

TO: Woodbury Leadership Parents/Guardians/Families
DA: March 13, 2020
FR: Dr. Mortensen
RE: **COVID-19 Update**

Greetings,

As we are all watching the news regarding the spread of COVID-19, I want to update all stakeholders with the information being provided to schools from various organizations, and update all with the planning efforts at WLA in regard to this matter. These efforts include cleaning, student illness, extracurricular activities and events, off-site learning, accommodating the personal preferences of our families, and temporary school closure.

Organizations Providing Guidance to Schools

I am in daily contact with the Minnesota Department of Health, (MDH) the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), the World Health Organization, (WHO) and the Center for Disease Control. (CDC) This contact includes detailed electronic updates for school leaders, and daily webinars and/or conference calls. Additionally, I have been meeting and collaborating with 17 other charter school district leaders in regard to COVID-19. Each of these organizations (MDH, MDE, WHO, and CDC) actively update their websites regarding this virus. I appreciate the frequent messaging and guidance that these organizations provide, but as we are all aware, things change quickly. For example, on Wednesday, MDE recommended that school officials not make any changes for childcare, schools, extracurricular activities, or institutions of higher education. However, yesterday the messaging had evolved to recommend that schools consider canceling and/or postponing after school activities, stagger times and activities when large groups of children are interacting such as recess and lunch periods, and to teach children to stay from 3' to 6' away from each other. It was also suggested that schools ensure they have a plan for off-site learning. Of course the message hasn't changed in regard to personal hygiene such as covering coughs, watching for fever, and washing hands, or for general cleaning practices.

Cleanliness

During Spring Break WLA hired additional help to deep clean our building. This team put in approximately 120 hours wiping down all surfaces, disinfecting switches, door handles, technology devices, railings, lockers, washing floors, and deep cleaning carpeted areas. As we resume school, teachers will continually disinfect doorknobs, light switches, and surfaces in their classrooms on a daily basis. Custodial staff will disinfect doorknobs, switches, railings, and surface areas outside of the classroom areas, paying added attention to restrooms and the lunchroom areas.

Student Illness

As we resume school operations school staff members will be vigilant for any signs of illness with students. Parents/Guardians will need to keep children at home who show signs of any illness. Students that develop symptoms at school or arrive to school with symptoms will need to be picked up immediately by parents/guardians. Parents/guardians need to ensure that they are able to pick up their child quickly upon a call from the school, or have made arrangements with someone who can pick up their child in a timely manner.

Extracurricular Activities and Events

At this time, all extra-curricular activities and WLA events are cancelled or postponed. This includes Kindergarten Round-Up, Festival of Nations, music concerts, and the Middle School field trip to the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. We are also considering cancelling the Viktor the Viking presentation, the first grade field trip, and the APEX fun run, which are all scheduled for late April. School administration will re-visit this in early to mid-April to determine if the late April events and field trip will be cancelled or postponed. Furthermore, all after school clubs at WLA are postponed until further notice.

Off-Site Learning

WLA will close down temporarily in several situations including a directive from the Governor's office, or a directive from the MDH, MDE, or CDC. The school will also close if the organization is unable to operate efficiently. In the event that the school closes, off-site learning will be fully implemented. Teachers will be communicating with families regarding what off-site learning will look and feel like according to their classroom grade level, and/or specialty area. In a nutshell, families will have the option to receive paper and/or electronic versions of all classwork, and school work will be ongoing.

Personal Family Preferences

I understand that families have their own preferences for sending their children to school, or keeping them at home, and WLA will respect and support the choices that families make. We have a clean building, vigilant staff members, and are closely following the directives of health organizations. However, if you choose to keep your child(ren) at home, we will immediately provide off-site learning experiences for your child as outlined in the paragraph above. For the children that stay at home, we want their education to continue uninterrupted, under the distant tutelage of their WLA teachers. If you choose to keep your child(ren) at home, you will need to send me an email with your intentions and copy the classroom teacher for grades K-5, or copy the Advisory Homeroom teacher for grades 6-8. We will then provide you with the materials and plan for your child(ren). Finally, in the case that you keep your child(ren) at home, they are not considered absent if they are participating in WLA produced off-site learning.

Temporary School Closure

In the event that WLA closes temporarily, all students and teachers will move to the off-site learning model. Such a closure could occur with little notice. Thus, families need to ensure that you have a plan in place for supervising your children.

Summary

I will keep families updated if/as situations change, and all memos will be emailed to homes and posted on our website. Finally, let's stay positive and remember that this is temporary situation. We will come through this together!