

Dear Cavalier Community,

Thank you so much for your patience as we transitioned to our online school over the course of this week. We miss your child(ren) here on campus and look forward to returning to the normal routines of school life as soon as it is prudent to do so. We are grateful for your flexibility, support, and understanding as we navigate complex circumstances in the best interest of health and wellness for all.

We are compelled to live up to [our mission](#) in modeling *personal responsibility, global perspective, and service to others*. So, in the best interest of public health and with respect for the President's "15 Days to Slow the Spread" recommendations, we are extending our suspension of in-person classes at Prep through Friday, April 3. We realize this closure creates further difficulties for your family, and so we want to leave ample time for you to plan ahead.

Our school is not taking this action in response to any known or suspected cases of COVID-19 in our school community, but we are mindful of the first cases reported in the greater Augusta area this week. We are seeing both public and private organizations and universities respond to COVID-19 in a variety of ways, and we feel this is the next prudent step to take out of an abundance of caution for our community and the public good.

It is our hope that we will reopen in April, just after our planned spring break, and finish the semester on campus, but we are mindful of increasing governmental restrictions and that those plans may change. For anyone impacted economically, we intend on waiving late fees over the next 60 days for individuals unable to pay tuition bills because of circumstances related to the coronavirus pandemic.

Details of the extended campus closure:

- Spring Break will be honored as scheduled from April 6 through April 13, 2020. We will send a follow up email with a survey of family travel plans (if any) for spring break.
- Students should not expect to report back to campus until April 14, 2020. So, Prep students will have a total of 13 online class days before spring break and then return to in person instruction here on campus.
- All athletics (practices and games), arts (rehearsals and performances), and club activities (on or off campus) remain cancelled. We are currently working to reschedule what activities we can when campus activities can resume.
- Look for me to send you an update on our plans each Friday.

Resources that may be helpful to your family in this extraordinary situation:

[Just for Kids: A Comic Exploring the New Coronavirus](#) (NPR-great for younger children)

[Why Outbreaks Like Coronavirus Spread Exponentially, and How to “Flatten the Curve”](#)

(Washington Post-great computer simulation for older children to visualize impact of social distancing)

[Talking to Children About COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\): A Parent Resource](#) (NASP)

[Responding to Children’s Emotional Needs During Times of Crisis: Information for Parents](#) (AAP)

*Please also note our school counselors will be available to support students experiencing anxiety regarding their school work:

Lower School Counselor: kara.deaner@augustaprep.org

Middle School Counselor: amanda.riggs@augustaprep.org

Upper School Counselor: laura.becton@augustaprep.org

Reminder about social distancing:

The President has given [specific guidance](#) for Americans to follow for the next two weeks. *It is important that all of us practice social distancing at this pivotal moment in the national effort to contain COVID-19.* While it is tempting to schedule playdates and have friends over for social activities, we believe that we all need to do our part to contain the spread of this disease. Please do not allow your son or daughter to gather in large groups or engage in activities that could cause the additional spread of COVID-19.

Reminder about restrictions on a student’s eventual return to campus:

Individuals who meet any of the following criteria should reach out to the school nurse at jennifer.blanchard@augustaprep.org and not come to campus for at least 14 days:

- have been in contact with a person being tested for or diagnosed with COVID-19
- do not feel well or have a fever and/or respiratory symptoms
- have traveled to an area designated by the CDC with a level 1, 2, or 3 advisory within the last 14 days
- have traveled on a cruise within the last 14 days

Note: *The State Department issued a [Level 4 Global Travel alert](#) on March 19 warning against any international travel.*

Finally, we want you all to know that as a member of the [National Association of Independent Schools](#) and the [Southern Association of Independent Schools](#), *Prep has an amazing network of peer schools to learn from quickly and a plethora of resources to help us with preparedness,*

communications, virtual learning, and business continuity planning. Many of you have reached out to offer support and aid to our leadership team as we navigate this transition. We, as a school, feel well supported by you and our fellow school professionals. We are all in this together. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate reach out to your respective division head or me:

Lower School Head: julianne.ingram@augustaprep.org

Middle School Head: monica.messner@augustaprep.org

Upper School Head: andrew.gyves@augustaprep.org

Stay Safe and Well,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Derrick D. Willard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping underline.

Derrick Willard
Head of School
derrick.willard@augustaprep.org