



Friday, November 13, 2020

Dear Families,

Cases continue to rise across the [state](#) and the nation. We have also seen an increase at certain academies across the network while some academies still have yet to see a positive case identified on campus since September. If you are curious about the current case counts at your academy, you can now go to your academy's website to see the most up-to-date information. You will find the COVID tracker under the Parent Resources tab.

As noted in previous letters, we work directly with our representative at the county health department to track potential spread on campus and make determinations about section, grade, or whole campus quarantining. Protocols for containment begin immediately upon notification of a positive case, including contact tracing, quarantining, and sterilizing. The same team meets for every positive case in the network. Should it be determined that single section or grade level quarantining measures are not enough, we would close the school for two weeks to reduce the chances of spread. We would also provide distance learning to every student in quarantine. This will be true for the remainder of the pandemic. If you have any questions about the metrics used by the health department and how that has impacted decisions so far, please contact our Executive Director of Lower Schools, [Leanne Fawcett](#). Leanne leads our network-wide COVID Response Team.

All of us parents should prepare for possible quarantines. These quarantines are disruptive and far from ideal, but they do help us contain the potential spread throughout school communities. We continue to be vigilant regarding our contact tracing, as the rules regarding close contact are very strict. We have been so vigilant in fact that we are surprised (and grateful) no academy has experienced a campus-wide quarantine so far. It is likely only a matter of time however, and we ask that everyone continue to take these disruptions in stride and as preferable to closures for the remainder of the year.

We also want to ask for your help in doing all that we can to prevent as many of these disturbances to our students' learning experiences as possible. *If you discover that your child has been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 at any time, please notify your school and quarantine your student from campus, as well as any other activities such as sports or clubs, immediately.* The quarantine period is fourteen days from the last date of contact with the person who tested positive. This can include but is not limited to family members, teammates on sports teams (both school and club), coaches, participants in activities, and friends at social events. Should your student need to quarantine, your school's administration will work with you to ensure that your child receives distance learning instruction.

At this stage, students and faculty do not appear to be contracting the virus at school. The health department has not confirmed any cases thus far at our academies that have been a result of transmission on site. National [data](#) have shown that school campuses are not currently acting as contributors to community spread. This is welcome news and aligns with what we have experienced so far. Our protocols and safety measures have done a superb job of containing any spread, but they are not a protection from the domino effects of contact tracing, which can lead to quarantines of sometimes large groups of students and teachers.

Please keep all of this in mind as you make your plans for the holidays and heed the CDC's guidelines for a [safe holiday season](#).

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We will continue in our vigilance as we balance the health needs of the community with the academic, social, and emotional needs of our students. None of this has been easy. We appreciate your continued partnership and your immense patience as we work to provide your children a meaningful education.

Yours,
Erik