

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICE OF



HEIGHTS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

March 4, 2020

Dear HCS Parents,

Providing a safe and healthy learning and work environment for our students, faculty and staff is of the utmost importance. As the spread of COVID-19 (commonly referred to as the coronavirus) continues to be identified in a growing number of countries internationally, including the United States, we have had many inquiries about what HCS is doing to keep our schools/students healthy.

RELIABLE SOURCES OF INFORMATION: As more cases are identified closer to home, the concern will only grow. Because it is so important that we are responding to factual, reliable information and resources, HCS is proactively monitoring the updates, recommendations and guidelines for preventing the spread of the disease provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), as well as the California Department of Health (CDPH), and the World Health Organization (WHO). We do not want to allow ourselves to be overcome with anxiety or ruled by fear or speculation; we encourage you to seek out information from these sites.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: According to the CDPH, currently, the health risk to the general public in California from COVID-19 remains low, but schools are advised to take common-sense precautions to prevent the spread of all infectious diseases. There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), but the following guidelines are provided by the CDC to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, including COVID-19:

- Get a **flu shot**.
- Take **flu antivirals** if prescribed.
- Take **everyday preventive actions** (personal healthy habits) to stop the spread of germs including: 1) Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth; 2) Avoid close contact with people who are sick; 3) Stay home when you are sick or becoming sick; 4) Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue (not your hands) and throw the tissue in the trash; 5) Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces with regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- **Wash your hands often** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- The CDC does not recommend a face mask for healthy people to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19. **Face masks should only be used by those who show symptoms of COVID-19** to prevent the spread of the disease to others.
- **Seek medical care** right away if you have both symptoms of fever, cough and shortness of breath and have either recently returned from countries with known infections or have direct exposure to others diagnosed with COVID-19.

WHAT HCS IS DOING: HCS will continue to monitor the CDC, CDPH and WHO for best practices, and will endeavor to meet and exceed guidelines whenever possible. We will continue to keep you updated and are always available to respond to your inquiries and concerns. We will continue to train students and remind them to practice good personal health habits as indicated above, including frequent hand washing. We will also continue to be diligent about cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces throughout the day.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND VISITORS: As discussed in an earlier communication, there will be restrictions placed on students who have returned from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19 (includes China and any other countries identified by the CDC as having widespread, ongoing transmission of the virus). **These students will be excluded from school for a minimum of 14 days beginning the day after they left the infected area.** It has been determined by the CDC, CDPH and WHO that after 14 days, if these students remain symptom-free, they are not infected with the virus and contact with them will not expose others to the virus. Upon returning to school after the 14-day wait period, students are also required to provide a doctor's written verification of health. International students and visitors that are currently in attendance are strongly encouraged not to leave the country.

CARING FOR OTHERS: One of our Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLRs) is to "Be Like Jesus!" It is important to remember that many HCS students across our campuses are from other countries, particularly in Asia. They are a part of our HCS family, and we want to do all that we can to ensure that they are treated well during this time of uncertainty and worry for their families in their home countries. What a great opportunity this is for us to intentionally care for and embrace all of our students, representing the heart of Christ to each of them.

As always, we count our partnership with you a privilege. We pray for the Lord's continued hand of blessing, provision and protection over each of you and our schools.

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