

16th July, 2020

re: July Update on Heritage International School's confirmed preparation and plans to return safely to physical school for Sept & the new academic year 2020-21 following the MECC announcement on Mon 13th July.

Dear all,

I hope, in the circumstances, you are having a good vacation and sorry to disturb your break but I want to contact you with an important update following the news from the ministry of education (MECC) on Monday 13th July. I thought the best course of action is to write to all families about what this now means for us as a school community.

We welcome very much the statement from the Minister (see the link below - in Russian and English translations) and we commend the leadership of Minister Sarov and his team shown here in this strategy for schools to return safely. This announcement makes it clear that it is the individual school communities that work together for the route that they will take to allow our children to commence learning in the new academic year. This has been our position as a school from the very beginning in March and we have continued to work with and support the national education community in Moldova. The 7 ways to return to school are outlined below and it is the first option route, allowing us all to safely physically return as a school that we will continue to advocate, plan and prepare for as we believe we can get all our children back into school campus learning safely and start our new academic year properly. One size does not fit all and it is a very welcome decision that the ministry recognises this key fact. We do have the ability in our campus, our school community, environment and leadership to return fully. There are many examples of similar schools around the globe where the return has been successful and we have studied this carefully, along with the guidance from organisations like the WHO. We have always worked with our community, staff and students throughout this crisis and we know trust, confidence and reassurance is behind every decision based on the safety, wellbeing and education of every student. Ensuring our staff have a safe work environment and our school continues to be successful as a model of innovative education is also central here for leadership.

Now, we continue to plan and prepare our full return, as we have all summer so far, under the guidelines from MECC, and working with all our community. We will share our thoughts here in this email here with you as it is crucial you know what we are planning, we discuss this and everyone is part of this process. We are all challenged by this global pandemic crisis but today gives us real certainty of returning the school back to physical learning to start September. By the end of July, we will have a detailed return matrix to share with everyone for consultation based on our positional paper. Senior and middle leaders are due to meet on this Fri 24th July as we finalise our detailed operational return to school to share with the whole community. Webinars, individual school visitors, video clips, online sessions throughout August will all be part of how we get everyone ready and prepared for the physical return to school for the start of September. Everything is now being thoroughly looked at from the moment a child leaves home, learns in schools, takes a break, lunch, clubs, homework, to returning home. How we can keep everyone safe on the campus with measures in place that have been successful already in other educational models. Our positional paper from the end of June on returning we shared with you is on our website under our Covid19 updates section.

Here is the WHO link on advice for school returns: <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-schools-and-covid-19>

We know fully where we have climbed to and stand as an international school in this crisis and what we have demonstrated in Moldova and globally what a united school community can achieve to continue to give hope, certainty and education in these most uncertain times. The routines for our children of meaningful learning drives everything. On Tuesday we held, what was certainly seen for many, as the first truly global education conference for Moldova from our school online, with over 500 registered participants from around the World, a wonderful lineup of speakers, support from the UK & US Embassies and the British Council. Educators around the globe are impressed with our story and the vision of our Founders for our school and a huge thanks to Tatiana Popa and the support of Mariana Galescu and QUBO in organising the first of our annual global education conferences with the British Council. - <http://www.heritage.md/en/news/getting-back-to-global-for-the-2020s-international-conference-by-heritage/>

We have achieved so many 1sts in education as a school including the end of last week Mrs Angela' Cara' s work in achieving international curriculum and qualifications fully recognised officially by the Ministry in Moldova. We are really blazing the trail from our school and our efforts are completely focussed on getting our children to return safely to school for September, for their wellbeing, their learning and as a model for the country of exemplary practice, as our response with the DLP was here and globally back in March.

As ever, any questions, points to raise or to pass on, please message me. We all need to know we are all returning to start September physical school.

Warm wishes to you and your families and thank you for your continued support of our Heritage International School,

Rob Ford

Director

Minister Igor Sharov: "The school in September will be responsible, flexible, open, renewed and consolidated"

<https://mecc.gov.md/ro/content/ministrul-igor-sarov-scoala-din-septembrie-va-fi-responsabila-flexibila-deschisa-reinnoita>

Model 1: "100% physical attendance at school". It is applicable in the case of schools, of classes with a rational number of students, in accordance with the state sanitary-epidemiological norms.

Model 2: "Learning in 2 shifts" in the conditions of the pandemic context, in the case of schools with many students, with many classes in parallel, the organization of the educational activity can be done in 2 shifts.

Model 3: "Blended learning" involves the division of school into days of attendance and days of distance communication: in turn - one day you come to school, one day there is distance communication, including online.

Model 4: "Hybrid learning" involves dividing the class into two groups: one day you come to school, one day you take online lessons.

Model 5: "Alternate learning" is based on dividing the class into two shifts: one week at a time you come to school, one week you do online lessons.

Model 6: "Distance learning including online" this model applies in certain specific cases of local force majeure, many cases of positive Covid in a class / school / locality, with respect to isolation.

Model 7: "Blended learning" This model involves combining two or three of the models presented above.

We mention that each of the illustrated models is to be analyzed and adapted according to the specifics of the community and coordinated with OLSD. The responsibility for approval belongs to the Board of Directors and the teaching staff of the institution.