

Dear Whitefield Families,

Keeping students and staff healthy is a top priority Whitefield Academy. In the last week I have been liaising with Drs. Paul & Terese Bauer, who in turn have been in contact with many of the other physicians in our community, in order to assess the current situation vis-a-vis COVID-19, and to craft a policy to govern our thinking in the next few months.

Please take a few minutes to read this email and to check the websites mentioned.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has provided schools and communities guidance regarding preparation for the novel coronavirus. Novel coronavirus is a virus strain that has spread in people since December 2019 and has caused severe illness and pneumonia. Symptoms are similar to influenza - cough, fever, shortness of breath and difficulty breathing. More information can be found at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus or health.mo.gov/coronavirus .

Those at risk for serious complications from coronavirus are older adults and people of any age with underlying health problems. The risk to children and healthy adults is much less. Limiting the transmission of coronavirus is particularly important to the community at large who is at risk if exposed.

Whitefield Academy has taken or will take the following steps to ensure student and staff health:

- Dr. Johnston will continue to communicate closely with health professionals.
- We will continue to monitor and track student illnesses, and review CDC and local health department guidance.
- We will provide anti-bacterial stations in each classroom. NOTE: This is already challenging because of the shortage of anti-bacterial hand sanitizer.
- Teachers will make sure our students engage in frequent and proper hand washing.
- Teachers will review proper hand-washing techniques: Wash your hands often. Wash for 20 seconds with soap, rub between fingers and under nails, and then rinse and dry. Use alcohol (65%+) hand gel if sinks are not available.
- Teachers will be responsible for sanitizing classrooms including classroom door knobs. NOTE: We have secured a supply of wipes, but they are already in short supply. If you see any in the store, please buy one additional for the classroom if

you can.

- Heads of School will assign teachers aides and other to be responsible for sanitizing bathrooms and common spaces.
- Lunch Staff will be responsible for sanitizing kitchen and cafeteria.
- We will increase our supplies of wipes, tissues, and sanitizing products to ensure adequate supply. NOTE: See notes about regarding shortness of supply.
- Our contracted cleaning professionals will ensure the use of high-level antiviral cleaning agents on a daily basis.

Whitefield Academy will reinforce best practices to prevent the spread of this and other viruses to staff and students. The number one way to stop the spread of illness remains to stay home if you are displaying any symptoms such cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue with or without fever.

Respiratory viruses are transmitted from person to person when an infected person coughs or sneezes, or when a person touches something that has the virus on it and then touches his or her mouth, eyes or nose. While most of the population is at a greater risk of contracting seasonal influenza than coronavirus, it is essential that we partner to prevent the spread of all illnesses by embracing the following practices:

- Stay home if you are sick with the symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills or fatigue. Contact your local healthcare provider.
- Practice frequent hand washing using soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. You may also use hand sanitizer when it is difficult to wash your hands.
- Avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes because the virus can spread when your hands touch surfaces infested with germs.
- Remember to cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing and sneezing. If a tissue is not available, sneezing or coughing into the upper portion of your shirt sleeve and avoid sneezing or coughing into your hands (which are more likely to touch surfaces and other people and spread the disease).

- Viruses cannot live in heat. To decrease the amount of virus living in your nose or throat, boil water, remove from heat, and carefully inhale the steam.
- Do not share drinks, water bottles, eating utensils or cell phones with others.
- Practice “social distancing,” especially in the case of a pandemic. Stand at 3-6 feet away from others if you or the other person is infected.
- Traveling for spring break? Please familiarize yourself with information about the areas where infection rates are high, and the chance for the disease is heightened. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/locations-confirmed-cases.html>) If traveling to a level 1, 2, or 3 country, please stay home for 14 days following these travels. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>)

If we have a confirmed case of coronavirus in our school community among students, teachers, faculty, or a family member, it is likely that we would close school for 2 weeks to decrease transmission of the virus. We would advise that you would quarantine your family during this time. The reason for this policy is that it may take up to 14 days to show symptoms after exposure. We will update this policy based on the most current expert advice available. In this regard, the best we can do is to follow Christ's own admonition in Matthew 7:12 to care for others as we would want them to care for ourselves.

More information can be found on the following reputable websites.

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/as-coronavirus-spreads-many-questions-and-some-answers-2020022719004>

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/2019-novel-coronavirus-myth-versus-fact>.

If you have any questions concerning school policy, please contact the office. Of course, any medical questions should be directed to your family physician.

Every Blessing,
Quentin Johnston
Headmaster.