



PRESS RELEASE

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HENRY FORD ACADEMY IMPLEMENTS ALTERNATE LEARNING PLAN

Teachers/Students Adapt to Virtual Teaching and Learning

San Antonio, TX (April 9, 2020) –Henry Ford Academy: Alameda School for Art + Design (HFA), has developed and implemented an Alternate Learning Plan for its high school students as a result of COVID-19.

HFA is known for offering a world class education with a focus on the essential components of art and design. They work to build innovative, creative, and resourceful lifelong learners. Learners who experience hands on education with real world meaning and connection through college preparatory high school classes. Earlier this year, the school temporarily relocated to The University of Texas at San Antonio Downtown Campus during the City of San Antonio’s extensive transformation of the Alameda Theater complex, which is HFA’s permanent home. Students eagerly embraced campus life and are now adjusting well to virtual learning, as HFA is attentive to both transitions and continuity when it comes to developing their creative learners.

In these trying times, HFA finds comfort in the fact that their students can use art to not only learn, but cope. HFA believes art has various meanings: art as a personal expression; art as a therapy; art as a social commentary, art as community building, art as a positive force for change.

“In developing our alternate learning plan, our primary guardrails have been to provide continuity, social-emotional support and a positive learning path for each of our students. We teach young people first, content second - and our plans reflect this emphasis.” says Deborah Parizek, Executive Director, Henry Ford Learning Institute and a Board Trustee.

HFA’s Alternate Learning Plan goes above and beyond for its students, with dedicated teachers who work remotely every weekday to plan and provide scheduled remote instruction, afternoon office hours and tutoring for students via Google Classroom and Zoom. Teachers also do regular individual check-ins with students in their advisory class. Leaders talked with 100% of its students to understand the resources they had or needed to engage in a fully remote school experience. Based on their responses, HFA distributed school-provided computers to nearly 30% of families and made sure that all received information about low/no cost internet access. Hard copy packets were provided to students who had yet to have technology to support remote learning.

“We are small but mighty and have been able to provide for our students, to not only ensure they have access to technology and proper instruction. We are also reaching out to parents to provide support as needed to ensure the student’s continued success and well-being,” says Jeremiah Montez, HFA Principal/ Superintendent.

As this unprecedented coronavirus threat holds a moment of history in each of these students' lives, their creative work will be spotlighted in a virtual Art Showcase in the near future. In the course of developing their work for this exhibit, students will process their first-hand experience and communicate it through what they do best, art + design.

ABOUT HENRY FORD ACADEMY: ALAMEDA SCHOOL FOR ART + DESIGN

Henry Ford Academy: Alameda School for Art + Design engages students (grades 9-12) in an empowering education. HFA is the city's only tuition-free high school that focuses on art and design as essential components of a world class education. The school excels at developing not only students' academic knowledge and skills, but also their potential as critical thinkers and innovative problem solvers — all in a vibrant, accepting atmosphere where students and teachers work together. As a result, HFA was one of only 18 early learning centers, K–12 schools, districts and beyond school programs in the U.S. to be recognized by Battelle for Kids as a 21st Century Learning Exemplar for 2019. Developed and managed by Henry Ford Learning Institute (hfli.org - a nonprofit organization that is redesigning how we learn and lead), HFA's educational approach emphasizes working in partnership with San Antonio arts and community organizations to provide students with real world learning experiences. Learn more at www.thealamedaschool.org.