



March 5, 2020

Dear Covenant Families,

We understand that many families continue to have questions regarding the ongoing outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) and how it may impact our local community. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is providing daily updates and recommendations. Please click on the following link to stay updated <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

While this is a public health concern, the CDC continues to report that the immediate risk to the general public remains low at this time. Yet, in today's connected world, with a large number of families traveling regularly for work or during school vacation weeks, the potential for infectious disease is always of concern.

We are respectfully asking all members of our community, including family members, to inform us if you have travelled to any of the CDC's identified high risk regions within the past 30 days or had contact with any individual suspected of having the COVID-19 virus. Travel to the following countries by *any family member* should be reported to the school: China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Southeast Asia, Iran, Italy, Japan, South Korea, or impacted areas within the US. Please feel free to communicate this information directly to me at andrea.bergstrom@ccamail.org. This information would only be shared with necessary administrative staff and the nurses and confidentiality will be taken very seriously. Many businesses and organizations are recommending self-quarantine for any individuals who may have potentially been exposed. We would kindly ask that you consider staying out of the school building for the same length of time as recommended for quarantine (14 days) if you believe you may have been exposed to the virus. Knowledge is power and can help us more effectively monitor student symptoms and make appropriate recommendations.

As we embrace preventative measures and proactively plan for the "what ifs", we are considering how an extended school closure could impact our learning community. All faculty are in the process of preparing contingency Remote Learning Plans that could be utilized during such a worst case scenario. While we recognize that remote learning could never replace what goes on in our classrooms, we are doing our very best to develop simple plans that would keep our students engaged and learning while at home for an extended period of time. Please be on the look out for more information from your divisional administrator regarding these plans.

As with seasonal flu and strep infections, there are general precautions we can all take to remain as healthy as possible.

- Practice good hand hygiene. Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Use Alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available.
- When coughing and sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue. You can also cough or sneeze into your sleeve. Throw used tissues in the trash and immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid sharing drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, dishes, towels or other items. Wash these items thoroughly with soap and water after use.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick whenever possible.
- Practice other good health habits: Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.
- It is important to keep children home from school when they are ill. If your child has any of the following symptoms please keep them home from school: temperature greater than 100.0, coughing, vomiting, diarrhea, any rash not yet diagnosed by a physician, red or pink itchy eye, and/or drainage from eye, and any contagious illness such as chicken pox, strep throat or flu. *I*
- *In addition please remember that a child must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of analgesics.*

As part of our efforts to track illness in the community *in cooperation with the Peabody Department of Public Health*, we are respectfully requesting that if you need to keep your child home sick from school, that you leave information on the school's phone messaging system or with Mrs. Covell or Mrs. Nelson, indicating if the absence is due to fever, respiratory illness, or other flu-like symptoms. We ask that you please report all absences to the front office rather than to the classroom teachers.

The Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is an evolving situation that we are following closely and we will continue to update you as information is shared with us. Please rest assured that we are monitoring student health concerns. We are in close communication with the local Board of Health, Massachusetts Department of Public Health/School Health Unit, as well as pediatric health care providers in the community. Our staff is vigilantly sanitizing our educational spaces as we typically do during cold and flu season. We are following all recommended guidelines to ensure the safety of our students and staff.

We remain deeply committed to student and staff wellness and will continue to share new information with you, as necessary, about this evolving situation. We thank you in advance for extending transparency and strong communication with us as well.

Sincerely,

Andrea Bergstrom
Head of School