

# Friday Reflection

December 4, 2020

Walking out of my home yesterday and peering at the eerie sky colored by filtered sun sunlight peeking through plumes of smoke should have clued me in the day was on an interesting trajectory. Just after zero period started, I got the call to transition into full distance learning mode because of the local fires. Our team worked quickly to notify everyone and within a short period of time, students were home and online. Just a year ago, we would have completely closed school for such a situation, but yesterday was just an adjustment.

This week proved interesting because of more than the fires. On Monday morning in our admin team meeting, we learned about students and a coach who tested positive for COVID in the week just before Thanksgiving. It appeared in each situation the virus was contracted outside the school setting, but it is always concerning when one of our students or adults is subjected to this illness.

The very next day, we had another first. A parent notified us they just received information their child tested positive for COVID. The unique part was this parent's child was sitting in a classroom at that moment. I quickly went myself to pull the student from class. Just a little while later, a teacher also received news they tested positive. In both cases, there were no real symptoms, but obviously still an issue. With this particular student, I happened to interact with them two times earlier that morning. As I traced my conversations with this student, I was grateful for the emphasis on distancing and wearing masks. I know sometimes it feels like such a hassle to keep our masks on. However, in that moment, the purpose got real. Because of our protocols and attention to safety, we were all protected. It was an important reality check and reminder to keep doing what we are doing until this virus is eliminated, or at least under control.

In the midst of this interesting week, we held a virtual meeting with our school wide team of teachers. It was good to check in as a whole group. We acknowledged the challenges this semester, and also celebrated accomplishments. Listening to teachers share some of their highlights from the semester reminded me how blessed we are to have the team members who care. This has no doubt been one of the most challenging semesters in the history of American education. We learned a great deal, and some things are relatively simple now that seemed difficult just months ago. At the end of the day, what our teachers long for is the opportunity to connect with our students and see them all thriving. I am sure hybrid will continue next semester, and I am looking forward to expanding on the things that are working. While these are challenging days for everyone, it is still great to be a Tiller.

Go Tillers!

Dr. Jon Tuin

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