



April 3, 2020

Dear Waverly community,

Twenty-two days ago, we made the very difficult decision to send our students home. And while those days have been some of the longest days we've all had as educators, moving our unique, student-centered, humanist approach to a functioning online platform in such a short time has been truly inspiring. Everyone's flexibility, ingenuity, creativity, care, camaraderie, and gritty persistence have been truly humbling: the students, the teachers, the staff, and of course, the families.

As you may know, this week Governor Newsom called on public schools in California to remain closed through the remainder of the year. I was on a call with CAIS heads when this announcement was made. CAIS confirmed that independent schools have the flexibility to make their own decisions and the 100+ heads on the call largely agreed that it is too soon to make a decision regarding the length of remote learning. For now, we are planning for the three weeks from April 14 through May 1 while also keeping in mind that remote learning might be extended. We will review the situation when we return from spring break and make a decision about any extension of remote learning at that time.

On Thursday, teachers and administrators met to debrief the past three weeks. We considered feedback from students, teachers, and parents to assess what is working well, and what modifications we need to make. After debriefing, we worked together to refine our remote learning program to ensure that students and teachers continue to be engaged in meaningful and sustainable ways.

Classes will resume on Tuesday, April 14. To allow continued review and enhancement of our remote learning program, we have calendared April 22, Earth Day, as a technology free day for students. There will not be synchronous classes offered that day, and teachers will not be assigning work to be completed on the computer or a screen. If we make the difficult decision to extend remote learning beyond May 4, we will also be using May 1 as another teacher workday to plan the next phase of the program.

I have heard through the grapevine some reports of community members who are, or have been ill, with mild to moderate COVID-19-like symptoms. Thus far, we are not aware of anyone in our community testing positive for the disease. If you or one of your loved ones develops symptoms, please follow the guidelines in the Public Health Emergency Quarantine Order, put out by the Los Angeles Department of Health, attached to this email. I want to assure you that if we do have any confirmed cases of COVID-19 amongst students or Waverly employees, we will let the community know without revealing personal information.

I am very aware of the tremendous impact that COVID-19 has had on you and your families. And, I am tremendously grateful and proud of how the Waverly community has responded.

While we are all planning to take a deep breath over the next ten days, please know that administrators will be checking their email each weekday in the event that a family needs to connect with us regarding an urgent matter.

I wish you and your family a safe, healthy, and restorative spring break.

In gratitude,

Heidi Johnson  
Head of School