



Kind. Confident. Prepared.

WASHINGTON EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

March 12, 2020

Dear WES Families,

First, let me say how impressed I am by our students' resilience and flexibility. Many of them have confronted changes and disappointments over the last few weeks, and they should be commended for maintaining a strong and positive attitude in this unusual time. I'd also like to thank all of our families for the support and understanding they have shown over the last two weeks.

WES's tremendous faculty and staff have also helped us navigate uncharted territories with determination, resilience, and a commitment to excellence. Our students are in the best of hands, and I am incredibly proud and grateful for our team's work.

In our efforts day-by-day to evaluate community health risks, contain the spread of COVID-19, and ensure the continuity of learning for our students, I have decided with my Administrative team and with the full support and valuable input of the Board of Trustees to begin this year's Spring Break at the conclusion of this **Friday, March 13**. This action is in-line with the decisions made in the last 24 hours by several other local independent schools.

Let me stress that we have no confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 within our WES community. However, this early closure is meant to mitigate the spread of the virus in our community, and in our area more generally. Faculty and staff will be on campus next week to continue the work of developing a distance-learning program in case one is implemented at the conclusion of Spring Break.

Classes will resume either on-site or through distance learning on Tuesday, March 31.

DISTANCE LEARNING

Students will be bringing home physical materials on Friday, and students in Grades 3-8 will also bring home a WES device (either an iPad or Chromebook, depending on their grade level). Students in Grades 3-8 will receive Google Meet training prior to leaving WES on Friday, and instructions on how to use Google Meet will be shared with families next week. We will remain in close contact with families throughout next week and throughout spring break, and you can also stay abreast of the latest updates on our [website](#). All families will receive a dedicated communication about the distance-learning program by the end of next week.

As we plan for the possibility of an extended closure, we would also like to make sure our families are ready to facilitate distance learning. Our distance-learning program will require high-speed internet access and an internet-enabled device. As mentioned above, students in Grades 3-8 will receive a WES device; however, students in Grades N-2 will need access to a home device for a limited amount of time each day. If you will have trouble accessing our program, please contact our IT Administrator Andrew White, awhite@w-e-s.org.

SPRING BREAK TRAVEL

As a reminder, it is imperative and required that families who are traveling to an area with [a warning level of 2 or 3 by the CDC](#) or to an area highly impacted by the coronavirus 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 upon your return. Also, please inform the school if you believe you have been exposed to COVID-19 or you have tested positive for the virus. We rely on the cooperation of our community to maintain a healthy environment for everyone.

SCHOOL ACCESS

WES will be accessible next week during normal school hours via email and phone. The school building will also be accessible if students and families need to pick up materials. Please email or call the school if you plan to come to campus.

STUDENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT

Please know that our team is available to support students and families through these challenging times. Students and parents should feel comfortable contacting our counselors Debbie Weinberger, dweinberger@w-e-s.org, and Alison Klothe, aklothe@w-e-s.org, as well as Chaplain Kristen Pitts, kpitts@w-e-s.org.

We also 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](#)

Thank you for your support and essential input to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students and our community. As always, please feel free to reach out with questions.

Sincerely,

Danny Vogelman