



A Classical Education for the Modern World

March 5, 2020

Dear Latin Families,

Many of us are watching the news reports of coronavirus (COVID-19). So far, the DC region has not had any confirmed cases of the virus, but that could change. We are closely monitoring the situation and are making the necessary preparations in case it becomes widespread in our community. Together with my senior leadership team, I am working with DC authorities to stay informed about this rapidly evolving situation, the resources available to us, and our responsibilities to both our school family and the larger DC community.

### How we are preventing the spread of germs at Latin

While coronavirus is not yet in DC, we are following the advice of all major public health organizations, such as DC Health and the Centers for Disease Control, to limit the spread of any illness. This includes:

- Encouraging students and faculty to **frequently wash and sanitize their hands** throughout the day.
- Stocking up on **additional disinfectant supplies**, including wipes and hand sanitizer for each classroom and office, anti-bacterial soap in all bathrooms, and hand sanitizer stations (like the ones at the front door) at every exterior door of the building and in the MPR.
- **Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces more frequently**, particularly the most commonly touched (door handles, doorway jams, keyboards, photocopiers, light switches, phones, etc.)
- **Avoiding sharing** food, drink, and handheld items such as pens, pencils, etc.
- **Encouraging hands-free greetings** with elbow bumps and waves rather than handshakes, high fives and fist bumps to avoid touching hand-to-hand contact.
- **Containing sneezes and coughs** with a tissue or, in a pinch, in the crook of the arm instead of one's hand, and then washing or sanitizing hands immediately afterwards.

We ask that you discuss these measures with your children and encourage them to follow these guidelines at Latin, home, and beyond.

### What to do when your child is sick

- **Please keep your child home with any of these symptoms: fever, cough, respiratory illness, sore throat, or vomiting.** We are asking the same of faculty. Students and faculty who arrive at school sick will be evaluated by our nurse and sent home if warranted. Because this is so important, we will be flexible about absences and make-up work, as needed.
- **Please inform us about your child's symptoms.** When we speak to you about your child's absence, we will be asking about the basics of your child's illness (stomach flu, migraine, etc.) This will help us track any notable infections and respond quickly in the event of a spread.

We are also asking both faculty and students to let us know if they have travel plans to areas with a high risk of infection. Our language trip to China scheduled for spring break had to be cancelled, and we are monitoring other trips both in the US and internationally in case coronavirus concerns require changing or cancelling those trips. Likewise, we encourage families to share information about any contact they might have with an infected person (direct or indirect) or a person with likely coronavirus exposure.

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In addition to these immediate actions, my leadership team is preparing contingency plans in case the coronavirus comes to have a significant impact in DC. As part of our comprehensive emergency planning process, we have already outlined the procedures for handling an infectious disease outbreak. A coronavirus-specific plan is in process now and will be ready to implement if necessary.

There are many resources online for learning more about coronavirus, the current risks, and how to stay healthy. Please visit the [Centers for Disease Control](#) or [DC Health](#) to learn more. We will continue to communicate with you in the days and weeks to come as more information becomes available. If you have any questions in the meantime, please email me at [panderson@latinpcs.org](mailto:panderson@latinpcs.org) or Martita Fleming, Director of Operations, [m Fleming@latinpcs.org](mailto:m Fleming@latinpcs.org).

Please be assured that the health and safety of our students and staff is always our top priority. Our goal is always to keep our community healthy and learning. We appreciate your partnership in this effort.

Sincerely,

Peter Anderson, Head of School