

STEVENSON

March 2, 2020

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Dear Stevenson Community:

General Remarks

I write with an update regarding our ongoing response to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and to provide information for students and parents or guardians as we prepare to return from break. Additional information is now available at a [webpage](#) we have developed for the specific purpose of providing up-to-date information and links to valid resources intended to help you and your family navigate this anxious period. Here are some further thoughts to provide context for the sections that follow:

- Though the scale and particularities of this pandemic are still unfolding, we should all expect to be directly or indirectly impacted by COVID-19 over the coming months. We must keep the wellbeing of those who are uniquely vulnerable to flu-like illnesses foremost among our concerns. Influenza and related viruses represent more severe risk for infants, people older than 65, and those whose immune symptoms are already compromised than they do for the majority of healthy people, including school-aged children. In this light, adhering to the essential personal care disciplines being recommended by the CDC and other public health entities (see below) will protect not just ourselves and our immediate community, but countless others who need our help.
- Though COVID-19 is technically new, the challenge that it delivers to those of us who have worked in schools for many years is familiar. Indeed, it has often been the case that a sharp increase in colds, flu, and other communicable maladies attend our return from a holiday. In this qualified sense, we feel ourselves to be in relatively familiar territory, and experienced in the standard protocols that contribute to preserving community health during such an event.
- Our present understanding of COVID-19 is complicated by national and global politics, sensationalistic media coverage, xenophobia, and the generally anxious spirit of our age. These conditions can sometimes lead otherwise reasonable people to disproportionate levels of distress and radical action. Clearly, this is a serious matter. That's why we are paying careful attention to the CDC, the WHO, and our

own regional public health resources rather than to pundits and social media clickbait.

- We want to acknowledge this outbreak's impact on our students who are from China and South Korea, two nations which have been hit especially hard by COVID-19. As a result of travel restrictions, Chinese students were not able to return home for vacation and had to make alternative plans under considerable stress. They and many of our other international students are understandably concerned for their families' wellbeing. Being so far from home under such circumstances is truly difficult. We're deeply grateful to so many of our local families who generously volunteered to provide safe haven and gracious comfort for our Chinese students over the break. We will continue to provide support and care for them and all of their peers upon our return to school.

Preparing for Returning to School

In preparation for our return from break, please review the following reminders and requests.

- PK-12 students who become ill during the break with [flu-like symptoms](#) must remain at home until they are free of these symptoms, which include: the abrupt onset of aches, chills, fatigue, weakness, chest discomfort, cough, headache, often, but not always, accompanied by a fever.

Without exception, these students will need a doctor's note, specifying the date they are cleared, in order to return to school. In order to protect their other patients, doctors prefer that you notify them of flu-like symptoms ahead of your office visit.

Parents or guardians: should your child be in this category, or if you or they have traveled to or knowingly had contact with someone from a country currently listed as Warning Level 3 on the CDC's [warning list](#), you must immediately notify:

- Resident students: Pete Lips (plips@stevensonschool.org)
 - Upper Division day students: Terry O'Hara (tohara@stevensonschool.org)
 - Lower and Middle Division students: Stacey Cimoli (scimoli@stevensonschool.org)
- Upper Division
 - Resident and day students who were ill over break with flu-like symptoms and are now recovered must report immediately upon arrival to the Health Center to ensure that they no longer pose any risk to others.
 - Resident students who develop flu-like symptoms (or any other illness) upon returning to campus must report immediately to the Health Center, where they will be evaluated, receive standard care, and perhaps be sent to a local physician for further assessment and treatment.

- Day students who develop flu-like symptoms (or any other illness) once classes have resumed must stay at home, consult with their pediatrician, and have their parents or guardian report their condition to the School by telephone or email. Once recovered, these students will need a doctor's note in order to return to school, specifying the date they are cleared. In order to protect their other patients, doctors prefer that you notify them of flu-like symptoms ahead of your office visit.
- Lower and Middle Divisions
 - Parents or guardians should notify Stacey Cimoli at scimoli@stevensonschool.org if their child experienced the flu or flu-like symptoms during the break. These students will need a doctor's note in order to return to school, specifying the date they have been cleared. This note must be given to Stacey Cimoli *before* the student will be permitted to attend class.
 - Students who develop the flu or flu-like symptoms once classes have resumed must be kept at home, and be evaluated by their pediatrician. Their parents or guardian must report their condition to Stacey by telephone or email. Once recovered, these students will need a doctor's note in order to return to school, specifying the date they are cleared.
 - In order to protect their other patients, doctors prefer that you notify them of flu-like symptoms ahead of your office visit.
- Absences owing to illness are excused. Where appropriate, students who are ill will be able to submit academic work remotely, as they are able.
- The Monterey County Department of Health (MCDH) has advised us that if someone were to present with flu-like symptoms with respiratory illness and had been in contact with someone who had been confirmed to have COVID-19, they would be isolated and the MCDH would be notified. The School would then take further steps as directed by the MCDH.

Current Risk Assessment

- For the general American public, who are unlikely to be exposed to this virus at this time, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low.
- People in communities where ongoing community spread with the virus that causes COVID-19 has been reported are at elevated though still relatively low risk of exposure.
- Close contacts of persons with COVID-19 also are at elevated risk of exposure.
- Travelers returning from affected [international locations](#) where community spread is occurring also are at elevated risk of exposure.

Travel Risk Update

- Currently, it is highly unlikely that one will contract COVID-19 while traveling in the United States. Travel is still not, in and of itself, considered a risk factor for contracting COVID-19.
- As of this writing:
 - China, Iran, South Korea, and Italy have been elevated to Warning Level 3 by the CDC, which means non-essential travel to that country should be avoided. While there have not been any restrictions on traveling to the U.S. (with the exception of China), that could change at any time.
 - Japan has been elevated to Warning Level 2, which means “practice enhanced precautions due to sustained community transmission.”
 - Hong Kong remains at Warning Level 1, which means “practice usual precautions.”
 - Singapore, Taiwan, and Thailand are destinations with risk of community spread of COVID-19 but have not been elevated to any CDC warning status.

Flu Prevention

As a reminder, the CDC provides the following advice regarding the flu:

- Get vaccinated
- Avoid close contact with those who are sick
- Stay home when sick
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or inside of elbow when coughing or sneezing
- Wash hands for at least 20 seconds; use sanitizer if soap and water are not available
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Disinfect regularly touched surfaces
- Get plenty of sleep, drink lots of fluids, and eat nutritious foods

Thank you for your support as we work to keep our community healthy and safe. If you have any questions prior to our return from the holiday, please email president@stevensonschool.org.

Sincerely,



Dr. Kevin M. Hicks '85 P '29
President