Dear Ivymount Families,

I’m writing with an update on coronavirus (COVID-19) and to announce, on behalf of the PTA, that the St. Patrick’s Day dance scheduled for this Saturday, March 7, is being canceled.

**LATEST VIRUS NEWS**

Last evening, it was announced that three Montgomery County residents are the first confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the state of Maryland. State officials reported that the individuals contracted the virus while traveling overseas, are in good condition, and have not had contact with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) students.

In an update last evening, MCPS said, “We are following guidance from the Department of Health and Human Services and our schools will remain open.” **Ivymount School and Programs will also remain open, as we continue to monitor and plan for COVID-19 developments.** We will continue to implement protocols for daily cleaning, frequent handwashing, and proactive communication.

**PTA DANCE CANCELED**

Out of an abundance of caution, the Ivymount PTA has opted to cancel the St. Patrick’s Day dance, while recognizing this will be disappointing for students, families and staff who look forward to this annual event.

We feel it is most prudent to avoid a situation in which well over a hundred students, staff, and families are gathered in one room. Although the Maryland Department of Health is not officially recommending the cancellation of public events at this time, it states that community spread is how the common cold, flu, and COVID-19 are transmitted. This occurs through coughing and sneezing, close personal contact such as shaking hands, and touching an object or surface with the virus on it.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO**

We encourage you to reach out to your healthcare provider if you or a family member are experiencing symptoms and to follow best practices for overall health in cold and influenza season. The CDC recommends that individuals remain home for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medication (i.e., chills, feeling warm, flushed appearance). This is consistent with the policy outlined in the Family Handbook found on the online [Family Portal](#).

Please always remember to email the school at attendance@ivymount.org or email Outreach at outreach@ivymount.org if your child will be absent from programs due to illness or any other reason since this assists staff with planning.
RESOURCES

- CDC **step-by-step guide** for households to handle a potential outbreak of coronavirus in their community.
- **Montgomery County (MD) Department of Health and Human Services** information website
- **Maryland Department of Health COVID-19** Information Website

Ivymount will update you by email as developments occur. **All communications will also now be posted to the COVID-19 dropdown on the Ivymount website, which is located under the Resources tab.**

Ivymount leadership and staff are staying informed, working together to make smart decisions about our students’ participation in community programming, and implementing prevention best practices. Our efforts will take into consideration the health and safety needs of the Ivymount, Maddux and Outreach student populations.

Sincerely,

Susan Holt,
Executive Director
Ivymount School & Programs