

March 3, 2020

Dear Friends:

As you are all well aware, the worldwide situation regarding the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) is changing rapidly. First detected in December 2019 in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, it now has an international presence including cases here in the United States. Like every school, we have been closely monitoring the situation, are paying close attention to information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Maryland Department of Health. While not currently classified as a pandemic in the United States, circumstances are evolving each day. Here at school, we have assembled an ad-hoc committee to coordinate our response to this crisis. In consultation with the professional resources available in our own community, we have also considered the recommendations of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), the Association of Independent Schools in Greater Washington (AISGW) and the National Business Officers Association (NBOA). This committee will continue to collaborate in the coming days to insure our response remains both well-informed and nimble.

While we believe that, at this writing, the risk is still low to the Primary Day community, we are reviewing and updating our *Widespread Illness Action Plan* to make certain that we are prepared for any disruptions here at school, but we need your help. First and foremost, please strictly observe standard health and hygiene practices. Every one of us bears the responsibility for our collective good health. The advent of the coronavirus notwithstanding, these important practices can also prevent the further spread of both influenza and the recurring colds that we have grappled with this season. These basic precautions include frequent handwashing, covering mouths when sneezing or coughing and remaining at home when ill. See the School's *Health Exclusion from School* policy (attached). Our custodial team has a rigorous cleaning routine in place but is increasingly vigilant, cleaning door handles, faucets, railings, light switches, desks, chairs, and all other surfaces throughout the school day and every evening. All teachers and staff have a supply of Clorox wipes, hand sanitizers and tissues for their frequent use in both classrooms and offices.

Here at Primary Day, our community is a diverse one and our families travel widely. Many of you have undoubtedly already made plans to travel during our spring recess which begins on Friday, 20 March 2020. Please consider the possibility of unexpected disruptions and/or quarantines, both during and post-travel. If your plans do include international travel in the near future, consult the [CDC's current travel advisories](#) and those of the [US Department of State](#), both prior to your departure and as you plan a return to the United States. Please inform my office of your travel plans to any country that the CDC has defined as Level 2 or 3. Finally, it saddens me to tell you that some of our peer schools have reported that children and families of Asian heritage have been unfairly treated, even vilified, as a result of heightened anxieties surrounding this crisis. In every way, such actions are inconsistent with our commitment to cultivating and preserving a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion. Thank you for supporting our efforts to sustain a community that values and respects all students, families, faculty and staff.



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The health and safety of our Primary Day family is our highest priority. Be assured that we will continue to carefully monitor this challenging, ever-changing situation and update the community as necessary and, as always, I welcome your questions and thoughts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S.W. Lawrence", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Scott W.C. Lawrence
Head of School