



A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Parents and Guardians,

(Scroll down for Chinese translation) (请翻阅后面的中文翻译)

I hope wherever you are in the world right now that you are safe and healthy. At the start of 2020, I don't think anyone imagined this would be how we would enter the second half of our school year. We cannot underestimate the enormity of the challenge we have faced together so far or thank you enough for the support and feedback we've received during this difficult time. It is no exaggeration when I say that what we are all experiencing right now is perhaps one of the greatest challenges as a community that we could possibly face.

Our faculty, students and families have been engaged in online learning since February 4th while dealing with the uncertainties that have come as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. Our administrators, teachers, counselors, EAL teachers and Learning Support teams have been working exceptionally hard to deliver a program that is both flexible and responsive to ensure continuity of learning. Our faculty are working above and beyond to continually refine our online learning program to ensure your children are supported both academically and socially-emotionally. For many of our parents, you are also juggling an incredible number of challenges right now both professionally and personally. I am incredibly proud of the resilience, effort, and positivity being demonstrated across our school community as we make the best of an incredibly challenging and unprecedented situation together.

While our students and teachers continue to work hard throughout the online learning period, we appreciate that some members of our community may have questions about how the school intends to capture additional face to face instruction time to reinforce the online learning program once we return to school. We understand and hear your concerns and want to partner with our parents to ensure our students are impacted as minimally as possible during this unprecedented COVID-19 crisis.

Therefore, in consultation with, and support from, the AISG Board of Governors, the school has made the following amendments to the SY19-20 school calendar. Please note, the below dates are dependent on the tentatively scheduled return date of March 16 and are subject to change pending instructions from the Guangzhou Education Bureau.

Spring Break

With the **tentative resumption date of March 16**, we believe it doesn't make sense for students to be back in session for a short period of time only to be faced with Spring Break shortly after. Therefore, the Spring Break holiday will be canceled. Instead, we will designate the week before the resumption of school, **March 9 – 13** as a travel week (in lieu of Spring Break) to allow students and faculty time to transition back to Guangzhou without having to simultaneously travel and focus on online learning. This change will also allow us to gain four additional days of in-person learning from March 30 to April 2 and it will allow students and teachers to have a break from the demands of online learning so that when we arrive back to campus (tentatively scheduled for March 16, pending further assessment) everyone can be refreshed and ready to resume school.

Middle School/High School China Trips

While there is no doubt that these trips are both valuable and educational, our priority right now is supporting classroom instructional time. Canceling Middle and High School China trips will allow for an additional five days of classroom instruction for students.

Parent-Teacher Conference Days

Parent-Teacher Conference days will become regular instructional days. The conferencing that would have normally occurred during PTC days will be scheduled in another manner so as to not take away from classroom instruction for the students.

Tomb-Sweeping Day

AISG will not have classes on Friday, April 3 as we are required by law to observe the official Chinese Holiday of Tomb-Sweeping Day. While this is not an adjustment to the calendar per se, we felt it important to notify parents so they could plan accordingly.

Additional support for Seniors

Our IB DP teachers will once again make individualized arrangements for their Grade 12 students as needed for additional revision and preparation classes closer to the examination dates for the upcoming IB DP exams in May.

Previously Scheduled Activities

Where possible, all previously scheduled activities that would have taken time away from student classroom instruction have been removed from the schedule.

Additional After-School Support Sessions

Voluntary after-school support sessions will also be offered to provide additional support to students to help them reinforce the learning they accomplished online.

As previously communicated, we are still planning to conclude the 2019-2020 school year on June 9 and will not be adding additional days to the calendar. Our rationale for this decision is as follows:

- Student learning continued during the outbreak via our online learning program. Although the delivery system was different, the provision of education services continued. Only one instructional day was lost to this crisis. Administrators, teachers, and staff worked during this online teaching period. Our accreditation and authorization agencies count online instruction days as official school days.
- Extending into the summer holiday would not be of any benefit to our grade 12 students as their IB DP exams are in May.
- Extending into the summer holiday would create significant compliance and logistical issues for our employees.
- Extending into the summer would significantly impact our summer facilities improvement and maintenance works.

We understand that online teaching is not a complete substitute for in-person learning and nor should it be. Expecting our students to sit in front of a device for hours on end is not healthy and the number of instructional hours students experience in class should not merely be replaced with the same number of hours sitting in front of a device.

