

February 28, 2020

Coronavirus: Update

Dear Grauer School Community,

The idea of a widespread virus is understandably a scary one for every school, and every community. We are taking this opportunity to share some information that may be helpful as you consider your own next steps. Our goal is of course to minimize exposure within our school community.

First, as the CDC has emphasized, the United States is not currently experiencing a coronavirus pandemic. A pandemic occurs when a disease is spreading diffusely across a large region (or multiple regions). Therefore, this and similar messages you may be receiving are intended to encourage our community to begin thinking about how we will respond if and when the situation escalates.

At schools, preventing the spread of infection is a critical first step. At school, we will attempt to:

- Continue enforcement of basic hygiene protocols - That means making sure that everyone is washing their hands, covering their coughs and sneezes, and disinfecting our work spaces. We will also be stocking up on sanitation supplies for our classrooms and stationing teachers in the lunch line to ensure students wash their hands prior to picking up their lunches.
- We continue to be diligent in monitoring our campus and taking extra precautions with all of our students, including, disinfecting classrooms on a regular basis;
- Strongly encourage students, faculty, and staff who are ill to stay home until they recover.
- Check the World Health Organization website routinely for updates - Resources include a [centralized coronavirus page](#) and an [interactive map](#) tracking its spread.
- Review guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#), [State Department](#), and other sources to determine the scope of the public health emergency.

No student will be penalized for taking precautionary sick days and, as always, all will be given opportunities for making up missed work. Please note that the California Department of Public Health does not recommend the use of face masks for general prevention and says that handwashing provides better protection from infectious diseases.

Our leadership team and other offices are working on plans in case there is an outbreak in this area and we have to close school (including strategies like virtual schooling). We are also thinking ahead regarding the impact spring expeditions, admissions visitors, and other non-typical school activities will have in the context of the coronavirus.

How might this affect our upcoming spring expeditions?

Not only do we want to not risk infection, we do not want to risk quarantine, and so we are reviewing all of our trips. Overall, many schools have cancelled most Asia trips through at least May, and some are beginning to cancel summer trips. Schools are also advised to control visitors from risk countries and locations, and we are of course monitoring this: **If you have any upcoming travel or have traveled outside the United States in the past 14 days**, it is a good idea to visit the [CDC website](#) daily for the most current guidance and recommendations.

This week, many schools are questioning Europe trips, and all Italy trips will be cancelled. We have four upcoming Grauer expeditions involving air travel: Chicago, Costa Rica, Kauai, and Washington, D.C. The school will review guidance and travel advisories from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), State Department, and other sources to determine the scope of the public health emergency. We advise parents to do the same.

It is important to remember that handling the spread of a serious contagion like the coronavirus is primarily a job for public health agencies. We advise families to continue to actively monitor directives from the WHO, CDC, and other governmental organizations like your [local department of health](#).

Thank you for all your support. We will work with all our constituencies with compassion and in partnership, as we look out for one another. The health and safety of everyone in our school community is the most important thing there is to us.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stuart Grauer, Ed.D." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'S' and 'G'.

Stuart Grauer, Ed.D.
Head of School