

16 March 2020

Dear AISCT Community,

On Sunday evening, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa gave a national speech on measures to combat the Covid-19 epidemic, declaring a national state of disaster in terms of the Disaster Management Act. The President's full speech is available [here](#).

Among the measures put in place is the closing of all schools in South Africa through the Easter holiday, meaning the first day of potential return is Tuesday, April 14, 2020. AISCT will be following this decree and will move to our Virtual Learning Plan.

In order to transition from a physical school setting to an online program, our educators need time to prepare and adjust. Therefore, AISCT is **extending the March holiday for students through Tuesday, March 24**. Our Virtual Learning Program will begin on **Wednesday, March 25**.

All educators will report to school on Monday, March 23 to take part in two days of professional development and planning time to be ready to start on Wednesday, March 25. While the initial period of online learning is set for three weeks, we are acutely aware this could be extended further and have contingencies in place to carry this through the rest of the academic school year, if necessary.

No doubt, there are many questions on what this will look like, especially considering the age range of the students attending AISCT. We find ourselves responding to unique challenges that require innovative solutions. Our Virtual Learning Plan was created with tremendous collaboration from AISCT teachers and administration, along with guidance and support from other international schools and educational organizations around the world. I encourage community members to view our Virtual Learning Plan here: [AISCT Virtual Learning Plan](#).

This is a living document and will be adjusted as needed, based on feedback from teachers, students, and parents. While no plan will ever cover all variables, we have endeavored to set out a reasonable outline of what learning should look like during this time of uncertainty. There will be further guidance coming directly from our division principals and teachers as we move towards implementation.

In addition to the closing of schools, the President also outlined significant travel bans for foreign nationals coming from Covid-19 high risk areas. For any of our community members who are currently outside of the country, our guidance is to check with your airline and/or travel agent for the latest updates and how you may be impacted. As the situation is highly volatile around the world, our general advice remains to avoid all non-essential international travel. There is no telling when the situation may change again.



As the challenges presented by Covid-19 continue to evolve, AISCT's top priority remains the health, safety, and well-being of our AISCT community. Our family partnerships are crucial, especially now. We ask that you join us in working together to make the virtual learning experience as beneficial as possible for our students.

We are facing an unprecedented, once-in-a-lifetime event that necessitates sacrifices to protect the welfare of the entire country. With any adversity, there comes an opportunity for innovation and new ways of thinking. I look forward to working with our community in the coming weeks as we launch our Virtual Learning Program and continue learning together.

Be healthy, be safe, and be well.

Kind regards,



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Headmaster
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