



March 10, 2020 - update #2

As part of our regular communications regarding COVID-19, I want to follow up regarding current and future planning for students and families, so that you may stay fully informed. Please read through the entire document, and **please complete the very short survey** on remote learning accessibility at the end of the document.

Information sources

We are maintaining close contact with local health officials, and we are actively monitoring local, state, and national websites for the latest information. Additionally, we have received excellent information from our independent school organizations as to best practices other schools are using, including from our peers in California and Washington. We encourage you to use the following resources.

- Centers for Disease Control (CDC) COVID-19 information page - [link](#)
- Michigan Department of Health and Human Services COVID-19 information page - [link](#)
- Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD) - [link](#)

Additionally, we will be posting information on our School's website. We will continue to push information to you via email, but we will also add a web page for ready access. A link to our page will be shared in this week's newsletter.

Travel (including Spring Break)

Families and employees will possibly be traveling out of the region this coming Spring Break. Additionally, many members of the Emerson community travel as a matter of course for business or leisure. Emerson will consistently follow CDC and WCHD advisories and expect all individuals who enter Emerson's facility to comply with those advisories.

To that end, all Emerson community members (including staff and students) and visitors to Emerson (including parents) must adhere to the following procedures:

For any community member returning from a location with a CDC Level 3 Travel Health Notice (currently China, Italy, Iran, and South Korea):

- Follow the CDC's instructions. Currently travelers from these countries are directed to stay home for 14 days from the time they left an area with widespread, ongoing community spread.
- The individual must not enter Emerson during the 14-day period.
- The individual must notify the Head of School if self-quarantine is required.

If the CDC's travel advisories are updated after you return to include an area that you have traveled to, first notify the Head of School.

We strongly advise you to pay attention to CDC Travel Health Notices, as well as both state and county health department websites; the situation may change rapidly and new notices may be

issued at any time. Families are advised to consider their ability to self-quarantine before engaging in any travel, domestic or international, where COVID-19 is present in the community.

Signage

As not all visitors to Emerson receive communications such as these, we will be adding signage to both our main entrance and our after school care entrance. This is to notify visitors that should they have traveled to locations with Travel Health Notices, they are not to enter campus. Visitor restrictions may be modified in the future, based on notices at the federal, state, or county level.

Field trips and international trips

Currently, the school is under no outside advisory for canceling trips or changing travel plans. That said, conditions are changing rapidly. Additionally, a number of parents have expressed concern about their child's attendance at future trips, and are worried about children being away from home beyond the length of a day trip.

Assuming that no advisory is given by state or local authorities, we are evaluating upcoming school trips as follows:

- **Lower school class trips** - Faculty will work with me and Jen Kime, Lower School Director, to determine whether and when canceling any upcoming trips is appropriate.
- **Middle school end-of-year trips** - Currently, these trips are scheduled to run, but this may change. We are actively monitoring conditions and giving further consideration to these trips. Should we find it necessary to cancel any or all of them, we will plan to notify you as soon as possible, taking into account the students' needs, as well as the financial and logistical impact of cancellation. In the event that we do cancel these trips, we will plan to have the week of June 1-5 as a regular week of school. We will certainly think through how to lessen the sting of cancelling these much-loved year-end trips.
- **Teacher-led international summer trips** - Victoria Scott and Sarah Longcore will be in contact with those families who had signed up to travel either to Italy or France this summer. They will share what changes or alternative plans will be in place. Wei Cao's planned summer trip to China has already been canceled.
- **Auction trips** - we have ensured that the wonderful travel packages up for auction this Friday can be used either in 2020 or 2021, so as to maximize flexibility.

Remote learning

We are developing plans for remote and online learning, should the school be required to close for an extended length of time. Lower School Director Jen Kime and Middle School Director Andy Zimmer are helping teachers to prepare for this possibility. For our older students (grades 4-8), we would primarily be using Google productivity tools, such as Google Classroom, Chat, and Meet. For younger students, we would use tools appropriate for the age, such as Bloomz and SeeSaw. We would also be able to provide resources and guidelines to families of younger students, so that learning could continue in as uninterrupted a manner as circumstances allow. As much as possible, we would seek to have some degree of normalcy for our students, using various combinations of live streaming, recordings, posted assignments, and/or submitted work. Once these plans are finalized, we will share them with you.

In order for us to maintain successful online learning during a closure, we will need to ensure that every family will have proper access. **Please take a moment to complete [this very short survey](#) to answer a few questions about remote access capabilities.** This will help to guide as to what contingency plans would work successfully, should there be a prolonged school closure.

Good hygiene practices

Our Medical Assistant will continue working with our students on understanding and following healthy procedures. She has been impressed with the number of students who can already recite proper handwashing procedures!

As a reminder, good hygiene practices include the following:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, and stay home when you are sick.
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with either a tissue or upper sleeve.

Student reassurance

Our faculty members have been sharing helpful videos and resources with one another as to how to best support students with their questions and concerns about this virus. One that caught my eye the other day was a short comic titled [Exploring the New Coronavirus: A Comic Just for Kids](#). Please continue to help us reassure our students that we, the adults in students' lives, will be working together to help keep them safe.

As always, I thank you for your trust in Emerson School to care for your child and provide the best environment in the face of such global concerns. I will continue to keep you informed in the days to come.

John Huber
Head of School