SYA Coronavirus Update
March 10, 2020

Dear SYA France and Spain parents,

As you are likely aware, in the past 24 hours restrictions and closures in Spain and France were increased as each country reported new cases of the coronavirus. Schools in Madrid and Vitoria were closed by the Madrid and Basque governments and assembly of large groups are now prohibited in France. In addition, in neighboring Italy, the entire country has been effectively quarantined with only those with special permission able to travel. Local schools in Rennes and Zaragoza do remain open as do our France and Spain SYA campuses. This is due to the fact that we continue to follow local and national recommendations, and also as part of our commitment to those parents who have shared with us their desire to continue with the program in-country. We will remain open as long as we are able to safely do so, although it is becoming increasingly difficult to predict how long that might be.

Throughout this time we have tried to create an environment that allows parents a level of choice in how their family engages with the SYA program. We cannot predict the future of what will happen in France and Spain, but we can allow parents to have a voice in the process. Therefore, we would like you to consider the following three choices as we move forward in Spain and France:

1. **Depart SYA and return to your home school.** Students who return home would be given a transcript for work completed through two trimesters.
2. **Return home and continue with SYA online until the end of the year.** Students who choose this option would return home immediately and finish work and projects in progress. On March 23, all students who have decided to go online will begin a separate SYA curriculum designed for online learning.
3. **Remain at SYA in country.** Students would stay at SYA in country as long as SYA was able to operate and as long as we would be reasonably certain that students would be able to return to the U.S. if needed. Families who choose this option agree that they understand the following:
   
   i. That SYA’s ability to continue to offer the program could change at any time. In the event that SYA is unable to operate in a reasonable way, a decision that will be made exclusively by SYA leadership, students would need to migrate to option 1 or 2.
   
   ii. That students could contract the coronavirus.
   
   iii. That despite SYA’s best efforts, students could be quarantined.
   
   iv. That airlines could begin to cancel flights leaving from France or Spain.

**FAQs:**

**When do you need an answer?**
As soon as possible, but no later than this Friday, March 13.
If my child leaves now and goes online, can they come back when we feel more comfortable about the situation?

We wish we could accommodate this request, but once a student goes online, the curriculum will depart from the in-person curriculum fairly significantly. Because of the place-based nature of the program, and to ensure a demanding and rewarding online equivalent, once students choose an option, they will need to stick with it until year’s end.

**What if only a few students pick the online option. Will it still run?**

Yes. Because we will basing the structure on best practices for online education, we do not need a minimum number of students. Good online education does not try to mimic a classroom environment, but uses the advantages of being online. We will need some students, but not a critical mass. It is also possible that students may share their math and English classes with peers who have returned home from other campuses given that we have in recent years standardized those courses across all our campuses.

**If we decide that our child will stay and do so past March 23, but then change our mind and return home, can we switch to the online option?**

Yes. We will make sure that the transition is as smooth as it can be.

**Can students switch to an SYA location in the United States?**

No. SYA does not have an infrastructure to accommodate this.

If you have any other questions, please let us know.

Best,

Aric J. Visser
Head of Schools and Programs

Thomas E. Hassan
SYA President