



March 5, 2020

Dear Berkeley Academy Parents, Students, Families and Friends:

The purpose of this letter is to provide parents, students and families official communication regarding our institution's perspective and implementation of precautionary measures regarding COVID-19 (also known as Coronavirus) based on the report we received from the Costa Rican Ministry of Health - stating that the first suspected case has been reported in the country (Pococi).

Our official stance is to diminish any widespread panic and fear throughout our school community by providing students, faculty/staff members, and families with the appropriate knowledge regarding the COVID-19 virus, how it spreads, how it is treated and, most importantly, what preventive measures we can take both as a community and individually that includes sanitary best practices and protocol. To be clear, a wealth of information regarding the virus is available online from various sources. However, it is important to properly vet the information and understand the legitimacy of the source. For your convenience, we are providing links to resources regarding COVID-19 below that are legitimate government sources that will provide the best precautionary and preventive measures for the safety of your family and our community. We are starting a training module first with our admin, faculty and maintenance staff in regards to heightening the frequency of cleaning, disinfecting and sanitizing common areas, bathrooms and classrooms. We will be asking for your collaboration regarding items (Lysol wipes/sprays, additional hand sanitizer) to help keep our students safe.

We understand that the information we provide to students may cause anxiety, stress or fear. In that regard, our messages and periods of instruction will be age appropriate.

For Berkeley Academy Elementary Students (Pre-K3 to Grade 5), we will provide a period of instruction tomorrow before lunch to *briefly* discuss viruses and bacteria. We will focus on showing students when and how to wash their hands thoroughly, cough and sneeze appropriately, abstaining from scratching their eyes, putting fingers, toys or other objects in their mouths, biting nails and, lastly, how to diminish physical contact with each other by utilizing various forms of greetings (holding your heart and saying "hello," a "foot-shake," prayer hands and saying "namaste" or "shalom," etc.).

For Berkeley Academy Middle and High School Students (Grades 6 to 12), we will provide a period of instruction tomorrow at 8:00am to comprehensively discuss viruses and bacteria. We will cover how different viruses in the recent past have affected communities and provide insight on statistics that may change their perception of COVID-19 into something incredibly manageable and easy to fight off, if utilizing best practices. We will demystify the stereotypes of the virus and demonstrate the impact of what happens when a community panics without taking

logical precautions. We will also cover when to get checked for and report symptoms, as well as when to stay home. We will ask students to use their creativity to help create an internal public health communication campaign within our school so they will feel empowered to carry out and police best practices within our school community. We will also focus on the tips we will discuss with elementary, but with a more mature perspective regarding the implementation of our new practices.

I will be imparting these periods of instruction to our students, staff, and faculty as my experience as a former Nuclear, Biological, and Defense Warfare Specialist in the Marine Corps includes similar lectures regarding biological threat prevention and safe practices. Our number one priority at Berkeley Academy is student safety and we thank you for your trust and confidence in our ability to do so.

If you have any questions, concerns or comments regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact us through email or calling (506) 2203-4621 ext. #5.

Very respectfully yours,

Peter J. Swing
President

Yorlenny Aguilar
Vice President

Helpful Resources and Links Regarding COVID-19

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-for-schools.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Costa Rican Ministry of Health

<https://www.ministeriodesalud.go.cr/index.php/centro-de-prensa/noticias/741-noticias-2020/1552-primer-caso-sospechoso-por-covid-19-en-costa-rica>

Healthy Children

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/work-play/Pages/When-to-Keep-Your-Child-Home-from-Child-Care.aspx>

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/prevention/Pages/Prevention-In-Child-Care-or-School.aspx>