However, it is important to understand that we have not “lost time” at school. It is highly inappropriate to discount the entire online learning period with the view that the days allocated to online learning should be deducted from the overall required number of instructional days. The online learning period **must not** be quantified as a simple formula whereby *instructional days overall – number of days the campus was closed = days we need to add to the calendar*. This is not only unfair to our dedicated teachers who are working incredibly hard to ensure continuity of learning in very trying circumstances, but it does a disservice to the students and families across all divisions who have been fully engaged in the learning thus far.

One of the things I value about AISG is our sense of community and our ability to engage in respectful dialogue. We understand that for every family who is happy with the school’s decision, there may be others who are not. Regardless, I’d like to thank the parents who have contacted the school directly to share feedback in a respectful and solution-oriented manner. Just as we expect our students to engage in respectful online behavior, so too do we expect this of our parents. When we work together in a partnership that is respectful and supportive of one another, ultimately it is our students who benefit the most.

AISG continues to be actively involved in communication with international authorities and our fellow APAC schools along with other premier benchmark schools in China to discuss our approach and strategies. AISG’s approach is one that is also being taken by many of our international school counterparts.

Please note, our next schoolwide update will contain information specifically related to the local authority’s recommendations regarding quarantine and the newly implemented health check status. **Please keep an eye out for this communication which will be sent towards the end of this week.**

We feel confident in the tailored approach we have taken. AISG's Leadership Team and Board of Governors feel it is one that is responsive to our community and that it provides for additional support to those who feel they need it. It is important to honor the work that has been done by our students during this period of time and not apply a mandatory "one size fits all" approach to the extension of the school year.

Please know that we lament the impact that this crisis has had on our entire Ram Nation community and while we are confident we will emerge stronger and better as a result, we also long for the day in the near future when we can gather once again as the AISG family and continue the premier learning experiences that AISG is known for.

In closing, I encourage our students to continue their engagement with the online learning program. This will help ensure your child not only feels connected to their peers but will also support a smoother transition back to in-person instruction once the campus reopens.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact me, or prepare@aisgz.org should you have any questions, concerns or feedback.

Stay safe, be well and we look forward to seeing you soon!

Kevin Baker
Director
American International School of Guangzhou

尊敬的家长和监护人：

希望无论您现在位于何处，安全，快乐和健康都伴随着您。在2020年初，我想没有人能预料到我们竟然以这样的方式进入下半学期的学习。我无法低估我们迄今共同面临的巨大挑战，也无法用言语来表达我对你们感谢，感谢你们在这一困难时期给予我们的支持。毫不夸张地说，我们大家现在所经历的也许是我们作为一个社区可能面临的巨大挑战之一。

我们的教师、学生和家庭自2月4日以来一直坚持在线学习，同时应对由于“COVID-19新型冠状病毒肺炎”危机而带来的不确定性。我们的管理层团队、教师、辅导员、EAL教师和学习支持团队一直在非常努力地工作，以提供一个灵活的、让学生积极回应的课程，确保学习的连贯性。我们的老师也付出了很多额外的努力和辛勤付出，以确保您的孩子在学业上和社交情感上都得到支持。对于我们许多父母来说，你们现在也面临着许多艰难的挑战，既有职业上的，也有家庭个人生活上的。在我们共同面对一个充满挑战和前所未有的困难时，我为我们学校社区所展现出的坚韧、努力和积极性感到无比自豪。

我们的学生和老师在整個在线学习期间都很努力，但我们也明白，我们社区的一些成员可能会有疑问，一旦我们回到学校正常上课，学校打算如何利用更多的线下面授教学时间来加强补充这段时间的在线学习课程。我们听到并理解您的担忧，并希望与我们的父母合作，以确保我们在这场前所未有的COVID-19新型冠状病毒肺炎危机中，尽可能减少对学生学业的影响。

为此，在咨询与得到AISG董事会的支持下，学校对SY19-20校历做出如下修订。请注意，以下日期安排基于暂定的复课开学日期为3月16日，这有可能改变，学校同时等待广州市教育局的指示。

春假

鉴于暂定的复课开学日期是3月16日，我们相信学生复课后不久就开始放春假是没有意义的。因此，春假将被取消。取而代之的是，我们将把3月9日-3月13日开学前的一周定为旅行周(代替春假)，让学生和教师有时间过渡返回广州，而不必在旅行的同时专注兼顾于在线学习。这个改变也让我们获得从3月30日到4月2日额外四天的面授线下学习时间,同时让学生和老师从在线学习的需求中得到休息，确保当我们回到学校时（暂定3月16日，同时等待进一步评估），每个人都可以精神饱满，准备好重新开始上课。

