

March 11, 2020

Dear Parents

We continue to monitor the COVID-19 concerns in our area and review communications from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS), the Diocese of Raleigh Catholic Schools Office, local schools, and St. Francis of Assisi Parish. As always, we have the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff as our highest priority.

I know you are hearing news reports about college closures, receiving other communications from parents from other schools and organizations, and, I am sure, dealing with your personal work situations as well; it is all very confusing and overwhelming. We understand and can certainly commiserate!

We want to reassure you that we are in consistent communication with the organizations listed above, and we remain cautious and proactive in all of our policies and procedures; this is an unprecedented situation and we will treat it with the high level of concern that these circumstances deserve. We are reviewing our status each day and will communicate early and often as to any changes to our schedules, field trips, class events or other school activities, including whether we have to cancel school for any length of time. Please know we are moving forward with careful planning for any contingency.

As we do move forward in our planning, we offer additional important notes and resources below:

- We are reviewing our absenteeism policies and procedures, and we want to emphasize that students, faculty and staff are **absolutely NOT** to attend school if they are sick.
- We **require** that anyone who has a medical question or concern, and most certainly if they or a family member are in self-quarantine or have been **diagnosed with Coronavirus/COVID-19**, to immediately let TFS Administration know of the concern or diagnosis. Do not risk the larger community's health!
- Follow the CDC guidance for [schools and childcare programs](#).
- Make sure all your students are updated as to the benefit of practicing [good hand hygiene and taking common-sense precautions](#) to protect from the spread of respiratory illnesses, and we will advise them here as well as we do with our faculty and staff.
- We have established a relationship with our [local health department](#) (this provides all county sites, including Wake, Orange, and Durham) and we will be in communication with them about any questions or concerns about COVID-19.
- We are reviewing [NCDHHS recommendations for cleaning practices](#) and increasing our already high focus on best cleaning practices
- As a reminder to all faculty, staff, students' parents and/or guardians, an annual flu shot is an important way to support overall health. While the flu shot does not protect against COVID-19, it is the best defense against the flu, which is a common respiratory illness.

- Helpful [tips](#) on how to talk to your child about the coronavirus.

Additional Resources:

- Communication from the Wake County Public School System can be found [here](#)
- The communication regarding the State of Emergency declaration from the governor can be found [here](#)
- CDC information on the Coronavirus is [here](#) from their website.
- Information from the NCDHHS for schools is [here](#)

We are always available to address your questions, and let me re-emphasize again that we are contingency planning, as we speak, and are utilizing the information available from the health and governmental organizations that provide the best and most reliable information available. We expect more information from the Diocese of Raleigh soon, and we will share that information as it becomes available.

Be safe and healthy!

Sincerely,

Michael Watson
Principal at The Franciscan School