



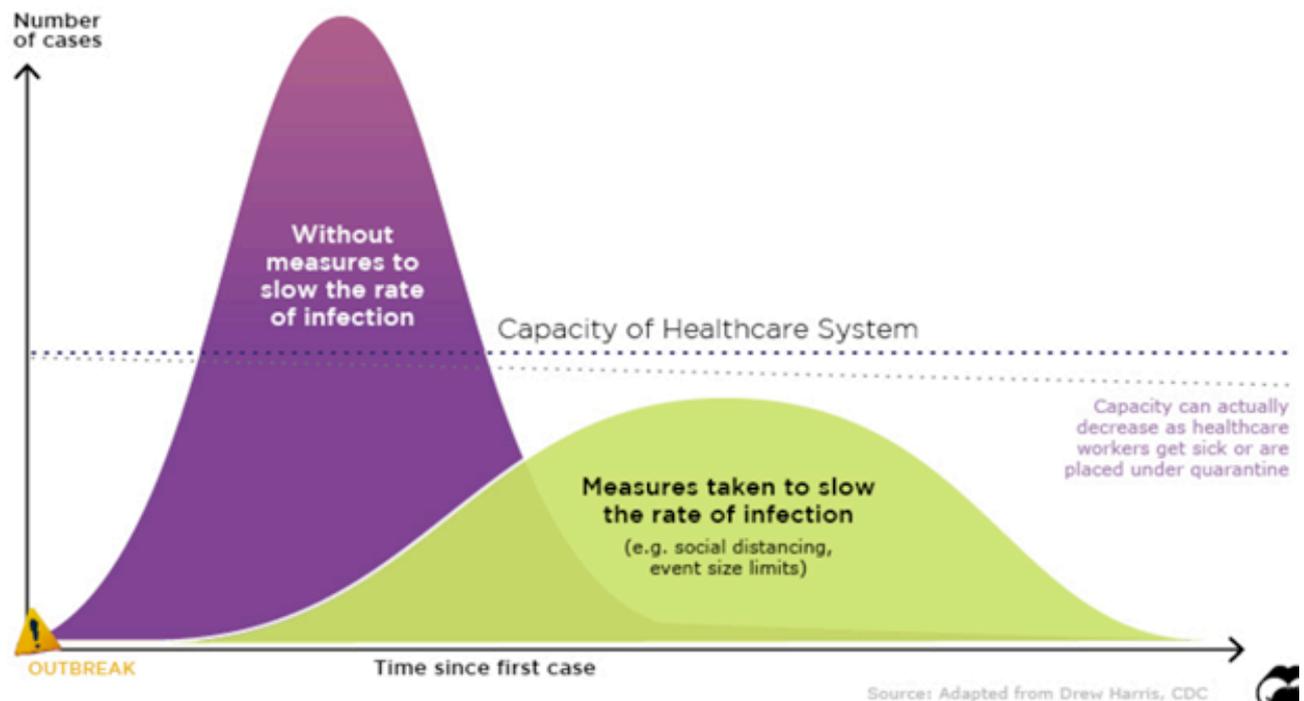
Important Announcement Suspend on campus leaning strategy

March 18, 2020

Subject Suspend on campus leaning strategy
To RAS Parents,

As COVID-19 spreads around the world, many countries are implementing measures to slow the spread of the disease. If countries are able to prevent a majority of the population from being infected until a vaccine was released, a considerable number of people could avoid serious health threats. Even with a mild mortality rate of less than 0.05%, hundreds of thousands of people could be spared in Thailand alone. However, halting the rapid spread of the virus requires governments to take drastic actions such as limiting large gatherings of people and promoting social distancing strategies. The following graph shows predictions by the CDC if a country takes preventative steps compared to if it fails to take these measures.

Flattening the COVID-19 Case Curve



If no actions are taken, there is a risk that a country's healthcare system will become overburdened. More importantly, delaying a bulk of the cases could allow time for a vaccine to be distributed.

Countries like China and Korea have already made remarkable progress slowing the daily number of new infections by taking preventative measures. Using some of their strategies as a model, Thailand has decided to limit large gatherings of people, schools included.

Starting tomorrow, all schools in the Bangkok vicinity will be closed for at least 15 days. There is no doubt that this will inconvenience parents and disrupt the learning process, but the government has decided that the social benefits of this

Raffles American International School Bangkok

15 Moo 15 Bangna-Trad Road, Bangkaew, Bangplee, Samutprakarn 10540 Tel: 02 034 0700 www.ras.ac.th

Think.Create.Succeed.



decision outweigh these consequences. Therefore, RAS, like many schools around the world, will need to rapidly shift to online learning.

For extended closures, it is not possible for international schools with “Western Licensed Teachers” to make up those classes in the summer. Most of the teachers at RAS need to go home during the summer. For this reason, leading international schools in COVID-19 affected regions are moving to online learning platforms. Schools all over the world are pooling their resources and ideas to rapidly shift to online learning. This has become one of the greatest challenges facing the education sector, but it is an exciting challenge that the RAS teachers are meeting with optimism. The world is all experiencing this distance learning experiment together, so please be patient and understand that there will be challenges that we will overcome.

We want to minimize any burden or frustration that parents may experience with this transition to online learning. Therefore, we are recording lessons so that the learning process is flexible and can be completed around your schedules. We encourage parents to try following the live and interactive lessons provided by our teachers, but the most important factor when determining whether your child met their grade level requirements is that they have completed their assignments and they have passed their assessments. Please remember that our teachers are working very hard to deliver interactive content for the benefit of your children.

Many parents have voiced concerns that the use of video technology will harm their child’s eyes. Please be aware that there are no studies supporting the myth that digital technology permanently damages eyesight. A number of digital display related factors can cause strain on the eyes resulting in tired or irritated eyes, but those factors have been addressed in newer technology, e.g. flicker rate, resolution, blue light filter, etc. (Chawla, et al., 2019). Adjusting the blue light filter and brightness on your display settings will help reduce strain on your eyes. Also make sure you are looking slightly downwards at the monitor (about 14 degrees) and keep your eyes about arm’s length from a computer screen.

As the government has asked us to cancel large gatherings, the Raffles Vice President will not be able to meet with the parents tomorrow about RAS’s development plans. Instead he will be sending his presentation to parents by email.

I will be updating parents with more information as soon as the government provides details. If you have any questions, recommendations, or concerns, please contact me, but remember to have a constructive approach. We are all doing our best with a difficult situation.

Sincerely Yours,

(Dr. Thomas Hamilton)
Head of School