eventualities, and our shared Crisis Management Plan has helped guide us through a very uncertain week in which changing*

events escalated rapidly. The most important consideration here has been the wellbeing and education of our children. They are always in the centre of any decision we make as a school. The one reality in all of the confusion of last week as this unfolded, is that doing nothing was not an option and waiting for a Ministry announcement or guidance or the hope it wouldn't happen was at odds with the old advice that the good leaders can always see around corners. We are an outward facing, innovative, 21st century, World Class international school in Moldova, and this week that vision and mission was completely visible in the way we took our advice and guidance from the professionalism of our parents, our Founders, QUBO, the global networks of the schools we work with and our own judgement calls based on our experiences. I want to thank Dr. Igor Pokanevych, head of the WHO in Moldova, and Simon Springett, permanent representative for the UN in Moldova, for their support of me and the school, and their invaluable advice especially as they have been rather busy this week. HE, Ambassador Mikuts and HE Ambassador Dacho, have also been working and advising the school, and I cannot thank these parents and all parents enough for their support as our cohesive school community. All colleagues have worked tirelessly to develop the Distance Learning Plan and to make it a reality, but Mrs Lynda Smith has led from the front with her drive and passion to make sure this was in place, and now we are making it a reality for our school as we meet the demands of this testing challenge to continue to deliver high learning in a strong educational model despite the circumstances. There is still a long way to go yet as this has the potential to last way past the 23rd March but in the words of NASA, failure is not an option. I am really proud of our school and what we are achieving here at Heritage. This is our "New Normal" and we are ready.

### ***HIS - Distance Learning Plan:***

- We are planning to share this week a practical video tutorial for all parents designed to explain how our learning platform works, how we interact with students and how the lessons work. We will be holding an online Questions & Answers session for parents with our Distance Learning Team on Mon 16th March, 3-5pm. If you are interested in joining our multi-lingual (Russian, Romanian, English) video chat, kindly email Lynda before 2:30pm on Monday with the words DLP VIDEO CHAT in the subject line.

Our Google DLP system explained - With school closures, teachers can keep their lessons going remotely - <https://blog.google/outreach-initiatives/education/distancelearning-covid19/amp/>







### **FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions):**

*These are the most common questions asked of school by parents this week and we will answer them here as the answers are important to all of us*

#### **Q1: Can we come and collect books and things from the lockers/classroom?**

*A1: Yes, if the visit is managed and reception is advised in advance. The time in the school has to be minimal and it cannot be in groups of children or families.*

#### **Q2: Is this likely to be longer than the 23rd March?**

*A2: We monitor regularly official announcements from the Government, Ministries of Health and Education. As a school we have planned a response for this situation for the medium term based on the experience and advice of international schools already affected. If we are allowed to resume normal school on the 23rd March we will all be shouting for joy but we are not allowing a "false summit" mentality to be in our strategy and the Distance Learning Plan is based on a longer period scenario. This is our "New Normal"*

#### **Q3: What if we cannot connect from home? Who is checking?**

*A3: Any connection issues/hardware access then email the Distance Learning Coordinator, Lynda Smith (email address in the contacts below). The classroom teacher checks attendance daily from students logging into Google Hangouts. If a student does not log on and is therefore "absent" the teacher will contact home. The key principle of distance learning means "school hours" need to be adhered to by both students and staff. Facetime will not be for every lesson but it will be daily and regular and schools affected and closed for nearly 3 months advise that Facetime for lessons and the principle of this daily routine and structure of school is crucial for good wellbeing and making sure students continue to learn and make progress. The online school day is 8:30am until 3:10pm. And we are still setting homework! No clubs officially but as the model develops we can consider how we can make this work.*

#### **Q4: I know of schools who are doing this differently.**

*A4: We are Heritage International School. Our Distance Learning Plan (DLP) fits our school culture and community. Our Crisis Management Team have worked with and taken advice from international schools who are making distance learning successful as a way of combating schools closures during this global pandemic. The schools that have taken the "snow day" approach by setting work without interaction, lessons and more to occupy time of students at home, are not successful models for this situation.*

**Q5: I am worried about so much time online and at a screen.**

A5: The DLP parents section specifically advises of the need for students to be active, mobile (PE lessons will continue so be prepared for Keep Fit and Zumba in your living room online) and to take breaks away. Schools in Hong Kong say families have devised their own "school bells" in the home to structure the day.

