



ST. THOMAS HIGH SCHOOL

Office of the President

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Dear STH Community,

We are writing to ensure you that our leadership team is carefully monitoring the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. We are planning for a range of scenarios and are approaching all decisions meticulously as we continue to follow the guidelines conveyed to us by governing bodies and health authorities. Our highest priority is the physical and emotional health of the students, faculty, staff, and families within the St. Thomas community.

We continue to stress the importance of keeping students at home who are ill or presenting any symptoms suggestive of COVID-19. Please follow the school policies in the [Parent-Student Handbook](#) when reporting any illnesses. If you have any concerns that you or a member of your household has been exposed to COVID-19, we ask that you notify the [Dean of Students Office](#) immediately.

Preventing the Spread of Germs

Common symptoms of Coronavirus include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Transmission of the disease is spread person-to-person through coughing, sneezing, or close contact of others. Please be mindful of the following steps that can be taken at home, and within the community to help protect you and others.

- Please stay at home if you are sick (and avoid contact with people who are sick)
- If you have not received an influenza vaccine, please get one as soon as possible
- Emphasis on frequent and thorough handwashing with soap and water
- The use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Avoiding hand contact with eyes, nose, and mouth
- Cover your cough with tissue/paper towel or the crook of your elbow
- Frequent wiping of commonly touched surfaces with disinfection supplies
- Do not pass personal electronic devices from one person to another
- Avoid sharing dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, etc. with other people or pets in your home

Cleaning Protocols

Ongoing maintenance on campus helps to fight the spread of infection as well. Our ground crews continue to:

- Wipe down all handrails with disinfectant at the end of each day
- Clean and disinfect the entrance doors around campus several times a day

- Ensure the kitchen surfaces and cafeteria tables are sprayed and wiped with disinfectant after each lunch period, followed by a deep clean at the end of the day
- Our locker rooms surfaces are also sprayed and wiped down each day with disinfectant
- Finally, the campus undergoes periodic deep cleaning utilizing a third party vendor to apply antimicrobial product to all door handles, desks, handrails, gym equipment, and locker rooms.

In our efforts to prevent the spread of viruses, please refrain from shaking hands, as this is how transmission often occurs. Please find other ways to promote friendliness and care when greeting one another and/or guests you may meet on campus.

School-Sponsored Events

At this time, all school-sponsored trips over spring break have been cancelled, including the Honduras mission trip and the Rugby trip to Washington D.C. We continue to evaluate and monitor to determine the cancellation of any on-campus planned events. Additionally, we will follow the guidelines of [TAPPS](#) to determine our participation in any athletic related events. Any changes to existing plans will be communicated via email as soon as possible.

Family Travel

We urge families to be cautious about travel during spring break and beyond. If you or someone in your household plans to travel to a [CDC Level 2 or 3 location](#), we ask that you notify the [Dean of Students](#) office. Accommodations for make-up work and remote learning alternatives will be handled on a case-by-case basis during any necessary quarantine period. Quarantined students will not be counted as absent and will be able to continue their schoolwork from home with remote learning.

School Closure and Remote Learning

At this point, we do not plan to close nor anticipate a need to close. However, we realize the situation continues to evolve, and we will be prepared for this possibility. Any decision to close the school would be made under the guidance of government health authorities. In the event of prolonged school closures, we intend to provide instruction remotely. Students should bring their school-issued laptops and chargers home each day should a school closure become necessary. (This would also be a good time to give it a good surface cleaning.)

Resources

Please refer to the following links to keep yourself informed as well as updated on all travel advisories:

Harris County Public Health – [COVID-19 Virus](#)

Harris County Public Health – [COVID-19 Virus Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Center for Disease Control – [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Center for Disease Control – [COVID-19 Virus Transmission Facts](#)

We continue to follow the guidance and utilize the expertise of the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), and the [Harris County Public Health Organization](#). We will closely monitor any recommendations from the CDC or health departments, and will communicate if any changes become necessary.

Thank you for your understanding and adhering to the plans that are now in place.

Regards,

Fr. James Murphy, CSB
President, St. Thomas High School

Dr. Aaron Dominguez
Principal, St. Thomas High School