March 8, 2020

Dear York Families,

I am writing to update you on the school’s diligent monitoring of coronavirus (COVID-19). During the past month, as you know from previous school communications, we have taken several preemptive steps to keep our community safe. Nevertheless, the news about COVID-19 has accelerated this week, which has generated additional questions for schools to consider.

I want to reiterate that as of Friday, March 6, there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Monterey County, and we are closely monitoring the responses of nearby counties and schools that have confirmed cases. We have organized a Coronavirus Taskforce of faculty, staff, and administrators. The taskforce is using the resources of the National Association of Independent Schools, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), and local public health officials to help inform our response. The taskforce has also utilized the expertise of Dr. Leslie Galloway, a York parent and local physician. Of course, our most important responsibility is to protect the health of York community members, especially our students.

**What would cause York to close school?**
Following the guidelines from the CDC, if a York community member were diagnosed or were in direct contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, we would close school. After closure, we would closely assess the situation, seeking the advice of health professionals and government officials, to determine the length of the closure and would discuss any other measures we would need to implement to ensure the safety of our community.

If a York community member attended an event where another attendee was later diagnosed with COVID-19, we would ask the community member to self quarantine and would then determine whether to temporarily close school.

**How would York continue to educate my child during a school closure?**
York faculty would teach their courses remotely to York students using Google Meet, a video conferencing application, and Haiku, our digital learning platform. Students have access to and are familiar with both applications.

Last Wednesday, we devoted our faculty and staff meeting to additional training for teachers to deliver their courses through distance learning. Further, last week, teachers reviewed with their students how they would stay connected in the event of a school closure. Teachers also encouraged students to take all of their school materials home during spring break. We are...
Currently crafting specific guidelines for distance learning for students and families that we will share prior to a school closure.

Note: If your family doesn’t have reliable access to wifi, please contact Kevin Brookhouser, Director of Technology and Innovation, at kevin@york.org.

Will York athletic contests and other off campus school events be cancelled or rescheduled?
Currently, all events remain as scheduled. We are following the guidelines from the CDC and public health officials to determine when we would cancel or reschedule athletic, extracurricular, or community events. If we closed school, athletic and extracurricular events would be postponed or cancelled. If school remained open, we would assess the nature of the event and the risk to our community members and students before deciding to postpone or cancel.

What if my student and/or family travels during spring break to an area where there are confirmed COVID-19 cases?
On your return to Monterey, if you believe you may have been exposed during your travels to someone who was confirmed to carry COVID-19, please contact Kevin Brookhouser, Director of Safety, at kevin@york.org and me at doug@york.org. Otherwise, the most important advice during your travels is to follow safe health practices outlined at the CDC travel site: https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel

In addition, if you are traveling to a Level 3 country as identified by the CDC (currently Italy, South Korea, China, or Iran), we will require you to be cleared by a York-approved physician before returning to campus. It is vital that you inform the school as soon as possible if you or your child will be in any of these countries during spring break. These travel health notices change frequently. We recommend families regularly monitor the CDC travel site: https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel.

Although the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 might make us anxious, I am proud of the faculty, staff, and administrators who are calmly and proactively preparing plans to support your child’s education and protect their well-being. I also want to express my appreciation to you, as a York family, for supporting our efforts as we manage the COVID-19 outbreak. Finally, we plan to send another email update to families by Friday, March 13, before we return from spring break. If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to let me know.

With gratitude,

Doug Key
Head of School