August 5, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

With August now upon us, we are within one month of beginning the 2020-2021 school year. I suspect all of us hoped we would be in a more certain place than we find ourselves with national COVID-19 infection rates holding at high levels. While Massachusetts and New England continue to be in better shape than much of the country, we are staying vigilant in our preparation of the campus and development of health and safety protocols. We are also mindful that a number of health and safety variables are still in some flux. Our plan is to stay the course in addressing all variables that are within our reach in an effort to do all we can to open school on campus as safely as possible.

To start, I would like to share where we are with our plans, along with what has shifted since we were last in touch:

**Enrollment Options** - To begin the year, we are offering all students the option of attending school as either a boarding student or virtual student. We will not be offering a day student option. We make this decision in an effort to reduce the coming and going from campus that increases communal risk of exposure to COVID-19. All changes to existing boarding or day status would be temporary, and we are hopeful all students will be able to return to their current status later in the year. While we move in this direction with the whole fall in mind, we will revisit this approach on October 10.

We ask that you complete [this survey](#) indicating your preference for boarding or virtual status by the end of the day on Monday, August 10. We anticipate questions and will be glad to talk with you about them.

**Tuition Obligation** - If you make a decision to attend Brooks as a boarding student in the fall, it will be the school's expectation that you are making an enrollment contract commitment that will hold throughout the fall. In other words, if a student starts the term as a boarding student and determines a need to transition to being a virtual student at a later date in the fall, the boarding tuition level will hold as the tuition obligation. While we have not completely ruled out the possibility of allowing virtual students to transition to being boarding students during the fall, all students should assume that a decision to attend school virtually will last through the end of the fall on Saturday, November 21. We will be taking great care to steer clear of any step during the term that compromises our effort to operate safely on campus. If we do allow virtual students to transition to being boarding students during the fall, there would be an expectation that our boarding tuition rate would take effect in a pro-rated manner on the date of the change. Finally, for any period of time when the school is in an
Financial Aid - For any day student contemplating a temporary shift to boarding status for the fall, the school will meet any demonstrated financial need required to cover the pro-rated difference between our day student and boarding student tuition rates. We are committed to making sure the boarding option is accessible to any student who is interested regardless of financial circumstances.

Calendar - We are delaying the in-person start to the school year until Thursday, September 10. There are two reasons for this shift: First, we have updated our COVID-19 testing approach (see below) and will not be able to begin executing the plan until this date. Second, we would like all of our students to begin classes in a uniform format, and the only way to realize that goal is to do so virtually. It is important to underline that these virtual classes to start the year will still begin on Monday, August 31, for all students.

COVID-19 Testing - We appreciate the helpful feedback a number of you shared regarding our COVID-19 testing approach. We have made the following changes:

- We have secured an on-campus testing partner, On-Site Medical Services, who will come to campus to administer a test to all students upon their arrival. This testing will take place over three days starting on Thursday, September 10, and finishing on Saturday, September 12.
- This initial test will be followed by one of two options: First, students who are able will be asked to go directly home after taking this test and quarantine in their homes until their test results are back. We will then invite each of these students to come to campus directly as soon as we receive word of a negative result. Second, students who are not able to go directly home after taking the test will quarantine in single rooms on campus until their test results are back. The results will be available within 36 hours of the test being administered.
- We will then undergo a second round of testing for all students one week after their first test starting on Thursday, September 17, and finishing on Saturday, September 19. While there is not a quarantine period required after the second test, we will be living under a rigid risk mitigation protocol during our first two to three weeks together on campus.
- **To be clear, students no longer need to take a COVID-19 test within one week of their scheduled arrival to school.**

Quarantine Expectations - In addition to the protocols we are developing in an effort to get students onto campus as safely as possible, we do want to remind all of you about the COVID-19 Travel Order Associate Head for Student Affairs Andrea Heinze wrote to you about on Thursday of last week. The list of safe states one may quarantine in for 14 days currently includes the following: Hawaii, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, and New Jersey. You also meet the state's travel order if you can produce a negative COVID-19 test result that was administered within 72 hours of arriving in Massachusetts. You can access current information about Massachusetts quarantine expectations [HERE](#).

For planning purposes and with our revised calendar in mind, this means no student planning to attend school on campus would need to begin their quarantine in one of these eight states any earlier than Thursday, August 27.

