

URGENT UPDATE
Collegedale Academy
March 12, 2020

Dear Parents,

The past two days have been like few other events in our country's history. Monday night I was packing bags with my son, getting ready to head to Europe with our high school choir. Tuesday morning, at 8am, I began my tradition of browsing emails to see if anything urgent floated to the top. "I'm stuck in Italy" was the very first message from our tour bus driver, as Italy had closed their northern border to fight the corona virus. Then an email came from Bogenhofen (Adventist college/high school in Austria), where we were going to perform Friday night and Sabbath, saying the country was forbidding any gathering of more than 100 people. On top of that, in checking with another bus company, they recommended we not come to Europe as borders were closing.

With that information in hand, we had no choice to cancel our trip (three hours before the bus left to the airport:). After listening to President Trump last night, I had to offer a quick prayer of thanks!!!! Could you imagine being stuck in Europe with 38 students, begging to get on a flight and heading right back home? GOD IS GOOD! He answered our prayers, before we knew we had a need!

Today, March 12, our administrative team and board chair met to discuss how CA will handle the coronavirus situation. We do not want to overreact to, what we all would agree is a certain amount of hysteria. With that said, we are obligated to protect our students and families. Even as we were meeting, several dominos dropped: Southern Adventist University suspended classes for the next two weeks at which time they will resume with on-line classes only this semester, the Georgia Cumberland Conference recommended that all schools close for (at least) a week after spring break, SonRise was canceled, and Hamilton County will close all their schools for the next two weeks.

CA Corona Virus Announcement

Following the recommendation of the Georgia Cumberland Conference, due to the health concerns of the COVID-19 virus and the well-being of our students and families, Collegedale Academy will be closed as scheduled March 16-20, 2020, for Spring Break. CA will also be closed the following week March 23-27, 2020. Only essential personnel will be allowed in school buildings during this time. School will reopen March 30, 2020; however, two points need to be addressed: is this sufficient time to close and what future large events need to be canceled/postponed for safety. This fast-moving crisis can change our plans at a moment's notice.

The CA administrative team will send out an email update on Wednesday, March 18 and Wednesday, March 25, 2020. At this time, we will indicate whether we are still on track with our plan or if additional time is needed to combat the health concern. CA is expecting that families who have gone overseas or on a cruise, will self-quarantine for fourteen days after returning from their trip at Spring Break. It is our top priority to protect our students, their families, and our staff. Students that self-quarantine will be given assignments at home. If the school sees the virus is becoming increasingly prevalent in our area, we may elect to go one more week away from school. This would be the week of March 30 – April 3. This choice would, in effect, self-quarantine all families who traveled at spring break.

CA has asked its staff to follow the same expectations that we have for parents. If a staff member has gone on a cruise, flown internationally or been in a “hot spot” (Seattle, etc.), they will be asked to self-quarantine. We would also ask that anyone going to Disney World in Florida (for example), which is currently not a “hot spot”, be extremely vigilant.

If school is canceled March 30 – April 3, students will be receiving course work on-line from teachers. Each building may use a slightly different way to deliver their classroom instruction. ECEC-5 has discussed driving up to school to receive a packet of work, while 6-12 may handle the situation by using Zoom (teacher will record class), Google Classroom, or another online platform. Our prayer is that with either 2 or 3 weeks away, the virus will have run its course! Students will be encouraged to take home all classwork/items they need, in case of this possibility. If a family does not have access to an at home computer or tablet, please let your building principal know asap! ACT testing on campus would not occur, will consult with ACT.

Without a clear view of the future, the following large gathering events will either be canceled or postponed:

1. Grandparents Day – canceled
2. Alumni Weekend – canceled (several other schools are still going ahead with their golf tournaments: they are outdoors, not in a confined area, and it caters to our local community – we are still determining how to proceed)
3. Book fair – modified
4. Senior Class trip – canceled (looking to move to May, providing the risk factor is lessened. Will try to do something for our Seniors).
5. Spring Fling banquet – canceled
6. Field day (middle school) – canceled
7. Board meeting – canceled (still having policy/personnel meet as they are small groups)

Today, as crazy as it has been, has still been one where I have caught a glimpse of the Lord’s majesty. Mrs. Foster sent me a *in God’s time* memory verse, “I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. TAKE HEART! I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD.” Thank-you parents, students, board members, and faculty of Collegedale Academy for your support and prayers as we educate our children for eternity! If you have any questions, don’t hesitate to email me at bbaldwin@collegedaleacademy.com.