



Dearest Sea Schoolers,

It is with a grieving heart that I deliver this message to all of you, but I want you to know that with it comes a profound commitment to remain hopeful and helpful in a time when silver linings can be a little more work to find than usual. I speak for our whole team of instructors, staff and volunteers when I say we are heartbroken to announce that we will be cancelling our regularly scheduled expeditions for the Summer of 2020.

This is a time to sit up tall, offer our hearts, and take a deep breath together.....

As I'm sure you can imagine, we have been working extremely hard in the past months - gathering information, discussing with colleagues and experts, playing out scenarios with our team, and pondering what this summer may hold for all of us. It is essential for us to guarantee the safety of our beloved participants and staff, and to do that requires a huge amount of preparation and planning. Sadly, we have come to the conclusion that the combination of health risks and the complex uncertainties around COVID-19 make our regular summer programs impossible to carry out safely.

I know you were looking forward to sailing and exploring the wilds of Nova Scotia with us this summer, to hear the wind hum in the sails, to visit remote islands, stare down roaming sheep, and to rekindle connections with nature and with each other. We were too! There are few things as powerful as this connection, and I hope that you trust that it is present, no matter where you are.

Our small, big-hearted organization is going to be very busy working behind the scenes to get things ship-shape so we can be ready to respond as soon as it is possible for us to be together again. In the meantime, our team is committed to staying connected with you and offering space for sharing experiences & stories. We are also exploring ways to help you build your wilderness and seamanship skills and connect you to opportunities with our amazing partners in the community. We welcome any suggestions you may have or projects you wish to connect with your Sea School community for.

We appreciate that all of this news is difficult to take in. Keeping with our Sea School traditions, we want to offer you space to reflect and process. **We invite you to join us in a community-wide outward turn at 12pm noon this Saturday May 16.** We will send out a reminder about our outward turn together on Saturday morning. If you are new to this, it's easy to follow along! At Sea School we use outward turns to make space for ourselves after long days of living in close quarters - it is a time for breathing, reflection & processing. To participate with us, find a suitable place, somewhere you can look "outward"; close to a window, looking at a flower, around the kitchen table or perched outside somewhere you can be still & quiet. Stay as long or as short as you wish, but give yourself a bit longer than you think you need. While you are there remember that we have the choice to look outward and welcome the spaciousness that life and nature offers, and that we are connected & together, even when we feel distant.

We strongly believe that this challenging time requires us all to tap into our inner wisdom, be leaders in our communities, and demonstrate our ability to persevere & work together under the hardest of circumstances, just as you may have endured in the most challenging conditions on your Sea School voyages. We are here to support you in that. Please stay in touch with us by email, phone or through our social media. We always want to hear from you.

From your loving community,
The Nova Scotia Sea School Crew

And from myself,
Sea School Executive Director, Heather Kelday