



ST. MARY'S
ACADEMY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 11, 2020

MEDIA CONTACT:
Jennifer Schulte Masi
Direct: 971.256.9972
jennifer.masi@smapdx.org

St. Mary's Academy will move to Extended Digital Learning starting Monday, March 16, 2020.

Portland, Ore - As we continue to learn more about how potentially widespread the coronavirus is both regionally and nationally and health officials' recommendation that social distancing is a key component in slowing its spread, **St. Mary's Academy will move to Extended Digital Learning for the week of Monday, March 16-20, 2020.**

As of now, there are no confirmed or presumptive cases of the coronavirus within the St. Mary's community. This decision was made in order to proactively prioritize the health of our students, families, faculty, and staff.

Extended Digital Learning, which is detailed on the St. Mary's [website](#), allows the school to maintain the momentum of learning during extended school closures. In short, teachers will conduct their classes online, and students will engage in small and large group discussions, participate in activities, and complete assignments through an online platform from home. St. Mary's provides each student with an iPad for all four years of high school to facilitate digital learning.

Following the week of Digital Learning is Spring Break. During these two weeks, the campus will be closed to all students, parents, faculty, and staff, and our facilities, equipment, and vehicles will undergo further cleaning and sanitizing. St. Mary's will consider guidance from health officials before re-opening after Spring Break and may consider extending digital learning for a longer period.

St. Mary's Academy has been ready for the possibility of Extended Digital Learning for many years, starting with the 1:1 iPad integration. St. Mary's became Oregon's only Apple Distinguished high school over 5 years ago, and this initial move allowed teachers to move to paperless classrooms and to optimize the digital learning environment.

St. Mary's Assistant Principal of Curriculum Design & Instruction Liane Rae states "Because of the groundwork already in place, we are able to nimbly pivot to an extended digital experience. While we know that online learning doesn't fully replace the in-person classroom, we have taken measures to ensure the strength and support of our community even in a digital experience. Students learning in an online environment need social and emotional supports, and we have ensured that our protocols allow us to meet these critical needs."



ST. MARY'S
ACADEMY

As an example, St. Mary's has implemented an online school day allowing for daily student check-ins with academic and personal counselors, college counselors, academic support resources and TA's (homeroom) as well as direct dialogue with teachers.

St. Mary's Principal Nicole Foran adds "Our goal is to transfer our mission of educating the whole person to the online experience. We can keep moving instruction forward as well as maintain community, which are both equally important to our mission and program."

###

At St. Mary's Academy, We Believe. Located in the heart of downtown Portland, Oregon, St. Mary's Academy is the Oregon's premier all-girls high school and the oldest continuously operating school. Founded in 1859 by the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, St. Mary's Academy serves over 700 young women in grades 9-12. SMA students achieve, excel and are recognized locally, regionally and nationally in academic fields, the arts, athletics, community services and extra- and co-curricular activities. www.stmaryspdx.org