初中/高中的中国旅行

虽然毫无疑问，中国旅行既有价值又有教育意义，但我们目前的首要任务是支持课堂教学时间。取消初中和高中的中国旅行将为学生提供额外五天的课堂教学时间。

家长教师会议日

家长教师会议日将改成常规的教学日。以往的PTC家长教师会议日安排的家长会将以另一种方式安排，以免占用学生的课堂教学时间。

清明节

AISG在4月3日星期五将不上课，因为法律规定，学校需要放清明节假期。虽然这并不是对日历作出的调整，但我们觉得通知家长是很重要的，这样他们就可以做出相应的计划。

对12年级的额外支持

IB DP的老师们将为他们12年级学生的需要做出个性化的安排，在临近5月份IB DP考试的时候进行额外的复习和备考。

之前预定的活动

在可能的情况下，所有先前安排的占用学生课堂教学时间的活动都从课程表中删除了。

额外的课后支持课程

此外，学校也会为学生提供自愿性课后支持服务，以加强学生已完成的在线学习课程。

正如之前所沟通的，我们仍然计划于6月9日结束2019-2020学年。我们不会在校历上增加额外的天数。我们作出这个决定的理由如下：

- 在疫情期间，学生通过我们的在线学习课程持续学习。虽然提供服务的交付方式有所不同，但教育服务的提供仍在继续。这场危机只损失了一天的教学时间。管理层、教职员工在这段在线教学期间依然工作。我们的认证和授权机构把在线学习教学日视为正式上课日。
- 把学期结束日延长至暑假对我们12年级的学生并没有好处，因为他们的IB DP考试在五月。
- 延长到暑假将给我们的员工带来重大的合规和后勤问题。
- 延长至暑假将严重影响我们的暑期设施改善和维护工作。

我们明白，线上教学不能完全取代线下面授学习，也不应完全取代。期望我们的学生连续几个小时坐在一个设备前是不健康的，学生在课堂上体验的课堂学习小时数也不应该替换为坐在设备前的相同的小时数。

然而，重要的是要明白，我们没有在学校“失去时间”。完全不计算在线学习的时间，并假设这段在线学习的天数应该从总的教学天数中扣除是非常不合适的。在线学习时间不能用一个教学天数的简单公式来量化——学校关闭的天数=我们需要增加到校历中的上课天数。这不仅对我们努力工作的老师不公平，他们在非常艰难的环境下努力工作以确保学习的连贯性，而且对所有的积极参与在线学习的学生和家庭都是不公平的

在AISG，我非常看重的一点是我们的社区团结精神和参与彼此尊重对话的能力。虽然我们也明白，有些家庭对于学校的决定感到非常满意，也有一些家庭不满意学校的决定。无论如何，我要感谢那些直接与学校联系并以尊重和解决问题为导向，分享反馈的家长们。正如我们期望我们的学生在网络行为中能够尊重他人一样，我们也期望我们的父母这样做。当我们在相互尊重和支持的伙伴关系中一起合作时，最终受益最大的是我们的学生。

AISG积极参与国际权威机构和APAC亚太地区其他伙伴国际学校以及中国其他一流国际学校的交流沟通，讨论我们的方法和策略。AISG的方法也被许多其他国际学校采纳。

请注意，我们下一次全校性的更新邮件，内容将包括根据当地政府机构关于隔离和新实施的健康状况信息卡的具体相关的信息。**请留意本周末即将发出的相关邮件。**

我们对于学校采取的量身定做的方法充满信心。AISG管理层和董事会认为这积极回应我们的社区，也为需要提供额外支持的家庭提供额外的帮助。重要的是要尊重我们的学生在这段时间内付出的努力，而不是采用一种强制性的“一刀切”的方法来延长本学年。

我们为这场危机对Ram整个社区大家庭带来的影响感到痛惜，然而，我们也相信，这将使我们更加团结，齐心协力。我们也渴望，我们AISG大家庭在不久的将来可以再次相聚，回到AISG闻名遐迩的卓越教育经验中。

最后，我鼓励我们的学生继续积极参与在线学习课程。这将有助于确保您的孩子不仅感到与他们的同龄人的联系，而且帮助他们平稳过渡到学校复课后的线下教育。

一如既往，如果您有任何问题、担忧或反馈，请发送电子邮件到prepare@aisgz.org。

祝您平安，身体健康，我们期待再次相聚!

Kevin Baker

Director

American International School of Guangzhou



American International School of Guangzhou
Er Sha Campus No 3 Yan Yu Street South, Er Sha Island
Guangzhou, (8620) 8735 3392

www.aisgz.org