



*A Message from the Head of School*

March 19, 2020

Dear Madeira Community,

Though it seems long ago that we bade farewell to students and faculty as Madeira let out for Spring Break, in reality it has been less than a week. So much has changed in such a short time. Spring officially arrived today, and nature is at its best, with cherry blossoms, daffodils, and magnolias to grace the grounds, and birdsong to announce daybreak. In the midst of this challenging world pandemic, it is calming and cheering to have nature continue its course through the change of seasons.

While most of our personnel are remotely working, we continue to meet daily to monitor the situation and plan next steps in this time of rapid change. Our faculty is preparing to launch their classes through Distance Learning, and they have enthusiastically embraced using many of the tools that are available on our platforms to support good learning.

Social distancing is the new normal and part of everyone's daily jargon. For us at Madeira, the importance of maintaining community is essential. We know that girls learn best when they feel they are part of a community and have strong relationships with adults and peers. It is somewhat ironic that we have been trying to encourage our students to relate to others face-to-face and limit the use of devices. Those same social media tools will probably be one of the things that keeps us together through these challenging times.

As part of our efforts to keep all of us connected, we will continue to rely on our standard communications, Around the Oval, News Parents Can Use (published on alternate Thursdays) and our website. We update our [coronavirus web page](#) regularly, and have [recently added materials](#) from our counselors, Ms. Epes and Ms. Belsher, related to self-care, lowering stress levels, and keeping entertained.

After Spring Break, you can expect frequent communication from Ms. Mahoney on Distance Learning and Ms. Zahradnik regarding student affairs and community connection opportunities.

Please be assured that if any timely and specific information needs to be shared with our community outside of our regular communication cycles, we will send those as needed.

At this time we do not have any known positive cases of COVID-19 among our faculty, staff, or students. Given the wide reach of the illness and our community, we understand this may not remain the case. With that in mind, we ask that if your daughter tests positive for COVID-19, that you please share that information immediately with the [Health and Wellness Center](#). We respect your daughter's privacy, and will not share names, but would inform the community that

a member has been infected. Employees have been instructed to report any positive COVID-19 test results to Human Resources in an effort to protect the health of our community.

At Madeira, we function in disaster and finish in style. This was Miss Madeira's motto, and I know that as a strong community, we will continue in that tradition. To all of you, stay safe and well. Know that my team and I will continue to work with you and for you to make sure that the next days and weeks are as smooth as they can be under these special circumstances.

My warm regards to all,

Pilar Cabeza de Vaca