



COVID-19 Update #3 March 6, 2020

Dear Westerly Families,

As many of you have heard, California and many local governments - including LA County and the City of Long Beach - are taking steps to enhance their preparedness in response to the evolving situation with Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). It is important to understand that these actions are rooted in preparedness, not in panic. I want to take a moment to share with you some of the detailed actions we are engaged in as we continue to follow guidance from local health agencies to keep our community healthy.

What are we doing here at Westerly?

Westerly continues to follow the standard best practices protocol advised by the CDC for preventative measures here on campus. Here are some examples of actions already underway:

- Wiping down surfaces at least three times a day
- Supervising students as they wash their hands thoroughly (for at least 20 seconds and with soap) whenever students return to the classroom from recess, lunch, or play
- Frequent reminders for students NOT to share food and keep their hands away from their nose and mouth
- Wiping down faucets, door handles, dispensers, and playground equipment every two hours
- Utilizing alcohol-based hand sanitizer in all the classrooms and shared spaces
- Wiping down shared iPads and laptops before student use
- Temporary removal of the Imagination Playground equipment

What happens if schools have to close?

We understand that this is a dynamic and evolving situation. Many of you have followed the CDC advice to ask what our plan is in the event local health agencies call for school closures or other "social distancing" measures as a precaution to slow any localized spread of the virus. Rest assured: should health agencies provide direction to close campus, we have a plan in place for mobile learning to accommodate all of our Kindergarten through Eighth Grade students. In order to help us prepare, please email Pedro Jimenez at pjimenez@westerlyschool.org if you do not have access to a laptop, desktop, or tablet at home so we can provide you one for temporary use in the event we need to implement mobile learning.

Additionally, we will be asking students to bring home any necessary texts or materials each weekend in an abundance of preparedness, should any closure directive be given during a weekend.

What does all this mean for after school sports or campus events?

I also want to ask for your patience and adaptability as it pertains to our upcoming community events, trips, and gatherings. All of our trips and events will be assessed on a case-by-case basis with health and safety at the forefront of our decision-making.

While we are proceeding as scheduled with most of our calendared events, in an abundance of caution **we are rescheduling our Grandparents and Special Friends Day to the afternoon of May 29**, preceding the Spring Arts Festival. We recognize that many of our grandparents and special friends may fall into the high-risk category for COVID-19 and are taking this short-term measure to provide the best and safest possible event for all. We will send more information about the revised Grandparents & Special Friends Day in the next month.

What can our staff and families do to stay healthy?

Please continue to follow the advice and direction of doctors and local health agencies with regard to best practices at home and for any planned travel.

- **Stay home when you are sick.** Students must be fever free without the use of fever-reducing medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

I encourage you to review the [LA County guidance for parents with young children](#).

For your convenience, here are the links to trusted information sites that you can continue to reference:

- [CDC](#)
- [Los Angeles County](#)
- [Long Beach Health Department](#)

Last but by no means least, if you have any concerns please reach out to me and encourage students to talk with their teachers. There can be moments where the news and events of the day can seem overwhelming. The World Health Organization has good reference points for adults about managing stress [here](#).

If you are interested in talking more with your children at home about the news around COVID-19, here are three different approaches that have been shared with teachers as well. You may find these helpful in generating a conversation:

- NPR: [Just For Kids: A Comic Exploring The New Coronavirus](#)
- National Association of School Psychologists: [Talking to Children about COVID-19](#)
- New York Times - [How to Talk to Kids About Coronavirus](#)

Thank you all for your adaptability and consideration as we work together to weather this health challenge and keep our families, students, staff, and community as a whole healthy and happy.

In partnership,



Dr. Lauren Plant
Westerly School