



ROYCEMORE

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100 YEARS Proud history
Inspired future

March 31, 2020

Dear Roycemore Families,

Yesterday afternoon, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker announced he will sign an order extending the state's "stay-at-home" order through April 30. In response, Roycemore must also extend its Remote Learning program through that time. While we are all disappointed that we won't be back together as soon as we hoped, it takes the collective resolve of all of us to help slow the spread of COVID-19. By staying at home, continuing the practice of social distancing and taking other precautions, we can make great strides to protect our community and our families.

Our Community is Our Strength

One of the things that is most special about Roycemore is our strong sense of community, and we are so pleased to see the many ways that students are reaching out to each other and their teachers to stay connected. In addition, students and families are finding ways to support others during this difficult time, such as sending cards to senior citizens who are confined at Three Crowns Senior Home in Evanston and making surgical masks to donate to those in need. The coming weeks are going to present some unique challenges. However, the coming weeks will also present an opportunity for us to find ways to continue to demonstrate our spirit of community. We have the opportunity to present the best versions of ourselves and to demonstrate to each other and to our children what it means to take care of each other. Let us look back at this moment in history as a time when Roycemore embraced and actualized our core values of community, respect, and compassion.

We recognize that the pandemic has also had a financial impact on some of our families and we understand that this is a time of uncertainty. With that in mind, to support our families, the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees has modified Roycemore's Tuition Refund Policy for the 20-21 school year which is attached to this email. The committee has extended to June 30 the date by which families may be released from 2020-2021 contracts and receive full refunds of advance tuition payments (less the tuition deposit) if financial circumstances require them to withdraw. We hope that extending this date will help provide some peace of mind to our families.

The Finance Committee also discussed the feasibility of refunding tuition or fees (like EDP payments) due to remote learning. Our faculty and staff are more committed than ever to providing a premier teaching and learning experience for students. Remote learning requires an all hands on deck approach with our staff, technology team, faculty, maintenance, and administrative staff putting in countless hours to ensure our students have the optimal learning environment at home. Teaching and learning will continue and therefore Roycemore will continue to collect the annual tuition to fund these efforts. If school does not resume with in-person instruction before the end of the school year, the Finance Committee will assess what portion of fees collected should be refunded to families and will make those arrangements by the end of the fiscal year. Families that are experiencing extreme hardship due to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic should contact the Director of Finance and Operations, [Vicky Pickett](#).

Remote Learning 2.0

We thank the many of you who responded to the surveys that were sent out to families and students in middle and upper school. We are taking your feedback into consideration as we assess what we are doing and adapting in response. In addition, we are communicating with our colleagues at some of the best independent schools around the country as well experts at the National Association of Independent Schools to learn how we can continue to improve. When Remote Learning resumes after spring break, the school will launch new schedules for each division of the school with combinations of synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities based on the needs of students in those divisions informed both by your feedback and what we have learned from our colleagues. We will continue to assess the effectiveness of our program and as changes are required we will address them.

Looking Ahead

We remain committed to our mission: To inspire and nurture excellence and prepare each student for success in higher education and in a dynamic and complex world. One of the many lessons we have learned during this pandemic is that our mission is more relevant than ever, and we are fully committed to living this mission in the midst of a local and global crisis.

Certainly this is one of the most dynamic and complex times any of us has ever experienced. Let's hope our children never have to face another pandemic, but we do know that they will be facing other significant challenges in the years ahead. Those that will impact us from climate change and exponential technologies are just two examples of significant complexities our young people will navigate in their lives.

Now, more than ever before, we must nurture and cultivate the capacities of our young people to think critically, to work in teams, to think adaptively, and to develop the social and emotional intelligence that will enable them to develop resilience in the face of the incredible changes that are ahead of them.

Even while we are responding to the immediate challenges of maximizing a remote learning environment, our talented team of administrators and faculty is thinking creatively about ways we might continue to evolve our program to best support our students in the years ahead. We look forward to our continued partnership as we do so.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and our Faculty, we thank you for your belief and confidence in our school and our work. Reach out if you have ideas to contribute. We need everyone!

Stay healthy and take care of each other,

Thomas J. Ellis

Adrienne Finley Odell

Chair, Board of Trustees

President and Head of School