

Dear UWC-USA Community,

I am happy to report that at the June meeting of the UWC-USA Board of Trustees, the board formally supported the details of our plan to open for the 2020-2021 school year. This plan was a joint effort between our leadership team and a task force of the board formed in response to Covid-19. We still have work to do throughout the summer in response to a changing environment, but we are satisfied that we have plotted a path that balances our commitment to our mission, our values, and our student, employee, and community health and well-being.

In this communication, I offer a basic overview of our educational and health strategy for next year. For those who wish to see further detail, please [explore each of these areas in greater detail online](#).

Education: Our educational model is threefold, focused on academics, experiential education, and residential life. All of these learning opportunities are predicated on our mission and values and our commitment to diversity of experience and perspective as a driving force in the UWC-USA experience. All involve students and faculty, and in some cases community members, interacting with one another across differences and in light of our belief that the world can be better through our work together.

So how to create this amazing educational opportunity during a pandemic? We will provide access to a quality UWC education for all students, including those who cannot make it to campus and those who are on campus and need to social distance or quarantine. We will do this by developing an intentional, quality approach that focuses on the whole student while also adapting the IB and the “UWC experience” to Covid-19 conditions. This approach includes a different class schedule for next year, reconfiguring spaces to allow for social distancing (spoiler alert: look for new classrooms on the third floor of the Montezuma Castle, and get ready for some outdoor learning!), and capitalizing on every opportunity we can to bring our distance and on-campus learners together to share their contributions and enrich one another’s learning. In addition, our experiential and residential programming will adapt to a Covid-19 environment and to a distance learning environment. The programming may not be carried out in exactly the same way, but we will adapt with joy and with resilience in keeping with our values.

Health: We know this will be an “all hands on deck” year--no passengers, only crew. Our success will depend both on the best information we can get (science based) along with the good will and hard work of everyone who lives and learns in our campus community. Personal responsibility and mutual respect will be vital to our success in keeping everyone healthy.

Our strategies to keep our community safe depend on our ability to take advantage of the relative isolation of our campus to create a “Covid Safe” campus in which Covid spread is stopped or minimized through effective isolation and tracking. We will also leverage strong local partnerships with our UWC-USA Medical Advisory Team to ensure access to needed resources

and evolving medical information. With the support and guidance of our Medical Advisory Team, we have established extensive policies and protocols covering everything from travel to campus, entry at the airport and onto campus, residential life, dining hall procedures, and access to outside health professionals. We are adapting plans as new facts and information become available.

We know that the UWC experience is defined by interactions between people. And we know that our students are young and prone more to socializing than social distancing. We are confident that, with the buy-in of our entire community of students, faculty, and staff, we can develop a healthy and safe model. Because there are still a number of unknowns, we have mapped out contingencies based on the number of cases in New Mexico and San Miguel County. We have strengthened our capacity for some employees to work remotely in an effort to reduce the density of our campus population. We feel strongly, given Montezuma's remote location, the depth of our preparations, and our access to good healthcare, that many students will be at least as safe as they would be at home. That said, we acknowledge that every family has a choice to make in sending their students to us. We acknowledge the risk and will do all we can to mitigate it once our students arrive.

Our strategy and detailed action plan have been informed by so many members of our community helping out, sharing their expertise, and challenging us to anticipate and adapt. I welcome your further input (president@uwc-usa.org) as we progress through the year. And I encourage those U.S. residents to continue to lobby their congressional representatives to open the consulates and lift the travel bans that are making it difficult for our first-year students to secure visas and for many of our international students to travel. On our side, we will continue to honor the scholarships we have offered and do everything we can to get students here and make sure they are safe once they arrive.

We're confident that our planning covers contingencies and we will be dedicating much of our orientation of staff and students this year to the seriousness of the new normal we face. I encourage you to [read further details in each of these areas in the section of our website dedicated to our response](#) to, and plans to mitigate, the risk of Covid-19. We all pulled together in remarkable fashion when we determined that we needed to move to a distance learning model this past spring. I know we'll pull together - students, families, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends of the school - as we bring our students back in August. This virus wasn't something any of us wished for, but it has reminded us that we truly are globally connected. Let's leverage our connection by working together, modeling the world we wish to see for our children and the children of others, no matter where they are from.

My very best,

Victoria

Morning:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/9NF-Jbeg12FISbfO6Vr5e4UER5bneaa81CVI8qcJyxu5PxK823AByla_0Hc1pgEk?startTime=1592920262000

Evening:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/v9N7CZfJ_VtOWpGK0VHHCq98HY7Daaa8gCNlrvOme1WPzp47fEy0boXvKbplbGD?startTime=1592956302000