



March 14, 2020 - update #3

To our Emerson families -

As we have shared with you previously, Gov. Whitmer has directed all schools in the state of Michigan to be closed Monday, March 16 through Sunday, April 5 in order to slow the spread of COVID-19. In light of this announcement, Emerson School will be providing remote and online learning for our students instead of our regular in-class instruction. Please take a moment to read through the entirety of this letter to learn both about our remote learning plans, as well as other important information.

Please note that to date, we are not aware of any reported cases of COVID-19 directly affecting a member of the Emerson community. That said, we are staying alert to this possibility, and information provided below may be updated, based upon the latest conditions.

What events and activities are being canceled?

All school events and activities from now until Sunday, April 5 are canceled. These include the following:

- 3/14 - Robotics practice
- 3/18 - Middle School Band & Orchestra concert
- 3/19-3/21 - Middle School Girls Basketball tournament
- 3/20 - Kindergarten Visiting Day
- 3/20 - 6th grade to Finance Park
- 3/21 - Middle School Quiz Bowl tournament in Livonia
- 3/25-3/26 - Parent/Teacher Conferences (*see below for more information*)
- 3/28 - Middle School Science Olympiad tournament
- 3/30-4/3 - Spring Break Care

How will remote and online learning work?

Soon after you receive this email, Lower School Director Jen Kime and Middle School Director Andy Zimmer will send you a detailed description of how this will work in each division. This will be followed by direct communication from our teachers.

Please note the following regarding remote learning:

- ***As requested by the teacher, please gather your child's materials from school this Sunday.*** Some parents have already been by the school to gather books, but it is possible that teachers will have produced new materials this past Friday afternoon. **We will be opening the building on Sunday, March 15th from 1 pm to 6 pm.** During this time, you may collect necessary materials. We also encourage you to look in your child's locker and remove any dishes or perishable items. We respectfully ask families to gather materials swiftly and not linger in the school beyond the time it takes to collect items.

- **Electronic devices are available to be borrowed as needed.** Kindergarten families needing iPads, and 1st-8th graders needing Chromebooks, may sign out these devices, along with charging blocks and cables. We ask that you sign a usage agreement when you pick up a device. Families with devices at home do not need to borrow ours.
- **Some administrators (including me) will be in the building from March 16 through March 27.** Should new materials be developed requiring pickup, we are currently planning to allow this, assuming there is no requirement to close the campus due to health reasons. That said, we are canceling all meetings on campus, and families gathering materials are asked to do so swiftly.
- **Teachers will be sharing “business hours” with you directly.** Please consider that as we move to remote and online learning, many of our faculty are also parents who will be juggling their own schedules. Each faculty member will communicate his or her available hours to respond to emails, and these will vary person to person, depending on each person’s circumstance. In all cases, email communication is best.
- **We are exploring an outdoor book cart checkout for students during the upcoming weeks.** More information on this will come from our Librarian Linda Lakshminarayanan.

I have questions...

- **What about our families in need?** Counselor Carrie Berkley is serving as point person to help direct attention to those in need. If you, or someone you know, needs help with continuation of meals, general accessibility to the internet and materials, community support, etc., please email Carrie at cberkley@emerson-school.org.
- **What if I have technical difficulties?** Please email Technology Coordinator Renee Durrant at rdurrant@emerson-school.org. Additionally, you can leave a voicemail with Renee at 734-665-5662, ext. 346.
- **What if my student is sick and can’t complete what is assigned?** In the Lower School, please let the teacher know. In the Middle School, please let either the advisor or teacher know.
- **What if we lose access to internet connectivity?** You can leave a voicemail with Lower School Office Manager Christy Loewen at 734-665-5662, ext. 307, or Middle School Office Manager Beth Muszkiewicz at ext. 301.
- **What if a teacher is sick, or he/she can’t access electronic communications due to outages etc.?** Our faculty have been advised to contact the appropriate Division Director, who will then seek to let families know. Should we have broader internet access difficulties, I will use the RenWeb alert system.
- **Is it possible that the building will be wholly closed?** Yes, and should that be the case, you will be notified directly.

- **Will our Counselor be available?** Yes! Certainly in times of stress, students will need special care and support. Our Counselor Carrie Berkley will be available to answer your and your child's questions and concerns. She can be reached at cberkley@emerson-school.org.
- **Will we be rescheduling Parent/Teacher Conferences?** Yes, our goal is to reschedule these later in the school year. Though there are certainly remote access options available, we do cherish the value of face-to-face meetings for collaboration when discussing a child's progress. That said, this may not be possible. Please stay tuned for further updates.
- **When will report cards come out?** These will be delayed, but not for too long. Please read Jen's and Andy's updates for specific information.
- **What about ERB scores?** We will be sending your child's ERB scores with you on March 23rd, as previously scheduled. Please note that faculty have not had the opportunity yet to review these as we typically do. Please allow some time before asking questions specific to your child's scores.
- **What about Spring Break?** We believe that a significant number of our families and faculty will be traveling over Spring Break to be with loved ones, or will be heading to remote areas where reliable internet access will be difficult. In order to maintain a sense of normalcy, we are planning for Spring Break to remain as it is, and work will not be assigned over the break. We are also considering the possibility that we might be unable to return to regular on-campus classes after April 5, in which case the Spring Break will be a respite before a continuation of remote and online learning.
- **Can teachers meet with students and families, just outside of school?** No. We have directed teachers to work from home, and only work on campus if unable to complete remote learning from their homes or elsewhere. We will not be leading, holding, or scheduling student group practices of any sort.
- **Is the school still running admissions activities?** Director of Admissions Lisa Psarouthakis will be providing inquiring families with specific information as to how we plan to continue with admissions. While we will not be welcoming visitors to campus, we will maintain communication with inquiring families.
- **What about April and May events?** We will be discussing these in the coming weeks.

Reminders (summarized from prior communications):

Information sources. We encourage you to use the following resources to gain the latest information.

- Emerson past and present updates, including this letter - [link](#)
- 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](#)

Good hygiene practices. 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.

Travel. 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.

Student reassurance. Our faculty members have been sharing helpful resources with one another as to how to best support students with their questions and concerns about this virus. Please continue to help us reassure our students that we, the adults in students' lives, will be working together to help keep them safe.

One final note - the Emerson community has once again shown its strength as it has come together to face these challenges. I cannot thank you enough for the kindness and support you have shown our faculty and me these past few weeks. This is a new experience for all of us! Had you told me in September that we would be planning for remote access learning for Kindergarteners in March, I never would have believed it. So as we refine our plans and persevere through challenges, I want you to know how appreciative I am for your patience and your partnership.

Be well,

John Huber
Head of School