



April 7, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope you had a nice time with your Brooks School children and families over Spring Break. With nearly two weeks of classes having passed since we returned to school, we wanted to be in touch with our updated thinking and planning about the balance of the 2020-2021 school year. We have just under two months to go until we reach Prize Day for the class of 2021 on Sunday, June 6, and are eager to make the most of the time we have left with one another in this very different year. While what follows comes with the standard COVID-19 disclaimer and is subject to change, we are currently confident that what we are aiming for can be reached successfully if we all do our part to keep the community healthy. It has been exciting to have more students on campus than was the case in the fall or winter, and we want to do all we can to stay fully intact through early June.

Spring Session

We have been in touch a fair amount over the past couple of weeks with elements of our plans for these final two-plus months of the school year. You can continue to access these updates and others that will come through the spring on the school's [COVID-19 Updates](#) website page. As always, please let us know if you have questions. For now, here is what we have in mind as we look ahead to what we hope will be our best stretch of the year:

Intake Testing - We received all the results from our final round of intake testing for all in-person students at the end of the day yesterday, and are pleased to report that we have done well getting the spring off to a good start. With more than 1,200 tests administered through three rounds of testing for students and employees, we had only two positive test results. Both positive test results were part of our first round of testing, and only a very small number in the community were impacted by the contact tracing that followed. There were no positive test results in the second and third rounds of testing for students and employees.

Boarding/Day/Virtual Mode - As we ease into the spring and a mode that is new for all of us, we will continue to emphasize that all in-person students are expected to comply with the same rules. This means that boarding students will not be allowed to leave campus except for an approved school activity, an approved same-day medical appointment, or an approved elective absence that would require the student to go through a three-test reentry protocol that would take nine-to-10 days to complete. In effect, the rules are the same for commuting students who are not allowed to leave their "campus" (defined as school, the route to and from school, and their homes) with the same exceptions applying. We appreciate that it will take some time to adjust to this mode and that we will make honest mistakes along the way. We will have less patience with willful or repeated violations of safety protocols that compromise the community's safety. Your support of these measures makes an enormous difference, and I thank you in advance for all I know you will do to help us have a great spring.

Surveillance Testing and Quarantine Protocols - All boarding students and employees working and/or living on campus will continue to be tested once per week. We are going to test commuting students two times per week for the foreseeable future, in order to have an extra layer of safety in place for that cohort. We will be making the following adjustments to our surveillance testing and quarantine protocols:

- **Vaccinated Community Members** - We have been extremely pleased to learn that a good

number in the community have both started and completed a COVID-19 vaccine regimen. We are in the process of gathering this data and will add to it as more and more in the community complete the regimen - very exciting news! There is compelling and mounting evidence indicating that fully vaccinated people are both far less likely to contract COVID-19, and far less likely to infect other people in the very rare instances when a vaccinated person does contract the virus. This is especially true in a community practicing the safety measures that we are practicing: masking and doing what we can to minimize crowds and physically distance from one another. Thus, with the exception of students participating in interscholastic athletics this spring, any community member who is two weeks removed from a final vaccination dose may opt out of our surveillance testing protocol. It is important to underline that this will not exempt vaccinated community members from all safety protocols we have been practicing throughout the year.

- **Contact Tracing** - In the event that we have positive test results, we will continue to engage in contact-tracing protocols. The purpose of these protocols is to identify community members who have been within six feet of the person who tested positive, for 15 minutes or more in a 24-hour period, at any point during the two days prior to the date of the positive test result. These community members will be required to quarantine in a manner spelled out below unless they are asymptomatic and have been vaccinated, or are asymptomatic and have tested positive for COVID-19 at any point up to 90 days prior to the exposure. We have no plan to amend our approach to safety protocols for vaccinated community members beyond exemption from contact tracing and the ability to opt out of surveillance testing.
- **Quarantine/Reentry Protocol** - The school will use the same testing reentry protocol for all community members who are either required to quarantine or are away from campus for an overnight trip and/or elective absence of any kind. In these cases, the protocol will work as follows:
 - Day 0 - The day quarantine begins, as determined by our Health & Wellness Center
 - Day 2 - The student tests at school or an approved location off campus; quarantine continues
 - Day 5 - The student tests at school or an approved location off campus; quarantine continues
 - Day 8 - With Health & Wellness Center approval, the student may return to campus and will have a final test administered at school on this date.

Interscholastic Athletics and Afternoon Programs - We were glad to get our formal afternoon activities program started today, after seeing scores of students outdoors and enjoying the campus over a glorious weekend and first couple of days to start the week. Our tents are up and we are hoping the stretch of relatively nice spring weather that we have had of late will continue and allow us to be outdoors as often as possible. Obviously, our interscholastic athletic and afternoon activities programs will be a big part of enjoying the outdoors through April and May. Here is a sketch of how we plan to proceed from here:

- **Wednesday, April 7 - Thursday, April 15** - This will be the preseason phase of our athletic and afternoon activities programs. There will not be any interscholastic scrimmages, trips to other campuses, or visiting teams on our campus during this stretch of time.
- **Friday, April 16 and Saturday, April 17** - We are scheduled to begin competing interscholastically over these two days and will continue to compete on Friday and Saturday each week through May 28 and May 29, provided we have opponents each week. There will be exceptions to the Friday/Saturday model in a small number of sports, and individual sports could have different opponents in cases where the school with whom we are paired does not field a team in a sport we play. Yet, the general rule will have us compete against one school over the course of the two days. The schedule for all levels will be determined at the beginning of each week, and some sports will play twice over the course of the two days. The tentative plan for the first three weeks will have us playing the following schools:
 - **April 16/17** - The Governor's Academy
 - **April 23/24** - Milton Academy
 - **April 30/May 1** - Groton School

While nothing will be firm until we are able to confirm the plan for the week with the school we are competing against, we will post these tentative schedules as they materialize. It is our plan to compete at as many levels of play as possible.

