



Dear GDS Community,

As our first days of school, August 13th and 14th, are approaching we have been focused on making the campus safe for a healthy return. For the most part that means physical and environmental changes, but we cannot forget about our social and emotional needs as we head into the new school year.

We understand students *and adults* feel confused, anxious, stressed, isolated and managing one's mental health is a big part of our initiative in making the school year healthy.

Today's [Parent Education Series](#) continues with a video from Dean of Students, Candyce Owens, and Athletic Director, Casey Field, about [Student Life & Athletics](#). This video will cover topics that include staying connected and social/emotional health, GDS community events, clubs, athletics and virtual athletic teams.

As Casey Field said in his most recent Spartan Athletic E-News, *"Given the fact that Gaston Day was one of the only schools in the country to offer virtual athletic practices last spring, I am confident that we will be able to serve the physical, social, and emotional needs of our students through athletics this school year."*

Don't forget we are holding a **Town Hall Meeting** via Zoom on **Tuesday, August 4th from 7pm-8pm**. Division Heads, GDS Administrators, and I will discuss our plans for the fall and the top five changes you need to know about going into the new school year. A link to the meeting will be sent in an upcoming email prior to the event.

We are most interested in your questions! We will have a Q & A portion of the meeting especially for YOU to ask anything that's on your mind about the new school year. To make sure we cover as much as possible, we would like you to submit your questions ahead of time. Please email our Director of Marketing & Communications at kpaxton-shaw@gastonday.org with your questions OR you can visit the [re-opening webpage](#) and submit a question through the link at the bottom of the webpage. We also will be accepting questions via the chat in the Zoom during the Town Hall. We may not be able to address every question during the Town Hall, but we will compile the most asked and post them on our re-opening webpage.

I am confident we will have a successful return and an unforgettable school year. I have seen our community pull together and accomplish great things. That's Spartan Strong.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Richard E. Rankin, Jr.' The signature is written in a cursive style.

Richard Rankin, Jr.
Anderson Davis Warlick Head of School