



Colorado Rocky Mountain School



April 2, 2020

Dear CRMS Families and Faculty,

Throughout this process, I have promised that I would do my best to keep the members of our community as current as possible with changes to our program.

Suspension of In-Person Learning to April 30: On Wednesday afternoon, we learned that Governor Polis extended the deadline for in-person learning for all Colorado schools, including independent, until April 30 (previously it was April 20). This extension places a possible opening of school on a Friday, and therefore, as a boarding school, we have to view this extension as a suspension of in-person learning through May 3 with a return to classes on Monday, May 4. This order will also mean that all CHSAA sports practices and games are suspended until April 30, and as I understand it, any additional extension beyond this date will result in canceling the season.

I will also share that it seems very likely, given this direction, that the current “stay-at-home” order for the state of Colorado will be extended from April 10 to April 30 as well.

At this writing, I have not made a final decision as to how we will complete the school year. However, it is becoming increasingly less likely that we will be gathering on campus as a full community before the conclusion of the fourth quarter. We have already begun planning around the implications if and when this is finalized.

Here are some of the decisions that we have already made:

Senior Project: AO and Betsy have already sent out a letter to seniors and met with them virtually about changes to our senior project that will allow them to complete this capstone experience at any location they find themselves in right now. The new program provides more latitude and flexibility and ensures that each senior can do it anywhere in the world. While this represents a shift in how we have delivered this program, we don't think that it diminishes the impact the experience can have on the seniors; similar to previous years, the success of this program is based on the energy and passion that each individual brings to it.

Plant Sale: We continue to prepare for this tremendous community event, and we have plans in place for this to take place in a way that is “stay-at-home order” friendly.

Celebrating the Reopening of the Glass Studio: We are exploring options for creating a “virtual” reopening event hosted online and will communicate our plans via email and social media once they are finalized.

Oystermeister: The student agenda representatives have organized a continuation of our Oystermeister competitions by establishing strava courses for biking, running, and walking to encourage activity and camaraderie.

Graduation: I am a big believer in recognizing important milestones and achievements in our students' lives, particularly because there are so few that are standard in American culture. Graduation is one of those events during which we not only get to celebrate each student's time at CRMS but also when we recognize the person that they have become and the broader community responsibilities that now await them. I need to be honest that currently, I cannot envision holding commencement ceremonies on the graduation lawn on June 6. We still have some time to make a final decision on this important event, and I want all of our seniors and families to know that this has our full attention. We plan to honor our seniors in some way - it is essential that we do so - and are actively exploring several options.

Scholarship Work Day (SWD): Jim Gaw participated in the first SWD as a student, and the proceeds went towards supporting a student from Africa; it has been a part of our community experience ever since. The money raised during SWD still supports student access to our program. We are making the difficult decision to cancel Scholarship Work Day this year, acknowledging that ensuring the health and safety of our students, faculty, staff, volunteers, and loyal supporters of the program is our highest priority.

A request for local families from Diane Hackl: It is wonderful to be "back" with students and beginning our distance learning adventure. As we are all adjusting to working and studying from home, many of us are also keen to spend some time outside exercising. We have noticed several families utilizing Tick Ridge for hiking, running, and walking dogs. While it is great to see people out and practicing social distancing, please remember the CRMS campus is closed. Tick Ridge is part of CRMS property, and while it is not central to campus, we are utilizing Tick Ridge for Active for our small group of on-campus students between 8:45 – 9:45 a.m. and 4:00 – 5:30 p.m. **We ask that everyone respect our campus closure and refrain from using Tick Ridge during our Active hours.** We thank you for taking an abundance of caution in helping us keep the community safe.

In closing, I hope that you will be able to take advantage of a [zoom meeting Friday, April 10, from 11:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. MDT with Diane, Jen, and Nancy](#). The call-in number is +1 929-299-3494 (PIN: 924708224). I would also like to invite everyone to join me for a virtual "parent coffee" Wednesday, April 15, at 1:00 p.m MDT (we will send a link in the next week's community newsletter).

My best,

Jeff