**Q6: Can students meet together to work at home?**

A6: The Ministry of Health Order states there should be gatherings of no more than 50. If families decide to do this then this is their decision and of course all are following the preventative health guidelines from the WHO around washing hands, keeping distance, coughs etc.

**Q7: What about meeting teachers/administration to discuss ongoing, non DLP issues?**

A7: This remains the same only the meetings cannot be physically face to face but online, phone conference or email.

**Q8: What if there is a society lockdown as there is in Italy? Does this affect the DLP?**

A8: No. It is designed to be operated from home for all teachers. The preparation and training of the first few days this week have been about finding problems, equipping staff and making sure this operates. Staff have to keep school hours and follow their schedules to teach as normal. If the situation changes, then we will inform parents by email, FB, website update and Twitter.

**Q9. Do they have to wear school uniform?**

A9: I wish some would follow the actual school dress code when they were physically in school. But no, they don't. Again, the Hong Kong schools, say the success of a DLP is all about routine and good wellbeing to get used to the "new normal". So some students cope better by wearing their school uniform for their "school day" at home, especially younger students. Some teachers in other schools, have made a game of it and asked that today students would wear pink or green or a hat. The routine and keeping them motivated and involved is crucial. That is the key job of home and school in making the DLP work. And please, no PJs!!!

**Q10: We worry about online safety**

A10: This is a key consideration in all of this model and the school applies its Online Safety policy here. This is a policy that was formulated on the UK/European model acceptable by the British Council, Etwinning-Europe online safety standards for schools as well as Moldovan legislation. A copy can be found on the link below and on the DLP. This is why the school is using Google Classrooms, Hangouts and Gmail to be able to have access and control of this closed internal learning platform. We need to all promote better online respect, just as in the normal corridors and classrooms and any issues around poor online behaviour will be dealt with under the school's behaviour policy.

**Q11: What about school events like World Scholars' Cup, UK exchange visit and Open House days?**

A11: Technically, the Order is only until the 23rd March but we are anticipating this period



to be longer based on the experience of other countries and the outbreak of the virus. We have postponed WSC, the UK exchange will now take place in the autumn and Open Days have been postponed for now. We will continue to monitor the situation and anticipate any possible disruption to the school calendar as the semester continues.

From our DLP: "Our goal is for students to read, communicate, and engage in authentic learning experiences, while continuing to be physically active."

You have entrusted your children to a phenomenal group of educators here at Heritage International. I am truly proud to be a part of this team. This is a goal that we will accomplish, and very well.



Distance Learning Plan (DLP) link here:

<https://sites.google.com/heritage.md/distancelearning/home>

Heritage International School Online Safety Policy link here:

<https://sites.google.com/heritage.md/distancelearning/online-safety>

Recommended related articles:

- A beautifully written blog from an international teacher in Italy and her experiences -

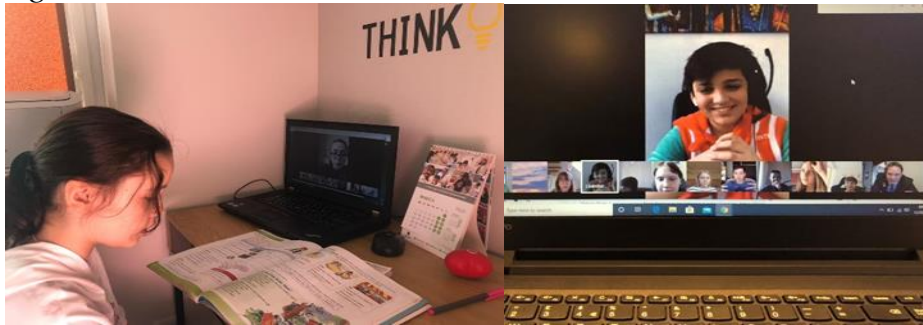
<https://aconstanteducation.blogspot.com/2020/03/lessons-from-italy.html?showComment=1583926141481#c1127210590010262080>

