



ROYCEMORE

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100 YEARS Proud history
Inspired future

May 12, 2020

Dear Roycemore Community,

First and foremost, we hope this finds you and your families safe, healthy, and able to adjust to the changes in your lives due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the pandemic evolves and responsive actions must necessarily change, we want you to know how Roycemore is responding so that you and your families may be informed, make decisions, and take appropriate actions as may be necessary. We take our responsibilities to our students, their families, and our faculty very seriously and will continue to do all we can to serve the needs of our community while carefully operating under the guidelines of the state, county, and municipal authorities.

Roycemore's Board of Trustees and its Administration have been actively and strategically working together in our responses to COVID-19, including work of the specially created Health and Safety Task Force and the COVID-19 Strategy Team. The details below reflect our current thinking with respect to the short-term, medium-term, and long-term responses, including specific information that will be helpful in your planning for end of year activities, summer, and the upcoming school year.

We have also included **Roycemore "Best in Class" for Remote Instruction and Surveys** and **Keeping Roycemore Strong & Supporting our Students** sections that contain additional important information. We ask that you please pay close attention to all links and calls to action contained in this communication.

As we continue our work together to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, we thank you for your partnership in support of your children. We appreciate the trust you have shown Roycemore in the education of your children, and you have our continued commitment to strive to serve you and your children in extraordinary ways in the year ahead.

With Appreciation,

Thomas J. Ellis
Chair, Board of Trustees

Adrienne Finley Odell
President and Head of School

ROYCEMORE SCHOOL - RESPONSES TO COVID-19
May 12, 2020

Short-Term (including end of year plans):

One of the most difficult realities for us this spring is the sadness of not being able to have our traditional end of year events in the ways we are accustomed to. We cherish the traditions of Palio, Awards Ceremonies, Graduations and more. We have reached out to you and heard some great ideas for ways that we can modify our events to safeguard the health and well-being of community members while also holding on to the traditions we love. With that in mind, we have created the following schedule for year-end events. Additional details for each of these events will be sent out soon. Until then- MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

YEAR-END EVENTS

- Thursday May 21, 1pm Virtual Yearbook Assembly
- Thursday May 21, 4pm Virtual PALIO
- Friday May 29th (last day of instruction for all)
- Monday June 1, 4pm - Virtual LS culmination night
- Monday June 1, 12pm -US Virtual Awards Ceremony
- Tuesday June 2, 4pm- MS Awards Ceremony-includes sports and activities + special tribute to 8th graders
- Wednesday June 3rd, 4pm- MS Virtual graduation, + “drive by”
- Thurs. June 4th, 5pm- US Virtual Commencement; + “drive by” at 7:15pm
- Friday June 5th- Wrap Up Day: (Locker clean out, technology drop-off, yearbook pick up, award pick up) (scheduled times will be available for students or parents to come to school to pick up their items. Face masks and social distancing will be required. Further details to come.)

Medium-Term

On May 5th, Governor Pritzker released “[Restore Illinois: A Public Health Approach To Safely Reopen Our State.](#)” This plan includes a 5-phase approach to reopen the state, and divides the state into four health regions to assess the state's ability to serve the public health needs of residents. Roycemore School will be following these guidelines as well as those put in place with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) as we make our own plans for resuming in-person programs at school. The Board of Trustees has supplemented its ongoing work by forming a comprehensive **COVID-19 Strategy Team** that will include members of the community with expertise to help advance our work. In addition to those individuals in our current groups, **we are seeking subject matter experts** from our community in the fields of medicine, facilities management, architecture, supply cost and logistics, and financial analysis to help us best navigate the complex nature of this pandemic and the various scenarios for safely re-opening school for which we must be prepared. If you believe you can assist with this work, please [email us](#) to let us know.

Summer Programs

Many Roycemore families and members of the community look forward to Roycemore Summer Programs each year, including Inspiration Factory and Camp Griffin. Given Governor Pritzker's reopening plan, summer programs are permitted to operate in “Phase 3: Recovery” with IDPH safety guidance. In addition to this guidance, Roycemore has convened a COVID-19 Health and Safety Task Force that will develop additional protocols for in-person camps. One of the changes we have already made is to limit camp groups to 10 or fewer, as well as requiring social distancing, masks, and other protocols to ensure the safety of the students. Our Summer Camp Task Force will closely monitor the Restore Illinois website to make a determination as to whether in-person camps will be offered on a

weekly basis. At this time all “Inspiration Factory” camps have been moved from early June to July, apart from one that has transitioned to online.

