



Information for Schools with International Student Programs

Dear School Leaders,

Some of you have already been impacted by the Coronavirus or the “COVID-19” as it is now called. Several schools have shared with us that some international students were not able to get back from winter term breaks. We are writing to suggest that you create a policy for students contemplating travel this summer. Many students are considering purchasing tickets so it is time for you to think about how you will handle summer travel. Countries such as China, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore have been in the news for weeks. However, countries such as Italy, Thailand, Vietnam, and Iran are creeping into the news as well, so it is important to stay on top of this outbreak.

What we recommend is for each school to have a policy for the following:

1. For students from the known affected areas such as China, have students look for extended family or friends in the U.S. for their summer break. If students cannot find somewhere else to go, consider recruiting short-term host families in your setting. Regular host families need a break from their students, so it is best if they are not asked to host them all through the summer. Please note that the CDC has issued a warning for ALL of China. If students go back to China, they may not be allowed back into the U.S.
2. For students going back to nearby countries, that are not in the epicenter of the disease, remember that this virus spreads quickly. Also consider the prejudice that other students and parents may have when they hear that a student spent the summer in Korea or one of the other countries near China. You may encourage those students to spend the summer in the U.S. as well. Or, have them meet and visit with their parents in a country that is considered “safe” so that they don’t face discrimination upon return, or worse, possible exposure. This virus has been unpredictable, and areas considered safe now could end up on the restricted list by the end of the summer.
3. For new students coming to your school for the first time, you might want them to arrange to visit family or friends in the states, or another safe country for at least two to three weeks prior to coming to your school. As long as they are not sick and not coming directly from affected areas, that will build in some confidence among your domestic school families that they are not carriers. (See article at the end of this section stating that 14 days might not be long enough.) This may be an “abundance of caution” as the phrase goes, but you don’t want them coming with a stigma that they might be a carrier of the

virus. <https://www.travelersunited.org/covid-19-trump-administration-failures-are-catastrophic/>

There are many possible solutions for the dilemma you and your students face because of this and though we are recommending that you develop a policy, we are not suggesting one particular alternative. We encourage you to be proactive about this now so that students don't buy airline tickets that cannot be refunded. Once that happens, it will be a difficult conversation between the school and biological parents as to who is responsible for that lost money. We also know that not allowing new students to start attending your school in the fall could be devastating for both you and them.

We are not experts, but we have put together some resources with school communities in mind. This is only a shortlist of information available online, but these are reliable links and the information applies to schools.

North American Resources

- [Coronavirus](#) from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This is a site you should probably return to frequently to see the latest updates. This additional page of [Communication resources](#) from CDC has some great stuff: videos, print, and resources for travelers. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html> helps you keep an eye on the level of threat by country. (If you only look at one, use the CDC site.)
- [Understanding Coronavirus: What Schools Need to Know](#) from the National Association of Independent Schools. This includes a great collection of resources.
- [Updates & Resources Coronavirus 2020](#) from The Association of Boarding Schools. This page is dedicated to helping TABS members think through how to handle this situation especially with incoming students. You don't have to be a boarding school to profit from these resources.
- [School Nurse and Administrator Resources](#) from the Washington State Department of Health. It also covers "What can I do to prevent 2019-nCoV infections in my school?" They also give you tips for [Handwashing to Prevent Illness at School](#) and [Classroom Cleaning Tips for Teachers](#)
- [Connecticut schools guidelines on Coronavirus](#). This link looks helpful and includes a section on "What can Schools do?"

World Health Organization

- [Coronavirus](#) from the World Health Organization has a lot of helpful information to understand what the virus is all about.
- Finally, [Be Careful Where You Get Your News About Coronavirus](#) from the Harvard Medical School.

Two online Christian schools, Northstar Academy and Sevenstar Academy, are standing by to assist you with creative solutions for instruction for students who may not be able to attend school for some portion of the school year. There are other online schools we can recommend as well.

- [NorthStar Academy](#) can work with your school to customize a plan that will work for your students. For more information contact the office directly at 662-892-4380 or e-mail them at info@northstar-academy.org.
- Similarly, Sevenstar is standing by to assist. You can reach out to [Sevenstar](#) at enroll@sevenstar.org to discuss options.

We do not have a sample policy to share. Everyone's situation is different, but we are encouraging you to think through the unique needs of your students, their countries, and get information out to your families soon. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call.

Blessings,

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