

Dear Beijing delegation families,

The school has been monitoring recent updates from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) about the Coronavirus outbreak in China.

As of Thursday evening, the *Washington Post* was reporting that “major Chinese cities, including Beijing, have banned all large gatherings over the coming Lunar New Year festival, the most important holiday on the Chinese calendar, in an expanding effort to contain a rapidly spreading coronavirus outbreak.” China is now working to quarantine approximately 25 million people in and around Wuhan. Although the WHO did not declare a Public Health Emergency of International Concern in their Wednesday meeting, they are closely monitoring the situation and plan to re-evaluate within the next ten days. Likewise, the CDC website notes, “this is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation and CDC will provide updated information as it becomes available, in addition to updated guidance.”

Our priority is to keep our children and families safe. Normally now would be the time we would purchase airline tickets to Beijing and finalize other elements of the delegation visit. We do not feel secure in taking that step at this time, and we do not have confidence that the situation, which is still unfolding, will be settled enough to enable us to complete the extensive arrangements for such a significant journey confidently and with enough time. We are also highly aware that families have likely made plans for Spring Break, and we are wanting to give you as much notice as possible.

Therefore, **based on careful consideration, we are canceling the Spring 2020 delegation to Beijing.** We are in close communication with our partners at Beijing #2 Experimental Primary School. Most of all, we are hoping that all those made ill by the virus will get successful treatment and that the outbreak itself will be contained rapidly. We are disappointed to miss the opportunity to spend time with our partners this spring and particularly disappointed for our 8th graders who were planning to be a part of this delegation. Both our schools treasure the partnership together, and we look forward to reconnecting and to many future delegation visits.

We will be refunding the deposits to all families. Please do not hesitate to contact Joe or me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Fernanda Pernambuco  
Director of Cross-Cultural Partnerships & Community Engagement

Joe Harvey  
Head of School