Recognizing the need for high quality summer experiences for young people, our Summer Camp team has rallied to create additional [new summer VIRTUAL class offerings](#), including high school classes for credit. Building on our partnership with Adobe Corporation, we are pleased to include a number of Adobe-inspired camps that will provide opportunities to learn everything from Apparel Design using [Adobe Aero](#), an Augmented Reality app, to Surreal Compositing with Photoshop. Students registered for an Adobe class will also receive one-year free access to Adobe Creative Cloud software, a \$240 value. Other special offerings include English and Visual Design, World Language courses, and math and writing classes-- some as accelerated courses for high school credit. Spots are limited, so sign up soon. The first classes begin on June 8th!

Long-Term

As we look ahead to the next school year, we fully understand that it must look different. There remain too many unknowns at this time to say exactly what the school experience will be come August; however, our team is developing plans that allow for three scenarios:

Scenario 1: We welcome everyone back to campus in August as planned. While our Health and Safety Task Force is developing complete plans, some of the guidelines being advised will include:

- A daily check-in plan for anyone entering campus to being symptom free and the wearing of masks
- The creation of a strategic plan for social distancing throughout the building, including movement of students between classes
- Revised food service procedures
- Reduction of shared items between students and disinfection and cleaning of shared items between use
- Reimagining larger community gatherings

As a small school, Roycemore is much better equipped than many schools to reduce the size of student groups and gatherings throughout campus. The individualized approach we have always emphasized in our teaching will be extended to our approach to operations during COVID-19.

Scenario 2: Multiple Learning Options- on-campus/remote learning. Given the likelihood that a vaccine will not be available for some time, we recognize that some families may want or need an option for their children to participate in school remotely. While we value the opportunities that result from in-person instruction, we understand that this may not meet the needs of some families. We have already made a commitment to continue remote learning for our international students who may not be able to join us for in-person instruction in August. We are extending this opportunity to families in all divisions of the school, as long as COVID-19 remains a concern in our community.

Scenario 3: Periods of Remote Learning. Given the Restore Illinois Plan, even if school resumes in-person instruction in August, if there is a new outbreak of COVID-19 in our area, the Governor could shift the order to phase 3, requiring remote learning. Roycemore is preparing for this scenario. Our teachers will be engaging in professional development over the summer to improve upon the good work they have delivered in remote learning this spring so Roycemore is a “best in class” remote learning school.

Roycemore “Best in Class” for Remote Instruction and Surveys:

We appreciate your prior participation in our surveys on remote instruction and have made changes to our remote learning as a result. We take your feedback to heart. [Here is a link](#) to survey feedback that guided recent changes we have made to the remote learning program. Recognizing that there is uncertainty related to whether remote learning will be required in the 20-21 school year, we are

committed to provide “best in class” instruction remotely. With that in mind, **we have partnered with NAIS to provide you with another five-minute survey** to provide feedback since our last changes in program and schedules were made. With less than three weeks of instruction remaining in this school year, we are now focused on preparing for next year. Your responses to this new survey will guide changes we will put into place for next year should we need to have remote learning. It will also help us plan our focus for teacher professional development over the summer. This survey will be open until June 8th. **Take the survey [HERE](#).**

Keeping Roycemore Strong & Supporting our Students:

The Board of Trustees is charged with over-arching governance for the school, including ensuring the financial well-being of the school. The Board supports the Head of School to work with the faculty to operate the school on a daily basis. Given the complex and changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic’s impact on the school, the Board has increased its engagement to support the Head of School during this time.

The Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees recently met and has approved refunds of 100% of the cost savings from Handcut Foods, our food service provider, due to the closing of campus since March 16th. Families who paid in advance for the Extended Day program or Zone will also be eligible for refunds. We will provide the option for families to take a refund, credit their refund to their fees for the 2020-2021 school year, or make a tax-deductible donation to the school.

We recognize that COVID-19 has caused significant economic difficulty for a number of individuals in our community, and as we previously communicated to you, we encourage you to reach out confidentially to [Vicky Pickett](#), our Director of Finance and Operations, if you need to discuss tuition arrangements for the remainder of this year or next year. COVID-19 has also had a significant financial impact on Roycemore with reduced revenue from rental of the building, summer programs, and fundraising over the last several months. To help manage the revenue shortfall, the school obtained funding through the Paycheck Protection Program. However, we must continue to collaborate as a community to help Roycemore remain a strong institution and continue its commitment to economic diversity in our student body. Your participation in our Virtual Scholarship Fundraiser this Saturday, May 16th would help us with this goal. We ask you, if you love Roycemore, to join us in supporting our mission and our commitment to young people.

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