

March 20, 2020

Dear Asheville School Families,

The last couple of weeks have been challenging and difficult to predict. Each hour brings new developments in the war on the Coronavirus. The State of North Carolina and the City of Asheville are taking more aggressive measures to limit the spread of the virus. Social distancing has been a major part of this strategy. It is obvious that this situation will not be resolved in a matter of days or weeks. We are going to see this disruption extend into late spring and early summer.

Most colleges, universities, and schools have ceased teaching on site for the remainder of the year. They have shifted to online learning. We will begin online learning on Monday. You should have received information about this earlier today from our Academic Dean, Helen Plaehn.

After much thought and reflection, we will suspend on-campus teaching and our residential program through the end of this academic year. We will complete this academic year through the online learning model.

Effective immediately, the campus will be closed to all visitors. All international students currently on site will need to work with our Student Life Office to make arrangements to leave campus as soon as possible. Day students are asked not to come to campus.

I am sad beyond measure. This is not a decision that I came to lightly. I love teaching and there is nothing more important to me than the relational model of the Asheville School education. I love the community we have on this campus. However, I am aware that we are in unique times and we have to be realistic to the global medical challenge we are currently facing. This decision was made with the recognition that we are connected to the larger world.

My heart breaks for the senior class. I know that they were looking forward to a culminating end to their time as students at our school. We are currently hoping that we can have some form of a Graduation and "Senior Days." We will monitor the recommendations of medical professionals as we go forward to find a safe and appropriate time to do this.

I want to thank the board, administrative team and the faculty for all their efforts during this unprecedented crisis. They are providing leadership that will allow us to continue to be a vibrant school and academic community for many decades to come. Asheville School has survived and thrived for well over a century, and we will come out of this crisis a stronger institution.

I know that you have many questions. We have listed below some frequently asked questions (FAQs). We will be providing more information in the days to come. If you have academic concerns, please contact Helen Plaehn at plaehnh@ashevilleschool.org. For other concerns, please contact Ben Williamson at williamsonb@ashevilleschool.org.

I pray that all members of the Asheville School family will remain safe and healthy during this crisis and always. Thank you for all your support and concern for our school.

Go Blues!!

Dr. Anthony H. Sgro '84
Head of School

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Will the Class of 2020 have a graduation ceremony?

We will have some form of a ceremony. We hope that it will be a live event on our campus. We will monitor the spread of the Coronavirus and the recommendations and regulations of governmental agencies.

How do boarding student clean out their rooms?

Ms. Grant will be communicating with boarders early next week with plans for cleaning out rooms.

How do day students retrieve materials from the Day Room?

Ms. Grant will be communicating with day students early next week with plans for picking up their personal items.

Will Sixth Formers be able to give Chapel talks?

Yes, we will be sending information next week about how this will occur in a virtual space.

Will there be a credit for boarding tuition for this year?

Families will receive a credit for a portion of their boarding tuition. This information will be shared in the coming weeks.

How can I get medication from the Health Center?

The Health Center is prohibited by law from mailing medications. Students should call PSA Pharmacy at 828 686-3804 to make arrangements for receiving medications.

How will student leadership be decided for next year?

The student leadership selection process will be conducted online this spring. Information about the process will be forthcoming. Honor Council and Student Council elections will be held in the fall.