



July 8, 2020

Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians,

I hope all of you have had a nice two weeks since we were last in touch to announce that we will be returning to campus for the 2020-2021 school year. As I shared in that letter, we are planning to send an update on our reopening plans every two weeks through Wednesday, August 19. The circumstances regarding COVID-19 continue to be in considerable flux, and we are monitoring all public health agency guidelines as our plans take shape. While we have little control over how the virus will evolve here in Massachusetts and across the country over the next seven weeks, we do want to be timely, clear, and transparent with all of you regarding our ongoing planning effort. We continue to move in the direction of a safe reopening of school in late August.

With what follows, we would like to share the current state of our work and thinking regarding our plans to reopen for 2020-2021. You can find greater detail regarding the many aspects associated with reopening on the school's [returning to campus website pages](#).

Here is an overview of where we are:

Calendar -- We are continuing to move forward with plans to have all students on campus to begin classes on Monday, August 31. This means we will begin inviting students to return to campus during the week of Sunday, August 23. To help stagger the move-in process, boarding students in closer proximity to school will be invited to move their belongings into their dormitory rooms during the week of Sunday, August 16. In both cases, our Student Affairs Office will be in touch to let each student and family know when they may come to campus.

There have been two questions that have emerged with some frequency since our last letter:

- **First, what do students and families do if they cannot quarantine in Massachusetts?** It is only our preference that the quarantine period (defined as limiting close contact to family members and those currently living in a student's home) be served in Massachusetts. We are asking all families that can comply with this request to do so. For those who do not live in Massachusetts, we are asking that the quarantine period happen in their homes followed by each student traveling directly to Brooks and taking all safety precautions while en route.

- **Second, some have asked about our approach to testing.** While we are still working on defining a testing protocol that we believe will best ensure our community's safety, we have decided that we will be requiring a screening test shortly before or upon arrival at school. We will also have testing capacity on site for any symptomatic community member at any point once we are in session. It is possible that our testing protocol will require us to alter the manner in which students return to school ahead of classes beginning on Monday, August 31. Any alteration would be confined to different days within the week beginning on Sunday, August 23. No student will be required to be on campus any earlier than that date.

Physical Campus -- We are continuing to move forward with plans to maximize the use of our physical plant and the 270 acres of space we have at our disposal. We will be beginning a deep cleaning process of all academic spaces over the second half of July. The same will happen in all dormitories ahead of students returning. In addition, we have secured the use of three large tents that will be deployed on different parts of the campus to increase our ability to congregate outdoors for various academic and community purposes. Finally, we have begun construction in a section of the school's Health and Wellness Center that is being designed in a way that will allow the school to isolate any community member experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

Campus Life -- Our thinking about community norms -- and expectations we will need to have of one another in order to be on campus safely -- continues to evolve. This will include wearing masks or face coverings in most indoor circumstances and in outdoor circumstances where appropriate physical distancing is not possible. This will also include our need to comply with clearly defined hygiene protocols throughout the day and evening. We will continue to define and amend these protocols in ways that align with public health agency best practices. As I noted in our letter from two weeks ago, our collective compliance with these protocols will have much to do with our ability to be safe and in person through the fall.

In order to maintain as much open space as possible in student dormitory rooms, we will be limiting the amount of personal belongings each student will be allowed to bring to campus. For example, all furnishings, such as chairs, tables, couches, and bean bags, will not be allowed in student rooms at the start of the year. While we appreciate student desires to make dormitory rooms their own, cluttered spaces compromise our ability to keep them clean and safe. In the coming weeks, we will post a more comprehensive list on the school's website of what we will permit in dorm rooms.

Boarding and Day Students -- We appreciate the questions some of you have asked about the possibility of temporary changes in day or boarding status. We have had questions regarding the possibility of attending school virtually in the fall due to a travel restriction or health concern. We have also had questions about the possibility of boarding students commuting to school for some period of time in the fall. In the case of virtual status requests due to travel or health concerns, we will do all we can to make that possible. In the case of boarding students seeking permission to commute to school, we will consider these requests in the overall context of community safety. It is important to note, however, that a move from boarding status to commuting status would not result in any change to a family's tuition obligation. In both cases, we would invite you to make these requests of Associate Head for Student Affairs [Andrea Heinze](#) (returning students) and Director of Admission [Bini Egertson](#) (incoming students).

In addition, we will be requiring each family to assure us that they will be able to pick up their child within 24 hours of being notified of a need to do so for health or school closure reasons. We take this step as part of our overall approach to mitigating risk of infection and doing all we can to ensure the safety of the whole community. To be clear, we appreciate that this is much more complicated for some of our families than it is for others. Thus, we are eager to support any family who is unsure about how to make these arrangements and look forward to those conversations. In cases where unforeseen circumstances prevent students from being able to leave campus, we will be prepared to allow them to stay on campus safely until an alternative plan is arranged. You will be able to access updates about this requirement on the [school's website](#). If you have questions, please let us know.

Athletics/Afternoon Programs -- At this point, there has been no change to our plans to compete with other ISL schools in the fall. At the same time, we are continuing to work on developing a robust afternoon program for all students should interscholastic competition be canceled. Again, we will have more information about this part of our program by August 1.

Enrollment Contracts -- By now, all of you should have received our updated 2020-2021 enrollment contract, which is due back to the school by July 15. If you have any questions about this contract, you should be in touch with Chief Financial Officer [Paul Griffin](#) in the school's business office.

Health and Safety -- We are continuing to develop health and safety protocols regarding COVID-19 testing, contact tracing, physical distancing, personal hygiene, and our Health and Wellness Center. We will be providing all community members with face coverings to wear, and we are closer to defining where and when we will expect students and employees to be wearing them.

Academic Program -- As we noted two weeks ago, we will be able to work with students who are both remote and in person. We are making every effort to hold all classes in person on campus in spaces where we can be in compliance with Massachusetts guidelines about physical distancing. Later this month, our teaching faculty will continue professional development work on how best to deliver our academic program in a blended (in-person and remote) mode of instruction. In terms of our daily and weekly schedule, we will be sharing updates as they materialize over the next six weeks.

We are looking forward to some further discussion with all of you who are able to join us for [Thursday evening's webinar](#) at 6:30 pm EST. While we continue to find ourselves discovering questions as quickly as we answer others, we are moving in the direction of being ready to return to campus safely. Your good questions and partnership have helped the process move forward. In that spirit, we are certain to continue making progress with all of you tomorrow. Thanks in advance for making the time.

We will be in touch again in two weeks. If you have questions in the meantime, please do not hesitate to be in touch. For now, take good care.

Best,

John R. Packard
Head of School