



### **3/13/2020 -- COVID-19 Update from [Amy C. Sousa, CEO](#)**

Thank you for all of your emails, calls, and notes of support, advice, and information. We are so lucky to have such a remarkable community of people surrounding us during this time of increased anxiety.

Like you, The Guild is receiving a flood of cancellation notices from school districts, day programs, businesses, and houses of worship. We respect the efforts of these organizations to help prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Each agency, household, and individual needs to make thoughtful decisions about how to move forward.

At The Guild School, we educate approximately 80 students, who benefit from consistency, context, and communication. During this time of caution, we continue to rely on these themes:

- **Consistency:** At The Guild School, our students benefit from highly-structured schedules and routines. *Given the needs and small size of our community, The Guild School plans to remain open unless there is a specific reason to close*, such as the potential for imminent risk of infection, public health order to shut down or widespread staffing shortages. In the event that a shutdown is required, The Guild has prepared educational curricula to be delivered in the residential houses. We have also made many of the lessons available for day students to access at home.
- **Context:** We try to keep disruptions to routine to a minimum; however, if there is an unavoidable schedule change, we are preparing students with information that provides a prevention context rather than one of fear or catastrophe.
- **Communication:** As we learn about cancellations of favorite activities or events, we are communicating with students about those changes. The



Guild's speech pathologists and clinicians are developing social stories and schedule prompts for individuals at varying levels of detail to help them understand the changes. Additionally, we are developing these stories in case of multiple contingencies, knowing that the situation is evolving quickly.

We understand that families and communities may wish to have their children return home. The Guild School's decision to stay open -- with [increased preventative measures](#) -- is an option for your children; but, it is not a requirement. We ask that you stay in close communication with us as you make these decisions. We know that they are not easy. In the meantime, we will continue to stay in contact with you and keep you abreast of any developing information.

Amy C. Sousa  
Chief Executive Officer