



Office of the President

March 6, 2020

Dear parents and guardians,

I am writing to you with an update on our school efforts around the COVID-19 virus. I want to let you know that I have appointed Ms. Mary Ella Marion, dean of students, to lead the school's taskforce around our response. The taskforce will include Ms. Jeanne Blakeslee, principal; Ms. Diana Rego, director of finance and operations; and me, together with other key school leaders in facilities, athletics, security, IT and operations.

We continue to take measures to educate our community about how to best protect ourselves and others against respiratory viruses. We are continuing to follow a regular program of cleaning and disinfection throughout the school. Handwashing reminders have been posted in bathrooms, and the only girls' restroom without touchless sinks on our campus has been closed. Today, we began the day with announcements highlighting some best practices. On Monday, March 9, we will begin the day with a brief school assembly on best practices and precautions with a focus on handwashing, coughing or sneezing into one's sleeve, staying away from those who are ill, and staying at home in the event of illness. If your daughter is ill, please keep her home so other students and teachers are not infected. She may return to school 24 hours after symptoms have abated, including a return to normal body temperature.

As I shared with you initially, we are formulating our efforts in accordance with the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Maryland State Department of Health, the Archdiocese of Baltimore, and the Association of Independent Maryland & DC Schools (AIMS). Many AIMS schools are cancelling field trips, as well as activities that bring students, faculty and staff into close proximity with each other or with people who may have respiratory infections. Out of an abundance of caution, we are cancelling field trips for the next few weeks. We are also changing the format of Career Day, which would have brought more than 100 guests to campus on Friday, March 13th. Instead, Career Day will feature a keynote address, a panel presentation, and a handful of speakers.

We recognize that these changes in our schedule are disappointing for our Mercy Girls, and we ask your help in processing this information with your daughters and in encouraging flexibility on their part. We do not want to create fear or anxiety, and we ask your partnership in talking about the role we each play in staying healthy and preventing the spread of illness.

Finally, we have created a page on our website, where you can find our communications to you and [web resources](#).

Please know that your partnership at this challenging time is deeply appreciated. Be assured that we will provide further updates as this situation requires.

Best regards,

Mary Beth Lennon '85
President