



March 1, 2020

Dear Derryfield Families,

The health and safety of our students and greater Derryfield community is our highest priority, and we want to assure you that we have been discussing and planning how to handle the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) situation for some time. We are drawing upon information and recommendations from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the New Hampshire Department of Health, the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and more.

The progression of this virus over the next few weeks and months is unknown and may change rapidly, so we are developing contingency plans for a number of scenarios, while remembering that we are still in a **low risk situation with no identified cases at this point in New Hampshire**. Our administrative and health team will monitor the situation daily. Based upon today's information, the following information is important for everyone in our community to know:

FAMILY & TRAVEL CONSIDERATIONS

What if our family traveled outside of New Hampshire this past week?

[Here is a link](#) to the current CDC travel guidelines. If your family traveled to a CDC level 1 or 2 location AND is experiencing fever and/or flu symptoms:

- Please contact Derryfield's school nurse, Michele Leclerc, (mleclerc@derryfield.org) before sending your child back to school tomorrow (Monday), in order to determine the best course of action.
- If any student has traveled to a level 3 location, we are requiring a 14-day self quarantine. Please contact Michele Leclerc to discuss the details of this further.

We will work with your family if a quarantine and/or extended absence is necessary, to ensure the best possible outcome related to a student's health and education.

What is the current situation in New Hampshire and how do I keep myself and family healthy?

In New Hampshire, there are currently no confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19.

As always, students should stay home if they are ill and not return to school until free of fever, vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours. Again, if you have ANY reason to believe there is a chance you or a family member has been exposed to the novel coronavirus, do not send your child to school and contact Michele Leclerc immediately.

Reduce exposure to and transmission of any virus by doing the following:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing and or sneeze into your elbow.
- Avoid close contact with anyone with a fever and a cough.
- Seek medical attention immediately if you develop a fever or cough.
- Avoid direct unprotected contact with live animals and surfaces in contact with animals.
- Stay home and avoid public places when sick (i.e. social distancing).
- Annual flu vaccinations for everyone 6 months and older (recommended by the CDC).

What happens if our family/student plans to travel internationally over March break? Will my child be restricted from returning to Derryfield upon their return?

Specific to this outbreak, we suggest that families who are planning international travel refer to the CDC's travel advisories page for recommendations to help stem the spread of this virus. Since a lot can happen and change over the next two weeks, we will be sending out further communications about this before the start of spring break.

What's happening with our March middle and upper school trips?

The health and safety of our students, families and faculty and staff is one of our top priorities. **The Nepal Trekking and Service trip and the Spain Creative Arts trip have been cancelled**, and our domestic trips planned for Colorado, Alabama (Habitat) and Washington, DC are still set to occur. Students and their chaperones will follow precautions for travel recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In addition, we will continue to monitor the situation on a daily basis to determine if further cancellations are necessary.

CAMPUS & LEARNING PLANS

What extra steps and precautions is Derryfield taking to keep the campus healthy?

We are working diligently to help contain viral illnesses by regularly deep cleaning our campus and by encouraging frequent and thorough hand washing. At this time, the flu is still a greater risk to our community, and basic hygiene practices remain at the core of any strategy to prevent infectious disease.

What will happen if we have to close Derryfield temporarily? How are faculty preparing should such a need present itself?

If, in the unlikely situation that we must close campus for health reasons, then learning will continue through remote learning. Below please find details below on how faculty will conduct classes remotely. During our next delayed opening (Wednesday, March 4), faculty will be training, planning, and sharing ideas to prepare distance learning lessons. Faculty will include activities and discussions into their classes during the next few weeks to prepare students in case the remote learning plan needs to be executed. Please see below.

Remote Learning Plan

A) In the case of numerous student absences from classes:

- All classes will continue to meet on the days scheduled. Teachers will do our best to continue daily teaching and learning activities.
- We will use the Google suite, email, and MSA system to post classwork, directions for activities, assessments, and homework.
- Teachers will make an extra effort to be available to answer questions and provide extra help to absent students through email.

B) In the case of a campus closure:

- We will continue to conduct classes digitally and design an abbreviated schedule, to run from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. each day, and the four scheduled classes will meet for 45 minutes each during the 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. day.

Students will be expected to login to the MSA system during the scheduled class time to:

- work on assignments as posted
- submit work as assigned
- send emails to their teacher with questions and requests for extra help

Teachers will be expected to:

- be available through email during scheduled class times to answer student emails
- available during Block 8 and Academic Block to provide extra help through email
- Grade and return work digitally and keep the class moving as best they can.

Nothing, of course, replaces human interaction and learning in the context of community, especially as we construct it at Derryfield; however, as part of our commitment to you and the education of your children, we will be prepared to continue the learning process even if the campus has to close.

EMPATHY & COURAGE

How are our international students being supported and what can you do?

We are talking regularly with our students from China, who have been affected by the outbreak in a number of ways. Many were planning on going home over March break, but have had to cancel those plans. They are also all worried about their family and friends in China. This is an unprecedented situation for us and these students, and we will continue to support them the best that we can. Tomorrow during Community Meeting we will affirm our shared school value of Caring, especially in light of how this virus has meant that our Chinese students cannot go home over March break, nor can their families visit them. Please keep in mind that this would be an excellent time to include Chinese classmates in your child's social plans and to talk with children about what it might feel like to walk in their friends' shoes.

My child is hearing news about this epidemic and feeling worried about it. What might I say?

You might express understanding that is worrisome to hear news about people suffering. The important element in judging a threat though, is to look at the numbers. At this moment, the vast majority of people who get sick get better. In today's *New York Times*, science writer Denise Grady writes that the *New England Journal of Medicine* is reporting that the mortality rate for the 1,099 cases of coronavirus in China is 1.4% which means that those who contract it have a 98.6% recovery rate and that "Children infected with the new coronavirus tend to have mild or no symptoms," because young people are much less impacted by the virus.

What resources are available to stay informed about the coronavirus?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- [Coronavirus updates](#)
- [Symptoms and diagnosis](#)
- [Transmission](#)
- [Prevention and treatment](#)
- [General travel tips](#)

The World Health Organization

- [Coronavirus outbreak information](#) and [explanation video](#)
- [Best practices for the prevention of infectious disease](#)

The U.S. State Department

- [Travel advisories](#)

Please be assured that we will continue to monitor the coronavirus situation closely, and that the health and safety of our students, families, faculty, and staff is of paramount importance. Thank you in advance for your partnership as we weather this storm, which—with some good fortune—may in fact pass us by.

Dr. Mary Halpin Carter, P'13, P'16, P'18, Head of School

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