

March 5, 2020

Dear Parents,

During what is probably a challenging and confusing time for us all, we are reaching out to provide a status update on new developments related to coronavirus (COVID-19) and share some additional details about the actions we are taking and planning to protect our school community.

The health and safety of our students, staff, and families is our priority. While the total number of coronavirus cases in the U.S. remains relatively small, experts expect this number to grow as testing increases and more individuals seek care. Currently, the key recommendations from public health agencies to prevent the spread of coronavirus are regular, thorough, handwashing and that symptomatic individuals remain home rather than going to work or school. We echo this recommendation and ask that students with any signs of respiratory illness, fever, or flu-like symptoms be kept home. Please continue following CDC-recommended best practices for overall health during cold and influenza season, including being vaccinated for influenza and taking the following simple measures to prevent the spread of germs and avoid illness:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizers.
- Avoid touching eyes, mouth and nose with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with individuals who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick. The CDC recommends that individuals remain home for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever or signs of a fever (i.e., chills, feeling warm, flushed appearance) without the use of medication.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then immediately discard the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Take any anti-viral medication prescribed to you as instructed.
- The school will require a doctor's note for any child who has been out for 3 days or more with a fever.

We are in contact with our local department of public health to stay updated on the situation and take actions as needed. Our facilities staff continues to focus on regularly cleaning surfaces like doorknobs, countertops, and desks. The cleaning service has changed

the products they use to ones that are more effective against virus and bacteria cells. Disposable wipes are available throughout our campus and we strongly encourage their use.

We have a newly formed Task Force consisting of faculty and administration in conjunction with our health advisor to monitor coronavirus updates on a daily, weekly, and ongoing basis. Should our school need to close or if the situation changes quickly, we will notify you directly via email or text message. If the situation remains stable, we will continue to update our community regularly.

Some of you have reached out with questions regarding field trips and community travel. We are keeping a close eye on field trip destinations that we have planned for our students and will follow any directives from the World Health Organization, CDC, or government organizations. **Currently, there are no impacts on upcoming PS1 field trips.** We will share any scheduling or programmatic changes that may arise.

For those planning to travel abroad during spring break (April 6-10), please stay informed of the State Department's travel advisories as your travel date approaches. Currently, neither the WHO nor the CDC are advising against travel except in areas where there is widespread transmission of disease. The U.S. Department of State issues [travel advisories](#) on a scale of 1-4 (1 being to exercise normal precautions and 4 do not travel). We will continue to monitor the situation for additional travel updates. If you are experiencing respiratory or flu-like symptoms following travel, please do not come to campus.

Finally, we want to take a moment to acknowledge the psychological impact of this situation. The organized worldwide response to coronavirus has been robust and generally encouraging. However, it can also be a challenge for students (and really our entire community) to process. The following links give some good strategies on how to talk to children about coronavirus without raising the anxiety of anyone involved.

[This New York Times article](#)

[Betsy Brown Braun's article](#)

Thank you, as always, for your partnership and understanding as we work together for the health and safety of everyone in our community. We will continue to share updates with you as needed.

Sincerely,

Joel and the Coronavirus Task Force at PS1