



March 18, 2020

Dear Brooks School Community Members,

As we move further into an indefinite period of time that will have us operating in ways that are new for all of us, we wanted to share updated information with all of you. I will touch on some of those particulars below, and will direct us to visit the school's website, where we have built a [Coronavirus Updates](#) page. We will add information to that page on an ongoing basis, and will include a series of [FAQ links](#) in an effort to provide evolving answers to questions that have come up.

I want to start by thanking all of you for your support and good questions following our most recent letter. The offers to help the school have been inspiring:

One parent shared a number of resources we could consult to get up-to-date COVID-19 information. Another parent offered to help with technology needs we might have as we move to a virtual classroom model. A third parent wondered if he could be helpful in securing medical supplies just in case we might need them in the future. A student wrote, "No community in New England, maybe even the country, is more prepared to face this challenge than ours!" And, there has been much more. This all means a lot, and it strikes me that the more aware we are of these offers and the good feeling we have about our school in the midst of a challenging time, the better.

To that end, I suspect I am not alone in thinking about how we might go about finding and furthering community in a mode that has us physically apart. I am not at all willing to concede that so much of what enriches our lives together while we are here on campus cannot be reimaged under circumstances that have us together in a virtual way instead. We do not know how long we will be required to remain in this mode, but I want to encourage all of us to start or continue thinking about what we can do to ensure that our virtual life together resembles our physical life together. The more we share ideas about how we might continue to be Brooks School in a virtual mode, the more connected we will feel to one another. So, my charge is to encourage all of us to share what matters most to us about our school, and think together about how we might continue to have those important elements of life at Brooks in a virtual mode. I am excited to hear what we might have in mind!

In terms of updated information about our post-Spring Break plan, I offer the following:

- We remain on track to begin virtual faculty meetings on Wednesday, March 25, with online classes beginning on Monday, March 30. The academic affairs office has been working on this plan for weeks now. We will first share and discuss it

with the faculty over the balance of this week, and will then send it to students and parents on Monday, March 23 -- one week prior to classes beginning.

- While we continue to be hopeful that a return to campus in the spring will be within reach, we still do not have the ability to provide a date. If that changes at any point, we will make that known with plenty of lead time to allow for a return.
- We continue to work with students and families in an effort to get all students to their homes and/or families safely. Our current focus is on international students, and I want to renew our request that all domestic students refrain from coming to campus to collect personal items until after March 25. We will be turning off student card access to dormitories at 10 pm tonight, and locking all dormitory rooms in order to secure the buildings. All students need permission to come onto campus, and we will be sharing a protocol for approved visiting early next week. All questions of this nature should continue to go to Andrea Heinze and Willie Waters. As a reminder, all students may leave any personal items on campus indefinitely.

#### Physical Distancing Steps:

- There are to be no meetings/gatherings on campus in excess of 10 people, and all are expected to maintain a minimum of 6 feet of physical distance from one another at all times.
- The school has closed the south entrance to campus indefinitely, and has put signs on the north and south entrances directing any vehicular traffic to the service entrance.
- Director of Human Resources Beth McNeff will be reaching out to all resident faculty members to inquire about invited guests who have been recently and/or are currently on campus. From there, we will be developing a protocol for any guests we have plans to invite to campus moving forward. For now, we ask that these invitations be kept to the bare minimum, and that we ensure all invited guests adhere to our community physical distancing expectations.
- We are developing a comparable protocol for all vendors and contractors who need to be on campus to perform essential work at this time of year. Here, too, we will reduce vendor and contractor visitors to the bare minimum.
- We will be establishing new protocols for vehicular traffic entering campus via the service entrance and are planning to have that protocol in place by the end of this week.
- In terms of reminders, all indoor and outdoor athletic facilities are closed -- including the school's fitness center. In addition, it is the school's expectation that all of us on campus practice good hygiene, wash our hands regularly in accordance with public health agency guidelines, cover our coughs, and do all we can to reduce the risk of spreading illness. Finally, all members of the community who are not feeling well should remain at home and seek care from medical health providers.

#### Coronavirus Updates on Website:

- You can access the page via [THIS LINK](#) for information we have already shared and daily updates to our approach to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The [Coronavirus FAQ page](#) includes information categorized, as follows: Student Life, Academics, Athletics, College Counseling, Health and Wellness, Alumni Information, Employees, Accepted Students. We will post all new information to the appropriate category as soon as we have it and encourage you to check the page on a daily basis.

- I want to highlight that we will be populating the Health and Wellness section of our FAQ page with mental health resources we hope will be helpful to all members of the community during this time. For now, I am including [CDC Information](#) for your reference. We will continue to be thinking actively about helpful resources of this sort and welcome suggestions.

Before closing, I want to thank you all again for your care, cooperation, and good communication about the constantly changing COVID-19 landscape. We are glad to have this time to get ourselves fully prepared for our virtual mode beginning on Monday, March 30. As I have indicated in earlier letters, we will continue to make decisions about return dates and scheduled school events when we feel a need to make them -- no sooner and no later. We intend to do two things at once: First, to fully engage in thinking together about how to ensure our virtual school is Brooks School. Second, to stay hopeful for as long as we can about a return to what we know and love about spring on our beautiful campus. Finally, I will be in touch again early next week and will soon be shifting to a video format of these updates in order to fully participate in the virtual model we will be engaging in on Monday, March 30. I will look forward to being seen as we continue moving forward!

Take good care and please continue to be in touch.

Best,

John R. Packard  
Head of School

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