



July 24, 2020

Dear Franklin Families,

The Board of Directors met this afternoon to discuss our plans for reopening. Based on the continued rise in the rate and number of individuals who have tested positive for COVID 19 in our region, our State, and across the country, and the concerns over whether reopening school in person could contribute to community spread and endanger our staff or our students, the Board approved a recommendation to begin the school year under Plan C, with all students participating in remote learning for the first 4 weeks of the school year.

This decision was also made in recognition that families and school staff need a definitive understanding of how school will reopen on August 18. Given the upward trend of cases in our region and across the state, we could not guarantee that our plan to reopen under Plan B would not change before school resumes. Most school districts in this area, facing the same data and concerns, have made similar decisions. Deciding now will allow our teachers to focus on developing excellent resources for online learning and coming up with creative ways to build relationships and connection with our students.

While learning will take place remotely, we are exploring opportunities for onsite orientation and Crew activities. We will keep you informed about these plans as we meet with our teachers and continue our preparations for the year. We know how important social connection and contact is for our students, and we are committed to providing safe and healthy opportunities, both virtually and, when possible, in person.

The Board also established the public health metrics we will use to determine when the school can reopen under Plan B and when it transitions to Plan C. The metrics are based on those adopted by New York State, the only state that has issued public-health based metrics. If the North Carolina rate of positive tests is 5% or below for a period of 2 weeks, the school can transition to Plan B. If the school is operating under Plan B, and the rate of positive tests rises to 9% over a 7 day average, the school will resume Plan C remote learning. The current rate of positive tests for North Carolina is 8%.

Finally, the Board approved a recommendation to move to fully remote learning for the week prior to and immediately following the fall (Thanksgiving) and winter breaks. The purpose of remote learning at these times is to allow all students and staff members to isolate at home prior

to visiting with family members who may be at higher risk for COVID, and to isolate after visits prior to returning to school.

These measures are taken to ensure the health and safety of our students, our staff, and our community. As staff, we will closely monitor student engagement and success with remote learning, and will seek creative solutions to problems related to connectivity, motivation, and engagement. We understand and appreciate that these measures will create challenges for many of our families, and we are committed to working with you to resolve these challenges to the best of our ability.

Plan C will differ from this past spring in a number of important ways that we believe will provide for greater student engagement and accountability, leading to better student learning. Note that students are expected to participate in remote learning every weekday (M-F), including attending scheduled virtual classes and Crew sessions.

- All lessons will be posted to Canvas.
- High school will follow an abbreviated “normal” schedule for classes. Each scheduled class will include a short live (synchronous) virtual session, followed by time for students to continue learning independently. Core classes will meet on an A/B rotation; Mondays/Thursdays will be A days and Tuesdays/Fridays will be B days.
- Middle school will implement an A/B rotation, like the high school schedule. Students will follow an abbreviated schedule, with live virtual sessions for two core classes and one special daily. Online sessions will be short (under 30 minutes) with time for students to complete work off-line.
- The general expectation is that students will attend the live sessions at the scheduled time. We will establish a process for parents to request an alternate schedule for students when this is necessary due to family circumstances, and live sessions will be recorded and posted so that students can access lessons later.
- Crew will meet daily for all grades.
- Wednesdays will be reserved for small groups and 1:1 assistance via virtual office hours.

More detailed information regarding Plan C instruction can be found in our [Blueprint for Reopening](#) and our [Remote Instruction Plan](#).

I am deeply grateful for your support through this challenging summer.

Be well,

Michelle Vruwink
Executive Director

