

March 1st 2020

Dear Summerfield Community Members,

By now you have likely seen CDC or Health Department recommendations to minimize the risks associated with COVID-19 and have begun practicing them. The Governance Council wants to assure you we will follow all recommendations and requirements for the school, if or as they arise, to the best of our ability. As always the safety and wellbeing of our students and community is our top priority.

All that we do not yet understand makes this moment challenging for us, and this is true for the children and young people in our care as well. In one way or another, we all share the questions this illness is already raising in our society. Most importantly for us as teachers at Summerfield is the question: how do we safely guide our children while teaching them the self-help and community lessons this situation is bringing forth, so they can learn and grow stronger from their experiences?

Our plan and actions to address this situation correspond with what we know, and we will adjust as we are updated by the appropriate agencies. We have already started working as a faculty and staff on how to educate the children in ways appropriate to their age – for the young, through love and care; for the older, with understanding and empowerment added. In the coming days our teachers will help the children and young people properly wash hands, cough and sneeze in their elbow and use and dispose of their tissues and paper towels safely and responsibly. Like our actions, our conversations and guidance with the students will develop and evolve as the situation unfolds and more information becomes available. But, even more importantly, we will strive to show the students our love for them and for all our community members, through our calm, effort and support. It is our hope as Summerfield teachers, that working all together through this situation will help the students understand at every age that, as human beings, we are stronger facing adversity together as a community.

~ The Summerfield Governance Council: Ignacio Garat, Jason Gross, Rachel McGarva

***Below are the recommendations at this point from our school doctor, Jennifer Schmidt:***

**Good Practices At Home:**

- Teach children how to sneeze and or cough into their arm. If they have a tissue, they can sneeze or cough into it and throw it away. Then wash hands.
- Teach children how to wash their hands—have them sing a Waldorf song 1-2X depending upon length of song—need 20 seconds of washing.
- Should your child have cold or flu symptoms keep them at home.

**CDC recommends individuals and families follow everyday preventive measures:**

- Voluntary Home Isolation: Stay home when you are sick with respiratory disease symptoms. At the present time, these symptoms are more likely due to influenza or other respiratory viruses than to COVID-19-related virus.
- Respiratory Etiquette: Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then throw it in the trash can.
- Hand Hygiene: Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with 60%-95% alcohol.
- Environmental Health Action: Routinely clean frequently touched surfaces and objects

Routine use of these measures by individuals and their families will increase community resilience and readiness for responding to an outbreak.