We appreciate that this is a lot to take in at once and look forward to having the opportunity to address questions at [tomorrow evening's webinar](#). In terms of additional
Boarding Life - The primary reason we have chosen to pursue a boarding and virtual combination to start the school year is due to our belief that this approach realizes the highest combined level of safety and mission. We are a predominantly boarding school, and we are excited about the prospect of inviting all of our students to consider living on campus for the fall. While we continue to be developing on-campus protocols, we would like to give you a feel for how we think this will work.

On our initial test date of Thursday, September 10, and running for two to three weeks, we will be operating at the highest end of our restrictions in order to do all we can to mitigate risk of infection as we move through our testing protocol and into our campus "bubble" safely. This will mean that all aspects of our day will be scheduled, and liberties we typically enjoy on campus will be very few in number. This will be unfamiliar to those of us who are used to a different pattern on campus, and we will need to help one another with the adjustment.

The reward for a collective and vigilant effort aimed at community safety at the outset will be getting to the final week of September healthy, through two rounds of testing, and able to gradually ease off on some of the restrictions that will be in place. This will be particularly true outdoors, where we imagine getting to a place where the only rules about interaction with one another will be simple -- wear masks when physical distancing is not possible, and practice good hygiene. While a number of restrictions will need to be in place for as long as we are in this pandemic, we will be doing all we can to realize an opportunity to interact with one another in ways that approach normal school life if we engage fully in safety protocols at the start of the year.

At this point, we can share the following modifications and restrictions we will be putting in place to enhance community safety:

- We should expect to be wearing masks, physically distancing whenever possible, and washing our hands regularly whenever we are indoors. This includes classrooms, dormitories, the dining hall, and any indoor space. With the exception of one's dormitory room, this will be the rule. Anything that can be done outdoors will be done outdoors. We will have three large tents on campus that will expand our outdoor options.
- We will not be permitting inter-dormitory visitation at any point, and there will be capacity rules for common spaces and bathrooms within the dormitories themselves.
- There will be no off-campus permissions granted to students through October 10, when we will revisit this restriction. In cases where a student needs to leave campus for reasons beyond their control, we may require a 14-day quarantine period prior to allowing the student to return to campus. The important point here is that boarding students should be prepared to move in on the date we assign them between Thursday, September 10, and Saturday, September 12, and remain on campus through our departure for Thanksgiving on Saturday, November 21.
- We will not be allowing any visitors onto campus to start the year. This restriction will include parents, relatives, and friends. We will revisit this approach on October 10, as well.
- The school will coordinate food deliveries from popular local food establishments at set times and/or through working with the dining hall. Individual students will not be allowed to place food orders on their own.
- We are in the process of defining social contracts that all commuting employees
and faculty families living at school will need to agree to in order to help us maximize our ability to keep our campus "bubble" intact.

- We will keep the north and south entrances to the school closed. We will have a welcome center that will be staffed 24 hours a day and 7 days per week at our service entrance. All cars coming onto campus will need approval from the welcome center in order to proceed.
- All weekend activities will be run on campus and in ways that allow for physical distancing and outdoor activity. All of our facilities will be operational, including our pools and hockey rink, in an effort to provide a wide range of recreational opportunities.

If you are familiar with summer residential camps, we are aiming to mimic that model as much as we possibly can. We know the more we do to restrict our interaction beyond campus, the greater the odds will be of our staying healthy and well.

As we move forward, we will be guided by science and local, state, and federal health advisories. We also recognize that we could implement all of these restrictions and still get caught in circumstances beyond our control. Yet, I do want to emphasize that the prospect of working together to do everything we can to earn time on our campus with one another after spending the spring physically apart is exciting. While these are not circumstances any of us would have chosen, we do have an opportunity to have an incredibly meaningful and memorable experience in the midst of an extremely challenging time.

Before closing, I want to say how grateful we are for your ongoing care and engagement. We want to do everything we can to keep our school intact and deliver on our mission for all of our students. We look forward to having an initial opportunity to address some of your questions during Thursday evening's webinar at 6:30 p.m. We are also glad to talk with you individually as you think about the enrollment options between now and when we hope you will be able to make a decision on Monday, August 10.

We will send our next update on Wednesday, August 19. If you have any questions between now and then, please let us know. For now, take good care.

Best,

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