

March 13, 2020

Dear Families,

I know anxiety is high on all fronts and you have many questions. We continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation daily, receive updates from the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) and Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) and talk internally about the best course of action for the Wolf School.

While we are all aware of the cancellations sweeping through our communities, we also recognize that the first coronavirus case in Rhode Island occurred two weeks ago, and as I write this there are only 5 confirmed cases in the state. So far, Rhode Island has done a great job containing the virus and limiting its spread.

At this time, RIDE and RIDOH are NOT recommending the closure of any Rhode Island schools unless there is widespread illness or a confirmed case within the school. We are following their guidance, while continuing our regular program of cleaning throughout the day and enforcing regular hand-washing from everyone in the building. During our upcoming break, we will also be conducting a more intensive, deep cleaning to keep our facility as safe as possible.

RIDE and RIDOH recommend cancelling, postponing or avoiding any gatherings of more than 250 people. We do not have any such events planned, either internally or externally.

RIDE and RIDOH recommend cancelling field trips where large groups of people gather or where there is limited access to hand sanitizers or washing stations. We are closely monitoring and evaluating our regular out-of-school activities to see if they pose any risk. At the moment, we are comfortable with our normal schedule of activities.

We are also communicating regularly with our staff and enforcing the expectation that no employee comes to school feeling sick or displaying any symptoms whatsoever. The staff is fully aware of the implications, and we have had great cooperation from everyone. Please continue to follow these same guidelines for your children.

R.I. Commissioner of Education Angélica Infante-Green has asked every school to develop plans to support instruction in the event of a school closure for a prolonged period of time. Our teachers and teams have been working on this all week, and we will be prepared in the event this becomes a short-term reality. Many of you will see evidence of this on Friday, when students come home with packets of work, reading materials, math books, and/or their personal devices for being able to access Google classroom after spring break. These materials are to be used *only* in the event of a closure - this is not busy work for vacation - and we ask that you set these materials aside until you receive further instruction from your child's team. Having said that, closing school beyond the two-week break is a decision that would not be taken lightly and is NOT warranted at this time.

As we enter the spring break, please know that we understand what so many of you are dealing with. I know many of you have cancelled vacations and are still figuring out what to do over these next two weeks - while trying to maintain a sense of normalcy and steer your children through a very anxious and unsettling time. We hope you can find time to relax, reconnect with your children and even laugh a little. Your children feel the anxiety too, and the more you can provide a calm, nurturing environment, the healthier they will be both physically and emotionally.

Though our doors will be closed, I and the administrative team will continue working over the next two weeks. I promise we will be closely following developments, continuing to take part in the RIDE and RIDOH conference calls, and making decisions based on the latest information and updates. I will keep you all informed of the plans for the Wolf community.

As always, I am here to answer your questions. Stay safe and healthy.

Warmly,

Anna