



Kind. Confident. Prepared.

WASHINGTON EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

Dear WES Families,

The wellness of our community is our highest priority, and I want to update you about WES's response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The administration is having daily conversations about the many facets of our school program that may be impacted by COVID-19, and we have assembled a task force to address the situation from multiple angles. We have rescheduled today's faculty professional development program to allow for additional time for these conversations and additional planning. We are continuously monitoring news and recommendations from the [CDC](#) and the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO). We are also in frequent contact with independent school associations—such as NAIS, AIMS, AISGW—as well as our colleagues at other local independent schools.

HYGIENE

One of the primary recommendations of the CDC and the WHO continues to be one of prevention, including frequent hand washing, disinfecting surfaces, and avoiding the touching of faces. To this end, WES is taking immediate steps to be extra vigilant in our routines and the disinfecting of the school and to provide education and new procedures for our community to limit the spread of any illness.

Individual hygiene:

- Hand sanitizer stations are being provided throughout the school.
- Teachers will work with students to increase handwashing and hand sanitizing at various times throughout the day.
- We are transitioning to non-physical greetings, i.e. students and adults can fist bump or elbow bump instead of handshakes and hugs.

Building cleanliness:

- Each evening, a professional cleaning crew disinfects high-volume surfaces such as water fountains, bathrooms, doorknobs, railings, elevator buttons, hard floor surfaces, and any other non-porous surfaces.

- Teachers will increase the cleaning of classroom furniture with disinfectant supplies and be encouraged to wipe down surfaces multiple times throughout the day.

As mentioned before, a friendly reminder for all of us:

- Wash your hands with soap and water frequently for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover your coughs or sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve (not with your hands).
- Keep your children home if they are unwell. A child should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

SPRING BREAK TRAVEL

We respectfully request that families who are traveling domestically to areas with a significant outbreak of the COVID-19 virus or internationally to a country with [a warning level of 2 or 3 by the CDC](#) email Ann Freniere, afreniere@w-e-s.org, and Stacey Bailey, WES's school nurse, sbailey@w-e-s.org. You may be asked to stay home for 14 days, the maximum incubation period of the virus. We rely on the cooperation of our community to maintain a healthy environment for everyone. As always, please communicate any illness that requires your child to be absent from school, especially if there is accompanying fever, to our school nurse, Stacey Bailey, BS, RN, NCSN.

STUDY TRIPS AND EXCHANGES

WES was scheduled to take three international trips and one domestic trip in the month of May. We were also scheduled to have exchange students from Spain and France visit us this spring. As of today:

- The students from Granada, Spain, were scheduled to arrive on Tuesday, March 10. That leg of the Spanish Exchange Program has been canceled.
- The State Department has raised the travel advisory to avoid all non-essential travel to Italy (Level 3). Consequently, we have made the difficult decision to cancel the trip as it currently stands. We are actively working to find an alternative that also protects the health of our families.
- We are actively monitoring the situation and are prepared to make additional changes as needed moving forward. We will continue to stay in close contact with those grades and families who participate in these study trips.

REMOTE LEARNING

It is our sincerest hope that we will be able to continue classes on-site for the remainder of the school year. However, we are actively working to create a distance-learning program in the event of a school closure. Distance learning will take many forms depending on grade level and subject area. These experiences may look and feel very different than a student's typical in-class experience—learning experiences will vary in ways that are developmentally appropriate and instructionally feasible. Unlike typical school days when students meet together at a particular time of day, students often experience distance learning differently. In some cases students will learn asynchronously or on their own time; in other cases, classes will meet virtually in real-time in order to continue the in-class, group-learning experience. More details will be forthcoming as our plan takes shape.

INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY

As we prepare a plan to promote learning continuity and protect the health of our community, we'd also like to reflect on the importance of inclusion. No bullying, harassment, or exclusion of any kind will be tolerated, especially any based on national origin, recent travel, race, or ethnicity. Relying on our community values of inclusion, kindness, and mutual respect will strengthen us in the face of challenges.

RESOURCES

We understand that unknown viruses can create worry and anxiety for families. If your child is feeling anxious, here are a few helpful resources:

[What Kids Want To Know About Coronavirus: An Original Comic](#)

[How to Talk to Kids About Coronavirus](#)

[Talking to Children about COVID-19](#)

We are continuing to monitor the situation, and we are refining our school's Crisis Plan to ensure that we are prepared to best care for all members of our community. Please understand that this is a rapidly unfolding situation, and things may change very quickly. We will be in touch as new information arises.

We thank you as always for your support and partnership.

Sincerely,
Danny Vogelmann