



A Message from Head of School Ben Williams

Dear Cate Families,

We are all learning the same grim news about the viral spread throughout the country and the world. The Governor of California, much like the leaders in a host of other states and countries, has imposed new standards with respect to travel, gathering, quarantine, and the like. We now have a two-week quarantine expected of anyone traveling to California from out of state. Similar expectations are in place on the east coast and overseas, and all “non-essential travel” is strongly discouraged. We have also gotten specific guidance about avoiding the introduction of potential infection vectors via family members who have been apart and plan to gather for the holidays.

In light of these new standards, and in keeping with the recommendations of our medical director, we are immediately making a series of policy and protocol adjustments to ensure that our students remain safe and our program can continue unabated until Winter Break. Many of these changes will have direct impact on our families, particularly those who intended to travel to Cate for the Fall Break and those who have day students at the School.

In all decisions we have been guided by our two fundamental priorities: to keep our kids healthy and allow them to pursue their educations with energy and purpose here on the Mesa. To that end, we have made the following adjustments:

- The campus will be closed to non-programmatic visitors and guests effective immediately and continuing until Winter Break
- Families who intended to travel to the Mesa to celebrate Thanksgiving should cancel those plans as the risk of contagion being introduced to the campus community is too great
- All Cate students involved in club sports off campus will suspend their involvement in such activities from this moment until the beginning of Winter Break
- Faculty children who are involved in club sports will also suspend their participation in such activities
- Day students who are coming to campus each day and their families should observe all quarantine standards – including minimizing and/or eliminating students’ interactions with individuals outside of the home other than those that take place on this campus

- Cate staff who do not live on campus who can work from home may do so for the foreseeable future
- COVID-19 testing will be augmented for all faculty and those who travel to Cate from off campus for school or employment. Students will be tested on a monthly basis as previously scheduled.
- Our performance of our fall play, Much Ado About Nothing, will be livestreamed so that all of our families can enjoy the play virtually in real-time.

These are immensely challenging days for all of us, and the uncertainty of the coming months is worrisome indeed. But thanks to your help and support, the great patience and resilience of our students, and the remarkable commitment of our faculty and staff, we have been able to live and learn together since September. Our goal in these new risk mitigations is to see that our momentum is maintained and the opportunity to study together in person is not lost.

Thankfully, our plans for our students over the Fall Break remain wonderfully robust, and we see no impediments, despite the changing context off the Mesa, to delivering a fulfilling respite to our kids. Perhaps that reduces the disappointment for those who imagined a more traditional family reunion at this time of year. That opportunity is coming in December.

Parent Q&A - Thursday at 6:00 p.m. PDT

No doubt this letter will inspire a host of responses and possible questions, so we have scheduled a [Q&A via Zoom for Thursday at 6:00 p.m. this week](#). We look forward to talking further at that time.

Thank you for your patience and your support. Despite all that is happening around us, the Mesa is full of its usual vitality, inquiry, and laughter. Especially amidst the uncertainty of this pandemic, that is a reassuring truth.

Servons,
Ben



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