



Dear TMA Community:

The safety, health and education of our students are our highest priorities. To that end, we have been monitoring the global health threat posed by the new coronavirus (2019-nCoV), and its associated illness COVID-19. Now, with the possibility of outbreaks in the United States causing community disruptions and potential health-crises, we want to be proactive in informing you of our current plans to prepare and deal with these possibilities.

We have outlined a three-part plan for how we as a school community will respond to this potential crisis:

**I. Information**

- A. We will follow the recommended and required guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Indiana State Department of Health with respect to guidelines and best practices.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html>

<https://www.in.gov/isdh/28470.htm>

- B. We will do our best to provide you with the information you need to make informed decisions and prepare your household appropriately. One thoughtful resource on ways you can plan was on NPR a few days ago:

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/26/809650625/a-guide-how-to-prepare-your-home-for-coronavirus>

If you are interested in discussing this with your younger children, NPR has made a mini-comic book available with details about the virus.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/28/809580453/just-for-kids-a-comic-exploring-the-new-coronavirus>

- C. We will update you on changes that affect our school as soon as we have accurate information to share. We will communicate all necessary real-time information through RainedOut.com as we do for weather related school closures. If you have not yet registered with RainedOut this year, please do so right away. If you're a returning family, you have likely been purged from their system. RainedOut made changes to their platform which requires everyone to sign up, even if you have in previous years. Click here [https://www.rainedout.net/team\\_page.php?a=72df1c8a06c626eec83e](https://www.rainedout.net/team_page.php?a=72df1c8a06c626eec83e) and type in the keyword 84483, or text TMAclosinginfo to 84483 to register.

- D. As ours is a culturally rich community, many of you travel frequently, so if you plan to travel to affected areas, we ask you to be mindful of your risks and to the guidelines of the communities to which you travel. Upon your return, please let us know so that we can assist you in monitoring your child's health.

## II. **School Closure**

A mandated school disruption is likely to be one of three possible scenarios:

### A. **Social Distancing**

- i. If the CDC recommends social distancing, school will remain in session and we will enforce a distance rule among our staff and students [This is typically 3 feet based on influenza pandemic guidelines]. We are stocking the school with additional disinfectant/cleaning materials. We will reinforce good hygiene practices. There will likely be disruptions to co-curricular activities like PE. We will make a determination on school events based on the best available public health information.

- ii. In this situation, we see a strength in Montessori education. Our classrooms are readily configured to spread students out; additionally we have several spaces that are available as extended-distance classrooms as needed to enforce appropriate hygiene and mandated distancing. The practical-works in Early Childhood for hand-washing and cleaning create an opportunity for public health and hygiene to be an open discussion among our students. Broader social issues and the science behind public health and biology create natural living-classrooms for students to engage and be informed citizens. This will address their fears and concerns if we maintain an open and transparent inquiry mindset.

### B. **Short-term Closure**

In the event of a mandated closure, we will implement the following policy (Subject to revision as necessary).

- i. **Closure from 1-3 days.**

If the school is required to close for a period of 1-3 days we will treat this as we would for inclement weather closings. This includes make-up days if/as needed at the end of the school year.

- ii. **Extended mandated closing**

In the event the school is required to close for a quarantine period, the most likely terms would be two to four weeks. The first goal of our extended closing policy is to maintain the safety of our families, teachers and staff. The second goal of this policy is to minimize the academic disruption an extended period of closure has on our students.

- a. I have instructed our faculty to prepare for this possibility. They are implementing plans for how they will adjust their lesson plans to accommodate closures of this duration.
- b. Our faculty have been instructed to design lesson plans and works that can be easily electronically distributed or communicated to families to continue academic progress.
- c. During the closure, we will list call-bank hours and numbers/emails, and teachers will be expected to be on-duty to answer student questions.
- d. Upper-elementary and Jr. High students already have electronic file storage capabilities, however for classes in which they are not already doing it, we can create classroom folders in Google drive for students to turn in homework and receive feedback (checks) for submitted work.
- e. We will reopen school as it is safe and advised to do so.

### III. **Community**

#### A. **Parent / Family Communication**

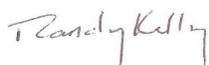
In the event our families are personally affected by this outbreak, we would like to keep communication lines open so our community is able to help. This could take the form of food delivery, helping with children, and other needs a family may have. Our TMA community is one that is always ready to step in when one of our families is in need.

To this end, we will make communication as easy as possible by providing all of you an accessible family directory. We will also set up communication trees by level that will begin with your Community Builder, and you can always get in touch with your child's teacher for any needs, including providing contact information for classroom families.

Many thanks to Patty Champion, Associate Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences and Matt Champion, Associate Professor in the Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry at the University of Notre Dame for guiding TMA's response to this potentially challenging global health situation. We are very fortunate to have parents with a wide array of expertise from which we can draw when needed.

Thank you also for your commitment to the health and well-being of our TMA community. If you have additional questions regarding our response to the potential outbreak, please feel free to contact me directly.

Sincerely,



Randy Kelly  
*Head of School*