

ANDOVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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To APS Families,

We are writing again to keep you informed about the ever-changing COVID-19 situation and Andover Public School's response.

We wanted to share with everyone traveling on school sponsored trips that APS has decided to cancel all international travel through May of 2020.

We've spent the last week learning as much as we could from CDC, MA-DPH, the ECDC, WHO, and even our colleagues across the member schools of the Global Education Benchmark Group (GEBG). We sought advice from all the key stakeholders and even as recently as yesterday, we were excited and prepared to proceed with travel following the guidance from CDC and US State Dept. Travel Advisories.

Two significant changes occurred in the last 24 hours that led us to move towards a decision to cancel trips. The first is the [MA Governor's suggestion](#) that all university and K-12 international travel be cancelled. This announcement cannot be taken lightly. The State leadership has access to critical information regarding international health situations and Public Health officials are experts in knowing the difference between a situation and an emergency. We trust they made the best decision.

The second is the data from our colleagues in schools of GEBG. GEBG is a collaborative of public and independent schools that have been working on global student travel and education for over a decade. Today, GEBG updated their school travel survey of 250+ schools with 600+ trips headed out this spring and summer. The trip cancellation rate went from 26% to over 60% trips cancelled in the last 24 hours. Of the schools that had similar travel dates and destinations - 80% have cancelled.

While we are enthusiastically supportive of travel as an incredible extension of our student's learning, we also operate under the principle that the well-being of our students and staff is the top priority.

Please know we will help each of you understand and engage the cancellation options you have as offered by the tour company. Shortly, you can expect a follow up message from your trip's faculty leader explaining the next best steps.

We're here to help. We want to thank the entire community for its flexibility and continued vigilance. Be assured that we will continue to update you with any changes. Thank you again for your support and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Sheldon Berman,
Superintendent