March 17, 2020

Dear Families of SMCMS Eighth graders registered for the Spring 2020 D.C. trip,

I’m writing to let you know that in response to the growing concerns surrounding the coronavirus, we’ve made the difficult decision to postpone our 2020 Washington, DC trip.

I know this is disappointing news, but I hope it also comes as a relief as our community tackles this global health challenge. While I hope most of you will be able to travel with us and still experience this enriching program that we’ve planning all year, I realize life may get in the way of unforeseen changes like this. WorldStrides is working with us to create flexible options for families that wouldn’t be available in normal circumstances.

**New Travel Dates: JULY 28-31, 2020**

After working closely with my WorldStrides Account Manager to finalize new travel dates, with cooperation from Mrs. Ahles as well as the SMCS staff, we are officially rescheduled to travel July 28-31, 2020. **If you plan to travel on our rescheduled travel dates, no action is required on your part as your child will automatically be enrolled on our new travel dates. The same applies to the 25 parents who are currently enrolled. The SMCHS Athletic Director, Matt Schoultz, informed us that Fall sports practices will not begin before August 10, so that will not be an issue. Also under consideration in making this decision is the possibility of the trip being postponed again due to unforeseen and/or extenuating circumstances. At that point, my recommendation would be that we cancel the trip, with the following consequences:**

**For Participants that Purchased the Full Refund Program**

There are 26 participants that purchased the Full Refund Program (FRP) who will continue to be protected by this investment through our trip’s date change. If participants need to cancel at any time up to the day before travel, they will still receive all monies back.

**For Participants that Opted out of the Full Refund Program**

Any participants that opted **out** of the Full Refund Program are still eligible to travel. **In light of these extraordinary circumstances, WorldStrides has altered the standard cancellation policy, which stipulates that within 44 days of the trip, no refund would be issued. The balance of monies paid by individuals will be provided as a transferable credit. This transferrable credit is good to be used for any WorldStrides program, across Worldstrides family of brands.**

* + Credits are transferable to any family member of the individual or to a student/parent in the same school as the individual. This means that a seventh or sixth grade sibling could have the trip balance applied to their trip or their parent’s trip for the 2021 or 2022 Spring D.C. trips. If there is no sibling who can take the credit, credit may be “gifted’’ to another student in either the 2021 or 2022 class.
	+ Credits are good for any program that travels before 12/31/2022 and have no cash value. This means that a Worldstrides trip to Costa Rica, Germany, Puerto Rico, or Spain (for examples) offered through December of this class’s Junior years would be credited with the balance.

The credit is also good for other WorldStrides programs, including teacher-led tours both domestically and internationally, and in specialized areas like performing or sports. You can explore <https://worldstrides.com/programs/> for a complete program listing. **Please note these credits do not have cash value and must be applied to a program that travels before 12/31/22.**

As you can imagine, WorldStrides customer support phones (888-963-8324) have been incredibly busy and families may experience longer than usual hold times. Families can send an email including Trip ID and Customer ID to WorldStrides at customer1st@worldstrides.com to avoid long hold times.

If you have questions that we are able to address, or any concerns within our control, please contact either Mr. K or Mrs. Pociask at the emails listed below our names.

Thank you for your patience in dealing with this evolving situation.

Sincerely,

Tom Kropidlowski Rachel Pociask

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