

Dear ISU families,

As many are aware, schools in Bavaria are closing for 3 weeks from Monday 16 March. ISU must follow this law. The ISU campus will re-open for students on 20 April.

All ISU community events are also cancelled during this time.

- Grade 10 IB Information evening on 16 March. This will now be done virtually and information will be communicated on this separately by Mr Tomes;
- Morning Connections on 24 March;
- MSUS Parent-Teacher Conferences on 30 March. This will now be done virtually and information will be communicated on this separately on this by Mr Rawlinson;
- MSUS Art Celebration on 1 April.

We have plans in place to adopt e-learning measures. Teachers have been refining these plans for the last two weeks. Today we worked with students on e-learning lessons and procedures. I would like to term this "campus closure" not "school closure". This is a subtle yet meaningful distinction - learning and teaching will continue via e-learning.

There are two kinds of online learning: synchronous (happening collaboratively and at the same time with a group of online learners and usually a teacher) and asynchronous (happening at any time, not necessarily in a group, but with teacher feedback). Please be aware that synchronous teaching is not always required or even desirable in order to support effective learning. The goal is not to try to recreate face-to-face (F2F) classrooms, which is impossible to do. Online and blended learning provides opportunities for learners to work more independently, expand their agency, and learn to use tools and strategies that they otherwise might not have. While we will not be experimenting in emergency situations with new platforms and toolsets; innovation, creativity and resilience are required to make things work.

We have been considering the lessons from other international schools around the world who had to recently close:

- We have key platforms in place to minimise disruption; namely Seesaw and Managebac;
- Work will be framed in the context of lesson time - not lots of homework and then more screen time;
- Online "Google Meets" and "Google hangouts" have been very well received in other schools and amongst older students who had to self- isolate. People who are isolated are craving social interaction.
- We have taken as much time as possible in the last two weeks to train, train, train - thanks to our IT department and Digital Learning Coaches.

Please also note the following:

#### **Lower School**

- Communication and e-learning will be conducted through [Seesaw](#);
- Teachers will post regularly class using [Seesaw](#) - providing students with instructions for tasks;
- Teachers to check daily that students are completing tasks at hand, if they are not being completed, emails will be sent to concerned parents and the relevant principal CC'd;

#### **Middle and Upper School**

- Communication will be by school email and e-learning will be conducted primarily through [ManageBac](#);
- Online attendance will be taken each morning via a QR code/ or link in ManageBac using Google Forms. The respective homeroom teachers will communicate how to do this with students and families;
- Teachers will post regularly using [ManageBac](#) - providing students with instructions for tasks, questions, links and feedback. Some teachers will use Google Classroom as well but the task will be posted and linked in ManageBac;
- Teachers will check regularly that students are completing tasks at hand, if they are not being completed, emails will be sent to concerned parents and the relevant principal CC'd;

- For Middle and Upper School students there are times when a teacher will video conference with a class or group. Video conferencing will take place using Google hangouts/Meet, with a minimum of one teacher and two students;
- Individual communication will be done via email using only school email accounts;
- When participating in a video conference students are to adhere to the school's dress code;
- Students should where possible be located in an open area in their house within earshot of parents;
- Video conferencing, when required, will take place when the class is normally scheduled;
- Teachers will be available during normal scheduled lesson times to respond to questions via email and students should ensure they follow their normal timetable.

ISU Distance Learning Guidelines are attached that provide more insight and information. Our Distance Learning Guidelines are also available on our website under the "Updates on Covid-19" tab.

Please be rest assured that we are all here to help with e-learning opportunities. All staff will be on campus over the next 3 weeks adhering to normal school hours. It will be a learning curve for many of us and not everything may be perfect by Monday but by mid-week students will be familiar with the routines and procedures. We will be continually assessing and making any necessary improving we go through next week.

We are aware that these measures will cause disruption for families and students, particularly our students doing external examinations. A separate communication will be sent to IGCSE and IB students regarding arrangements for oral examinations.

#### **Recent developments:**

The *Robert Koch Institut* has expanded its "high risk" areas to include all of Italy, all of Iran, and parts of France. More information can be found [here](#). Please do take time to familiarise yourself with this list as Covid-19 is a dynamic situation. Please be very mindful of your travels over the next 5 weeks.

With regard to travel bans to and from Germany; I am fully aware that recent announcements by political leaders have caused concern and consternation amongst some families in our community. We are here to help and support. Please do contact me if you will be affected by a travel ban.

#### **What to do?**

The [Landkreis Neu-Ulm website](#) has the following information: "Anyone who has symptoms such as fever, muscle pain, cough, runny nose or diarrhoea and has been in one of the coronavirus risk areas for the past 14 days or has had contact with a confirmed coronavirus case should avoid all unnecessary contacts with other people and stay at home. One should immediately call the on-call doctor at 116 117. The *Bayerisches Landesamt für Gesundheit und Lebensmittelsicherheit (LGL)* hotline at 09131 68085101 is available for more general questions". If anyone is diagnosed with Covid-19, they should also contact ISU immediately. My phone number is **0171 7451036**. (ISU parents please see ManageBac email.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

Stay happy, healthy and safe.

Warm regards,

Liam