



March 1, 2020

Dear St. George's Community,

As we all return from what I hope was equal parts a festive and restive Mardi Gras break, part of your vacation week likely included some reading, newscast, or newsfeed update(s) on the latest developments with the novel (new) coronavirus *COVID-19*.

Since our last communication to you on this topic in *The Flame* of February 6th, St. George's has continued to follow the latest updates and guidance from the [CDC](#) and the [Louisiana Office of Public Health](#). Our school nurse, [Penny Nunenmacher](#), has also been active in following the developments and recommendations from public health officials, as well as engaging with the strong network of regional and ISAS school nurses around preventative measures and responses to COVID-19. In addition, I personally have been consulting with a local health expert while also taking in the live broadcast of a special session at the NAIS Annual Conference on COVID-19 over the break.

In light of these continual developments and recommendations, it is important that we reach out now to share what measures we as a school are taking to safeguard as much as possible what remains our highest priority—the health and well-being of our students. We also request your help and support in doing so.

First and foremost, the best preventative measure all of us can take and share with our children remains the CDC recommendations to prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19 and influenza:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, and stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, and throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

The St. George's maintenance staff have taken great pains over the break to clean and disinfect our campus thoroughly, and they will be extra vigilant in their daily sweeps in wiping down and deep cleaning bathrooms, door handles, desks, shared toys and other items and areas susceptible to the spread of illness and viruses. Teachers will be reminding students at school to wash their hands thoroughly and as often as appropriate.

**With the health of our entire community in mind, if your Mardi Gras break included international travel to a country with an elevated threat level for COVID-19**, we do ask that you inform [Nurse Penny](#) via email or phone prior to returning to school. Please also consult the CDC website for updated and evolving information. The countries currently identified by the CDC with an elevated threat level (Level 3 or higher) are China, Iran, Italy, South Korea, Japan and the city of Hong Kong.

With an abundance of precaution, our administrative team will also be meeting to discuss plans around our health and emergency responses in the unlikely event that St. George's needs to close due to an outbreak for an extended period of time. This will include preparations for "distance learning" so that a school closing, as directed by the CDC and Louisiana Office of Public Health, does not prevent our students from continuing to learn with their teachers in a virtual online environment or through other platforms and means. We will communicate additional details about these plans as is necessary and appropriate.

Thank you for your continued help and support in these efforts. Please reach out to us should you have any questions or concerns.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Santogiovanni". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.