- An interesting article from the USA about how schools are preparing to deal with school closures - <https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/55498/when-should-schools-close-for-coronavirus>

- Cambridge International Assessment advice to all Cambridge Accredited schools - <https://help.cambridgeinternational.org/hc/en-gb/articles/360006532458-Novel-coronavirus-Information-for-schools-about-the-COVID-19-coronavirus-outbreak>

<https://twitter.com/BBCNewsround/status/1238169163425857536?s=20> I would recommend having a look and this thread from the BBC's children's news is perfect to use with our kids to help them understand Covid 19 - we are a school; knowledge is power

Encourage learners and **Heritage Community Distance Learning**: share the picture of your child learning!



### **On Connecting -- from our Distance Learning Coordinator**

Students will connect with teachers via google classroom and google hangouts. Teachers will post materials and platforms to be used for daily lessons on google classroom. Our "face to face" connections will be through the video chat feature on google hangouts. If your student is online and signed into the school google email, the hangouts feature is on the lower left panel. Your student's teacher will add your email to the guardian feature of Google classroom, and you will receive a twice weekly summary of his or her activity from each of his classes.

It is very important--especially for primary parents to sign up for google classroom with their student's Heritage google accounts. Parent emails are added only to the account as a guardian AFTER the student is connected to the classroom with a Heritage account.

Please let me know if your student has any challenges with connecting. I am here to help.

Lynda Smith, Distance Learning Coordinator

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Online access to libraries:

Bibliomania - <http://www.bibliomania.com>

Biblioteca virtuală românească - <http://biblior.net/>

Biblioteca Digitală Online de Administrație și Management - <https://administrare.info/>

E-scoala - <http://www.e-scoala.ro/>

Free Books at Project Gutenberg - [http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main_Page)

Lib. - Электронная библиотека - <http://lib.com.ua/>

Polirom / Biblioteca online - <http://www.polirom.ro/biblioteca-online/>

Site-ul oficial al Uniunii Europene - [http://europa.eu/index\\_ro.htm](http://europa.eu/index_ro.htm)

Universitatea din București / E-Books - <http://unibuc.ro/n/resurse/E-Books.php>

William Shakespeare - <http://shakespeare.mit.edu/>

World Wide School Library - <http://www.worldwideschool.org/>

Библиотека Максима Мошкова - <http://lib.ru/>

Библиотека: <http://allbooks.com.ua/>

<https://www.raz-kids.com>

Manuale <http://ctice.gov.md/manuale-scolare/>

Last Wednesday, a group of Heritage students had a video conference with another team from 'Petru Rares' National College in Beclean, Romania. They discussed customs and traditions for the beginning of spring, telling the famous Martisor legend, as well as sharing information about activities done in their respective schools for Spring Fest.

Besides that, they made plans for their future activities in the eTwinning project 'Are we



*citizens of a democratic world?' - thus looking forward to fulfilling them in the near future.*



*Our primary students participated in a contest, called INTERNATIONAL ILLUSTRATION CONTEST FOR PRIMARY STUDENTS (AGED 6 – 10) „LITHUANIAN COUNTING-OUT RHYMES 2020“. This is an annual competition organised by a school in Radviliskis, Lithuania. Yesterday our students' artworks were exhibited in Radviliskis Public Library. The winners are to be announced later. This is how we educate globally competitive citizens.*



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**20<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 (Friday)**

**20<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 (Friday)**

**23rd-26th March 2020**

**4th-5th April, 2020 (Saturday-Sunday)**

**6th-10th April, 2020**

**10th April, 2020 (Friday)**

**18th-27th April, 2020 (Saturday-Monday)**

*International Francophonie Day*

*International Day of Happiness*

*Global Money Week*

*World Scholar's Cup, Regional Round*

*Science Week*

*Heritage Science Exhibition*

*Easter Break*

## MAIN CONTACTS

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