

Coronavirus Message #5

Dear SRV Community,

As we prepare to head into the second weekend of school closure, I wanted to reach out to you to communicate what we know about the coronavirus crisis currently, what the school is doing, what you can do and continue to do at home, and what to expect from SRV in the near future. I continue to be inspired by our students, teachers, parents, and neighbors and the many examples of generosity, selflessness, and collective wisdom that you all have to offer. It is clear that this community knows that we are all in this together and in solidarity, we will triumph over the coronavirus crisis.

What we Know

Different parts of the country are seeing different levels of coronavirus activity. The United States nationally is currently in the initiation phases, but states, where community spread is occurring, are in the acceleration phase. The duration and severity of each phase can vary depending on the characteristics of the virus and the public health response.

- CDC and state and local public health laboratories are testing for the virus that causes COVID-19. View [CDC's Public Health Laboratory Testing map](#).
- All 50 states have reported cases of COVID-19 to the CDC.
- U.S. COVID-19 cases include:
 - Imported cases in travelers
 - Cases among close contacts of a known case
 - Community-acquired cases where the source of the infection is unknown.
 - Three U.S. states are experiencing sustained community spread.

As per today's announcement by SRV community member and Delaware County Council Chairman, Brian Zidek, today, Chester County has assumed jurisdiction over Delaware County's health services.

What the School is Doing

Now that a foundational program platform has been established, we are working to upgrade in stages to a more robust online learning program so that we continue to meet the needs of our students and keep them engaged, and meet our goal of keeping students connected with their teachers. The SRV Staff has been training on Google Meet and Google Hangouts, which we will use for whole classroom video conferencing with students next week. Our plan is to beta-test it with families on March 20 at 1 pm. This particular meeting will not be recorded but should we start recording the meetings with your children for playback in the future, the School will send you a video release form. You will receive an invitation from your child's

teacher to join the meeting. Those of you with siblings can decide which meeting to attend. This will not only enhance the regular program but allow our support teachers to work with individual students and therapeutic support groups.

Susan McCarter and Kristina Gomez will be conducting individual and group reading and math support sessions, respectively, via Google Hangouts. In addition, Susie Metrick and Izzy Hubbard will be conducting individual and group emotional support sessions via Google Hangouts and FaceTime. If you need any additional guidance and support with the Reading and Math support programs or counsel and support in meeting the emotional needs of your children, you can contact Susie Metrick (sumetrick@gmail.com).

What Students and Families Can Do

Everyone can do their part to help us respond to this emerging public health threat. On March 16, the White House announced a program called "[15 Days to Slow the Spread](#)," which is a nationwide effort to slow the spread of COVID-19 through the implementation of social distancing at all levels of society. Older people and people with severe chronic conditions should [take special precautions](#) because they are at higher risk of developing serious COVID-19 illness.

Make sure that you have logged in and can access all of the digital platforms that we are using and be sure to email me at rod@theschoolinrsoevalley.org if you have any difficulty doing so.

Remember that as James Balwin wrote, "Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them." Our children are taking cues from us to figure out how to understand and navigate this novel situation. Know that they can sense how you are feeling so be aware of your emotional self with them, as best you can. Please read this [letter from Susie Metrick, School Psychologist](#) for attending to children's emotional needs.

What to Expect From Here

As we learn to navigate the platforms and apps that are being added to Google Classroom and used by students, parents, and teachers, we will communicate what we learn on the SRV Community Google Classroom. As we find ways to continue other program elements we will let you know both on the SRV Community Google Classroom page and via Constant Contact. More comprehensive messages like this one from me will continue to come through the MSP student information system.

You can expect that teachers will schedule at least one virtual meeting with students next week.

Our weekly all-school Sing is such an important part of the lives of our students. We would like to try and maintain this tradition, despite being apart from one other, and so we are planning on hosting all-school virtual Sing on March 25 at 8:20 am. You will receive an invitation via Constant Contact in the near future so stay tuned!

One of the most incredible things that have happened while we have been isolated in our homes is the way that our students, in such organic ways, are beginning to create their own learning opportunities online with one another. For example, Miranda, a student in the Oldest Group has engaged her classmates in creating their own theater playbill! They are also inspiring us daily in other ways. Please read [this story](#) by Oldest Group student, Nolan Orr, titled *Home* to see what I mean.

I know how challenging it is to be balancing working from home, helping your children to engage in online learning, while caring for loved ones and worrying about an unknown future. When the crisis ends, I would like to be able to reflect on the ways in which we handle our responsibilities and know that we were graceful, caring, and supportive, especially with our children. With that in mind, the quote that I offer comes from Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa.

“There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children.”

— Nelson Mandela

Sincerely,

Rod Stanton
Head of School
The School in Rose Valley