- **Spectators** - We will be allowing all in-person community members to attend outdoor interscholastic athletic games on our campus provided that we are adhering to masking and physical distancing protocols. In addition, we will allow up to three family members, with at least one parent or guardian in the group, to attend provided that they adhere to the masking and physical distancing protocols we have in place. All family members attending games on campus should refrain from entering any building, and we will be working on designating viewing areas for family members ahead of games beginning on April 16. We anticipate our spectator approach will evolve as the spring moves along. We will share all updates as they come together.
- **Away Games** - Unless we explicitly indicate otherwise, no one from the Brooks community other than players, coaches, managers, and athletic office personnel may attend a game, race, or match on another school's campus or athletic facility. Conversely, there will be no spectators from other schools attending games on our campus. In sum, it will be home crowds only.

Parent and Guardian Visits - As we did in the fall, we are planning to allow parents and guardians to sign up for an outdoor visit with their child on the following dates:

- Sunday, April 25 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
- Sunday, May 9 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
- Sunday, May 23 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Campus Deliveries - While we are planning to continue to allow students to order food deliveries and the like from off-campus vendors, we are not planning to have drop-off zones for parents and guardians to leave things for their children. We will make arrangements for drop offs of essential items on a case-by-case basis. As always, items can be shipped to campus and delivered to students through our mailroom.

The End of the Year - While there are still a number of unanswered questions in our minds about the final two weeks of the school year, we have made substantial progress in scheduling what we hope and think will be a safe, fun, and successful conclusion to the school year. Parents and guardians of members of the class of 2021: We will be holding a webinar for you on Monday, April 12, at 7 p.m., to go over Senior Week, Prize Day, and all we hope to do to celebrate the class of 2021 with you on the weekend of June 5-6. The invitation to that webinar will be sent directly to you. Here is the state of our planning:

- Sunday, May 23 - We will hold a prom for fifth- and sixth-form students only. We are still working on the details of this event and will share updates as the plan comes together.
- Friday, May 28 - Final day of classes for all students.
- Saturday, May 29 - Final day of interscholastic athletic competition, if games are scheduled on this day.
- Sunday, May 30 - Lawn Ceremony for in-person community members on campus. Details are still to be determined.
- Monday, May 31 - Exhibitions of Learning will begin for members of the classes of 2022, 2023, and 2024, and will run through the week. School events will be scheduled on campus for in-person community members around Exhibition of Learning blocks. The schedule is being developed.
- Tuesday, June 1 - The class of 2021 will depart for a two-day trip to Maine for white water rafting and outdoor activities at a summer camp facility.
- Thursday, June 3 - The class of 2021 will return from their two-day trip to Maine.
- Friday, June 4 - Class of 2021 graduation rehearsal and on-campus events. Exhibitions of Learning conclude. All members of the classes of 2022, 2023, and 2024 may depart for summer vacation as soon as they have completed their final Exhibition of Learning at any point during this week.
- Saturday, June 5 - SAT testing for members of the classes of 2022 and 2023 who would like to take the test on campus. There will be an evening program for members of the class of

2021 and their families attending graduation weekend.

- Sunday, June 6 - Prize Day will be held in the morning and conclude by lunch. The schedule for the weekend is being finalized.

We will have much more to share with parents and guardians of members of the class of 2021 over the next 10 days, and when we have an opportunity to catch up with all of you on the webinar.

Finally, I do want to add that all Massachusetts residents who are 16 years or older will become eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine on April 19. We are going to do all we can to help members of our community get vaccinated, and the more students, employees, parents, and guardians who are vaccinated by the time we get to graduation weekend on June 5-6, the greater elasticity we will have with the program. If we can help in any way, please let us know.

2021-2022 School Year

While our focus has been, and will continue to be, on finishing the current school year with two terrific months, we will be turning some of our attention to the 2021-2022 school year over the course of the spring. We have put together the calendar for next year, and you can find those major dates [HERE](#). Our plan is to open school, as scheduled, on Sunday, September 5, and to ease into classes and our full program over the course of that week. The best case scenario will have the vast majority of our community vaccinated, and all of us beyond the need to operate with the kind of restrictions we have had to work around this year. In any scenario, we will be working with far fewer restrictions and far greater ability to congregate and realize much of what has been beyond reach this year. Perhaps most importantly, we will not be making any changes to our calendar or any decisions about a change to our typical boarding and day program prior to the second half of June. It is our belief that we will be feeling even more confident about what might be within reach by then. While we will certainly be in step with all public health guidelines, we are setting our sights on having a restriction-free 2021-2022 school year.

Before closing, I do want to underline how excited we are to be back in session and beginning to find some rhythm for this final stretch of the school year. Your children and our students have done an amazing job on screens, on campus, and with far more obstacles between them and their education than they will likely ever face again. Their perseverance and desire to be at and in school with one another has been an inspiration. We continue to be grateful for all you have done to support them and the school through this extraordinary year.

I will look forward to being in touch again as we approach the end of April. In the meantime, have a nice start to your spring and please be in touch if you have any questions.

Best,

John R. Packard
Head of School