

3/11/20

Dear Summerfield Community,

Our first priority as a school continues to be the health and well being of our students, families and staff while bringing the opportunities and experiences that make the Summerfield education unique. As you know, the experiences go beyond the classroom to presentations and performances. These are an important part of the educational process, and right now their value must be weighed with the current public health situation. As conditions with COVID-19 evolve rapidly, we continue to monitor very closely the guidelines and requirements of Public Health officials as the basis for our decision making about all school matters, including events. The county has opened a 24/7 hotline for schools at the Department of Health Services which we are now using for the information and guidance informing our decisions.

The point of this letter is to share with you our decision-making process for school events as it stands now. As with all things related to this situation, factors change quickly. We will continue to adapt to those changes. We hope this letter addresses the many emails coming in. We assure you, we are considering your views carefully.

Between now and our Spring Break, as currently calendared, there are four scheduled events: tonight's Lower School Concert, the 12th Grade Eurythmy performance on Friday, the Circus performance next weekend and Senior Project Presentations the week following.

Decisions on holding or cancelling these events will be made with the most up to date information and with care and appropriate caution. At this moment in the county there is a caution for events greater than 100 people, with a further caution for people in at risk categories attending. Our decisions on these events are and will be based on whether we can modify them to minimize risk.

Tonight's Lower School concert is on, but we are changing the format: The students of Grades 6, 7 and 8 will perform separately. 6th Grade will go first while 7th and 8th arrive later and wait with their class teachers in their classrooms. After the 6th Grade performs, they will leave with their parents. The same procedure will take place for 7th and 8th. Parents of 7th and 8th graders should wait outside until their children's class's turn to perform. 6th, 7th and 8th Grade parents should look for the email from the Lower School Core Group for the detailed schedule. We are asking that only parents attend this event. Please only bring siblings if that is necessary.

12th Grade Eurythmy performance is, as of now, on for Friday. This is subject to change if conditions warrant. As with the Lower School concert, we will only have very small audiences - perhaps just one or two classes - so not everyone will get to see it. We are asking parents not to come during the day performances and for parents only for the scheduled evening performance.

The Circus performance decision is not being finalized at this time. We are looking at options for postponing and / or very small audience sharings, and we will make and publicize the decision in the next few days. The Senior Project presentations decision will go through a similar process.

As always, and particularly in these times, we respect and support your decision if you choose to keep your child home from school or for any school event. We continue to urge erring on the side of caution with these decisions for the benefit of all in the community. Please give your child's teacher and the event holder as much notice as you can, if you are keeping your child home. People in or interacting with at-risk groups should use extra caution.

Staying home with an illness, checking with your doctor if symptoms are in question, and following good health etiquette and protocols is a community responsibility we must all keep in the forefront of our decision making. We will continue to get stronger as a community when we are thinking of each other at the same time as we are thinking of ourselves.

Thank you for your good thoughts, good community health practices, and your care for the children and our school.

Ignacio Garat, Jason Gross and Rachel McGarva, the Governance Council