

# WARDLAW + HARTRIDGE

Pioneering. Thinkers.

March 12, 2020

Dear Wardlaw+Hartridge community,

With mounting concerns about the spread of the novel coronavirus, we have decided to cancel classes for Friday, March 13. While we have no knowledge that would elevate our specific risk level at the moment, we have concluded that it is wiser to allay the increased anxiety we are seeing and lessen the risk of exposure for the whole community.

Teachers and staff will be in the building Friday conducting additional preparation in case we need to move to online learning following spring break. Thus, we wish to be proactive in our approach and advise you of the manner by which we will introduce distance learning to the community in the event of a closure.

In order to make the online learning experience as productive, engaging, and impactful as possible, teachers have already begun preparations for online instruction. They have met in division groups to begin planning an architecture that is developmentally-appropriate for the age and stage of learners. Teachers have also attended mini-workshops over several afternoons wherein they have taught one another how to develop and teach high quality online lessons using a variety of apps, software applications, and strategies. Their work will continue on Friday and in coming days as they design interactive synchronous (live) online activities and a range of interesting and enriching off-line and asynchronous experiences.



A WORLD-CHANGING PREP SCHOOL SINCE 1882

As parents in this scenario, you would also be facing the challenges of helping your children manage distance learning while balancing the needs of your professional and family lives. If W+H needs to close for an extended period of time, there will be a transition period before all classes are fully functioning on the online platform. You would hear from your Division Head explaining how the initial days will unfold for your children. To help you prepare, we provide a few, simple recommendations:

- Stay positive and patient. Your children will take their cues from you. There will be some growing pains, but we are confident we will quickly implement a successful, engaging online curriculum.
- Designate a dedicated space for your children for academic work with access to technology.
- When possible, keep your child's school day routine intact. It is important that your children are ready to engage with their teachers during regular school hours when needed. Some learning will take place in real time (synchronous) following our normal schedule. These virtual meetings will be arranged in advance. Most activities, however, will take place asynchronously at times most convenient for students and their families.
- Please understand that distance learning will present new and different challenges for your children. It will not be familiar, so your support will be essential.
- Designate time in your daily schedules where students remain offline and take advantage of the opportunity to build their stamina for and joy in reading.
- Get outside and enjoy nature as spring unfolds. Perhaps try some gardening, hiking, biking, or other outdoor activities.
- Please consult the W+H Coronavirus Information page on our website, [whschool.org/coronavirus](http://whschool.org/coronavirus), for any updates.

We are thankful to all of our faculty and staff members who have been hard at work responding to this complex and evolving situation. We will continue to make decisions based on the expertise of our local, state, and federal public health experts. We appreciate your patience and support as we face this threat together. During moments such as this, we come to rely on one another even more, and the Wardlaw+Hartridge community is made stronger for it.

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andy Webster". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Andy Webster  
Head of School