



November 16, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we move into our final week of classes before Thanksgiving Break, I am glad to have this chance to check in with all of you. In an ongoing effort to continually update our plans for this dynamic school year, I want to share the current state of our 2021 calendar planning. We are both further along in determining a schedule for the winter and spring, and still somewhat uncertain about how the balance of the year will unfold. With that in mind, we will be holding a webinar on Wednesday evening to address questions you may have about our plans.

By virtue of being on this up and down ride with us since late June, you all know that we have pivoted more than once in different directions in an effort to do all we can to ensure community safety and realize our school's mission. We have tried to balance a desire to provide clarity about the rest of the year with a desire to hold onto on-campus possibilities for as long as we can. It is in this spirit that I would like to share where our plan stands currently. We will update all that follows in mid-December.

November/December Calendar - Here is how we will finish up this calendar year:

- Classes will conclude on Friday, and boarding students will depart campus no later than Saturday of this week. We will be on Thanksgiving Break through Monday, November 30.
- We will finish the first semester with virtual classes for all students beginning on Tuesday, December 1, and finishing on Thursday, December 10. We will be operating in our five-day concurrent schedule during this stretch, which means there will be no school obligations during the weekend of December 5-6.
- Winter Break will begin at the end of the day on Thursday, December 10.
- We are planning to have first semester final grades and comments ready for all of you to look at before the holidays.

Winter Session Mode - There are three potential modes for our winter session:

- ***Boarding/Day/Virtual*** - In this mode, we would allow students to attend school as boarding students, day students, and virtual students. Currently, we are not feeling public health trends and projections about COVID-19 infection rates for the winter will allow us to realize a sufficient campus safety standard while operating with day students commuting to and from school each day. That said, we have been and will continue to monitor these national, regional, and local

public health trends, and will adhere to guidelines and executive orders issued by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Ultimately, we would need to see substantial improvement in public health circumstances in order to feel confident about our ability to operate safely in this mode.

- ***Boarding/Virtual*** - In this mode, we would allow students to attend school as boarding students or virtual students only. We have been operating in this mode throughout the fall, and are now better informed about how it works in practice. There are certainly aspects of this approach that we want to improve upon, and there will likely be some revised risk-mitigation protocols and expectations in place to account for colder weather and more need to be indoors. Yet, we have felt very good about the campus experience students have had and the relative degree of safety we have been able to realize. If we choose to continue with this mode, we would again offer all students a choice between boarding or attending school virtually. We will be reaching out to all of you following Wednesday's webinar with a survey asking you to let us know what you would prefer if we do move in this direction.
- ***All-Virtual*** - In this mode, all students would attend school virtually. While this is far and away our least desirable option, the possibility does exist that we would determine in-person school in any form cannot be held safely during the winter months. It is also possible that this decision could be made for us if the Commonwealth of Massachusetts closes schools in ways we all experienced this past spring. We are going to do all we can to avoid being in this circumstance.

Our hope is that public health metrics and conditions will turn for the better, and that the alarming direction we are now witnessing across the country reverses course over the next couple of months. We will plan to update our position regarding commuting students in mid-December, and look forward to elaborating on this thinking during Wednesday night's webinar.

January/February/March Calendar - We will begin second-semester classes in an all-virtual mode on Wednesday, January 13. From there, we are planning for the following:

- We will remain in an all-virtual mode from Wednesday, January 13, through Saturday, January 23.
- On Sunday, January 24, we will begin an intake testing protocol for all students who elect to attend school in person during the winter months when we are in session. This would be the case for all students attending school on campus, regardless of whether we are in a boarding/day/virtual mode, or a boarding/virtual mode.
- On Saturday, February 27, we will begin a staggered departure of all winter session in-person students that would run through Saturday, March 6, when the last group of winter session in-person students would depart.
- Thus, the in-person winter session will run from Sunday, January 24, through Saturday, March 6, when the third marking period would end.

Winter Interscholastic Athletics and Afternoon Programs - The Independent School League (ISL) has not made a decision to cancel winter interscholastic athletics, and it is likely member schools will approach the winter differently in a number of

ways. Our participation in winter interscholastic athletics would be limited to the period of time between Sunday, January 24, and Saturday, March 6. In addition, we would need to be confident about our ability to move safely to and from campus for games at other schools. Thus, if we determine we cannot operate in a boarding/day/virtual mode, we would likely determine we cannot participate in winter interscholastic athletics. We will update our position in mid-December. If we are not able to compete interscholastically, we will design a winter afternoon program along similar lines to what we have offered this fall -- lots of choices, flexibility, excellent coaching, and access to passions and interests students want to pursue.

Spring Break - This will run from Saturday, March 6, through Wednesday, March 24, when our intake testing protocol for students would begin for our spring session.

2021 Spring Months - While our focus has been and will continue to be on making arrangements for our winter session, we can begin to share some of the thinking we are doing about the spring. It is our firm hope and desire to be in a closer-to-normal mode in the spring than we have been this fall, or imagine ourselves being in this winter. We will continue to update spring plans in the months ahead. Here are some calendar items we are thinking about:

- Second semester classes will resume on Thursday, March 25, following Spring Break.
- We will be developing plans for the spring with finishing the second semester and perhaps holding a Winter Term equivalent at some point in May. We will update these plans as they materialize.
- Our Lawn Ceremony and Prize Day are currently scheduled for Memorial Day weekend: Sunday, May 30, and Monday, May 31, respectively. While we have not made a decision to move those dates at this time, we are considering schedule adjustments aimed at ensuring our ability to have a safe in-person graduation ceremony. Here, too, we will stay in touch as plans evolve.
- We know we will be in session through Saturday, June 5, which is a standardized testing date for students electing to test here on campus.

We fully appreciate that laying out a calendar and plan that takes us through the end of Spring Break in late March raises new questions. We will begin addressing some of these questions on Wednesday evening, and will continue to do that as we head to mid-December and our next update. I would add that we anticipate a number of questions that are particular to your individual circumstances, and we are committed to doing everything we can to answer those questions and provide support to all students and families as we move along. The more we stay in touch with one another, the better off we will be with the challenges that lie ahead.

Before closing, I want to underline my feeling that your children have been absolutely remarkable this fall. They all have reasons to lament the circumstances they have been forced to confront during this pandemic. Yet, all we have seen are students determined to continually improve and make the very best of a challenging situation. While this has not surprised me in any way, it has inspired me throughout the fall. I have seen fall athletic teams that would have been certain contenders for ISL championships competing with each other every day in ways that spoke volumes about their character. I had the privilege of attending Sleepy Hollow on a cold Halloween weekend night and watched with awe as a virtual and in-person company delivered a memorable and

first-of-its-kind performance along the shores of Lake Cochichewick. The class of 2021 organized a Friday evening dinner, inviting students attending school virtually to join them on screen in an effort to get everyone together. The point being that this sort of engagement and investment in being and sharing with one another at a time when there is so much in the way of being able to do so has been commonplace.

There is no question that this has been hard for all of us. It will likely continue to be hard as we find our way into the winter months. Yet, as we head in the direction of Thanksgiving Break without certainty about when we may be able to return to campus on the other side of the winter holidays, I am overcome with admiration for the "can do" spirit that has permeated our life together this year. I know this spirit will continue to carry the day as we move further into a school year unlike any other. To be part of such a community fills me with pride.

We will look forward to staying in touch and hope you all have a wonderful beginning to your holiday season.

Best,

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