



March 12, 2020

Dear St. Margaret's Students and Families:

As you are undoubtedly aware, the *novel coronavirus* (COVID-19) pandemic has expanded since my last communication with you on March 2. With this in mind, the SMS Administrative Team has determined that we will postpone the return of students to campus until at least Monday, March 30, 2020.

On Monday, March 23, St. Margaret's will launch our distance learning program to ensure an uninterrupted learning experience for all of our Scotties. This distance learning initiative will utilize two existing platforms that students already use here at SMS: the Google Suite and Blackbaud. Expect more specific information to arrive via email later next week.

As I discussed in my March 2 communication, the SMS Administrative Team is monitoring the advice disseminated by the Three Rivers Health District and the Virginia Department of Health. We will continue to do so and make a determination on any change to the above return date no later than Monday, March 23, 2020. It is a priority to give all families at least 7 days notice to aid with planning.

For our international students, Director of International Program [Lesley Newman](#) will reach out individually to each of you and your families to confirm changes to travel plans and ensure that all students are cared for to the best of our ability during this ever-changing situation.

We recognize the above changes may cause inconvenience. However, we must prioritize the well-being of community members. Many colleges and universities have suspended in-person classes in an effort to eliminate large gatherings of people. We are most concerned about protecting community members with underlying health conditions and respiratory illnesses. Thus, we must use an available alternate method to educate our girls while protecting the community as a whole.

Without doubt, the St. Margaret's faculty will continue to provide an outstanding education to all of our Scotties. Accommodations for individual students will continue, as will necessary supports including academic coaching and math labs. One-to-one

sessions and small group chats are just two of the many methods we will employ to ensure our signature supports and superb instruction remain available to all students from the very beginning of the Third Trimester.

Unfortunately, there are many of our programs that cannot resume until a physical return to campus. We encourage our athletes to communicate with [Coach Walker](#) for individualized conditioning plans. We hope our artists will engage in creative endeavors at home, whether it be painting, photography, or singing. [Ms. MacPherson](#) will be working with student leaders to create daily suggestions for “wellness at home” evening activities that will arrive in student email inboxes daily.

Please expect more communications from us over the next week. We wanted to get this decision communicated quickly to ensure everyone has time to make travel adjustments.

Thank you for your continued support of St. Margaret’s.

Sincerely,

Catherine M. Sgroi P'00
Head of School