



Transition to Mobile Learning

To Our Parents and Westerly Community:

This email contains important information. Please read it in its entirety.

After much careful thought, discussion and deliberative consideration, we have made the decision, in concert with the Board of Trustees, to transition to mobile learning and ask our families to remain off campus beginning Monday, March 16th. All related school events, including athletics and performing arts, are postponed.

This decision is one that we had hoped we never had to make. When State and County health officials advised that all schools should be ready for this eventuality, it allowed us lead time to accelerate our internal preparedness. This is not an unexpected moment and Westerly has been planning for this possibility.

We are taking this step because it is the right thing to do for our community at this time. We also want to be very clear: there are currently NO diagnosed COVID-19 cases on our campus or in our Westerly community.

We will continue to closely monitor the most current information available about COVID-19 locally by aggregating information and recommendations from government health agencies, maintaining close communication with other independent schools and monitoring actions by other educational institutions in the region.

We know this transition will bring difficulty for each of our families and for different reasons, not least of which is removing the comforting routine of coming to school during unsettling times. Please know our Westerly community will remain connected and strong as we weather this unprecedented challenge together. We will be in regular communication with our families in the days and weeks ahead and please remember that even from home, our families are part of the same engaged, supportive and wonderful Westerly community.

Is there school tomorrow?

Yes. Tomorrow, Friday, March 13th will be a normal school day with our standard dismissal at 1:30pm and Wildcat available after school. It is very important students make every effort to attend school tomorrow, assuming they are healthy, of course.

However, there will be no K-2nd family reading time tomorrow morning. Please remind your student tonight to make sure and gather any classroom materials they may need at home before they leave campus tomorrow.

Ok so, what happens next?

Monday, March 16th is already a scheduled pupil-free day on campus, and our faculty and staff will be working as planned.

We ask families to take some time this weekend to consider setting up a home learning area and organize for an extended time of mobile learning.

We also encourage you to monitor State, County and City sources for current information about developments and any directives that may be issued. We will communicate with our families about how any potential directive specifically impacts Westerly.

What exactly is mobile learning, how does it work and when does it start?

Mobile learning will begin on Tuesday, March 17th and all mobile learning days are considered actual school days. Our accrediting agency, the California Association of Independent Schools (CAIS), requires 3.5 hours of work per school day for K-2 and 3.5 to 4 hours for grades 3 - 8. This is active, engaged learning time which students can access on their own schedule, at their own pace from any location with standard internet access each day. On two predetermined occasions each week, students will need to log into a live session with their teacher.

[This graphic](#) from the Global Online Academy provides some helpful tips for engaging in online learning. All of our students have spent classroom time over the past week familiarizing themselves with the system, as well.

Before we officially transition into mobile learning next Tuesday, **families will get an email with detailed information and instructions about how to login and access the mobile learning platforms.**

How long will this last?

Right now, Westerly's campus will be pupil-free through at least the end of next week, March 20th. However, we are prepared to deliver mobile learning sessions for a longer period of time if we need to do so.

The City of Long Beach is now prohibiting all gatherings of 250 or more people through April 30th. This is similar to actions taken by major American sports leagues, sporting events in Europe which have been played in empty stadiums, and universities which are shifting to delivering classes online for extended periods of time. These "social distancing" measures are being rapidly rolled-out in an effort to slow the rate at which COVID-19 spreads and to protect the health and well-being of the entire community.

It is quite possible that mobile learning will continue for several weeks. We want to be forthright with you so you can take whatever steps necessary to prepare your family for what may be a prolonged period away from campus. Just as we ask our students to be adaptable, we will be ready to extend or modify our plans as events warrant.

What about Spring Break? We have travel plans for spring break, can we still go?

These are challenging times for travel and there is little evidence recommended restrictions will loosen in the foreseeable future. Please closely monitor evolving advisories from CDC about [Coronavirus and Travel in the United States](#) and any emergent outbreaks domestically. We also ask that you pay close attention to the advisories and follow instructions from the State Department and CDC regarding international travel. There is now a [Global Level 3 Health Advisory in place](#). Use your judgment, follow any isolation directives from government agencies and make appropriate decisions based on what is best for your student, your family and the community in which we live and thrive.

Finally, but of the utmost importance to our entire community, please continue to take seriously the basic strategies promoted by public health agencies to slow the spread of COVID-19: (1) wash hands frequently, (2) practice social distancing, and (3) postpone unnecessary travel.

Please know that, although we will be dispersed across our Southern California community, our students will continue to engage in the meaningful learning with which they are familiar here at Westerly. The creativity, curiosity, and loving community spirit that binds us all together remains intact and strong--please know that we are here to support all our families through this challenging time,

and don't hesitate to reach out. We can always be reached via email at lplant@westerlyschool.org or shalug13@gmail.com.

In partnership,



Dr. Lauren Plant
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