

Dear Families:

We continue to closely monitor up-to-date information about COVID-19 and adhere to guidance and recommendations from several reputable sources, most notably the San Mateo County Health Department, The Center for Disease Control (CDC), and the National Association of Independent Schools.

Our goal is to plan thoughtfully and comprehensively for all members of our school community and make informed decisions. This update focuses on 2 areas:

### **Taking steps on campus to prevent the spread of illness**

Our protocols are based on those guidelines provided by the above experts and mirror many recommendations already in place to prevent the spread of cold and flu.

- Our team is daily disinfecting all classroom and common areas. We have been doing this and we have added additional cleaning during the day for common areas including the lunch tables, playground, courtyard, multi, bathrooms, student services and the kitchen.
- We are reinforcing thorough and frequent hand washing for everybody on campus, throughout the day.
- We are implementing a basic set of questions about health and travel for any visitors to campus to limit exposure to our community and we are revisiting any planned visits that can be postponed until a later time
- We are sending students and employees home if they have any signs of a fever or respiratory illness. We require that you keep your child home for 24 hours beyond the time at which they no longer have a fever (without the use of medication).
- We remind you to not send your child to school if they have a respiratory illness or a fever, just like you would if they had a cold or the flu. Once again, the 24-hour rule applies before allowing them to return to school (including, again, all employees). In addition, please do not come to campus yourself if you have had any symptoms in the prior 24 hours.
- If your child is out sick, when you call in to report the absence, we are going to follow up with you to understand the nature of the illness. This information will inform our decision-making as we address the current situation.

### **Developing contingency plans**

We currently have no plans to close Armstrong and would encourage you to minimize any discussion with your student(s) of the possibility so as to mitigate any anxiety they may be feeling or distraction to their learning when at school. That being said,

- We are actively involved in discussions with schools throughout California and, at the appropriate time with public health officials, about the circumstances under which we would close school for a period of time. Some of you may be aware that the Menlo School in

Atherton chose to close for 3 school days starting today in response to a specific concern they had – so these decisions are not hypothetical and we are taking our responsibility very seriously.

- We have begun exploring options for At Home Learning, that will be specific to our student population, in the event of a school closure. We cannot make any promises that we will have a plan in place ahead of a closure, especially given the challenge of doing so while we are still teaching your children, but we want you to know we are exploring alternatives.
- We will communicate any change in our thinking or our approach clearly and in a timely fashion.

*Finally, school trips present a particularly challenging question. Currently, we are not canceling any major school related activities, including travel. However, we are monitoring the situation very closely and will make final decisions as we get closer to the departure dates for the Yosemite and D.C. trips. We may cancel or postpone some smaller field trips or parent education programs just to again limit unnecessary interactions/exposures.*

This is an evolving event and we recognize it is concerning. We know that keeping current on reliable information will allow for clear decision-making should something change.

Thank you all for your part in helping us during this unusual and challenging time. I'm hopeful you recognize that, given our close monitoring of this situation and all our regular school responsibilities, it is unlikely I will be able to respond to every individual e-mail about the current situation.

- Jessica