

July 27, 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students,

We hope this email finds you well and enjoying this "new" normal summer. By now, I hope everyone is fully rested from our "zoom" spring. I am writing to share preliminary plans for re-entry in September.

I would like to begin by saying again how this past year has shown us the power of the Woodward community, from making the best of 180 to the pandemic to supporting Black Lives Matter. It is incredible what we accomplished together, and I am incredibly grateful to you for your unwavering support. The three months of "Learning from Home" was a time when our culture was tested on many levels. We stayed strong, we communicated, and we kept connected. To be sure our students finished strong, our faculty innovated and kept teaching and grading to the Woodward Way. Our college placement and counseling did not miss a beat. And our students were fantastic in keeping up although it was not their favorite mode for learning, we redesigned and executed many of the Woodward traditions, including Senior Dinner, Recognition Day, Rising Up Ceremony, Rhetoric, and the list goes on. We knew that the learning and growth of our students this year depended on the best closure we could give them. We did our best. Thank you.

I am sure we are all wondering about September, and what will be? We have some solid plans in place, yet these are still very uncertain times, and we continue to plan and innovate, as things change. Let me share our thinking so far.

First, we want our students and faculty back to school; however, the safety and health of our community members is essential. Our plan focuses on health and safety, as well as academics. We understand there will be risks, and our challenge will be school-wide compliance to the guidelines we set up.

We have developed a comprehensive draft re-entry plan, which is still under development. We based it on the report: "**Schools for Health; Risk Reduction Strategies for Reopening Schools**," released July 15, 2020, by the Harvard Chan School's "Health Buildings Program." In addition, we keep connected to the Center for Disease Control(CDC), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Early and Secondary Education (DESE) in addition to a vast number of school organizations such as the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). Woodward is accredited by NEASC.

Woodward's Re-entry Plan synopsis as of July 22, 2020 includes the following:

Our overall goal is to:

- 1) Establish and reinforce a culture of health, safety, and shared responsibility: We need everyone to be part of keeping Woodward safe.

- 2) Adhere to strict safety and health measures to ensure safety for all.
- 3) Be prepared to respond dynamically to potential outbreaks of COVID-19 with a transparent protocol.
- 4) Be flexible and ready to "pivot" between in-school learning and "Learning from Home" on short notice so as not to disrupt overall learning at Woodward.
- 5) Attend to the Social and Emotional Well-being of our students.
- 6) Garner confidence and support of our Community.

Our full Re-Entry Plan includes specifics on the following sections:

1. Healthy Building
2. Healthy Classrooms
3. Healthy Schedules
4. Healthy Policies and Procedures
5. Healthy Activities
6. Healthy Faculty/Staff
7. Healthy Students
8. Healthy Parents
9. Healthy Alumnae Relations

Below are the "top 21" guidelines that we have set up to assure a culture of health, safety, and shared responsibility.

1. Masks will be required
2. Frequently hand washing will be required. Stations will be set up throughout the building and classrooms.
3. Families will be requested to take temperatures before arriving to school and to say home and call doctor if any signs of temperature.
4. Single Desks In all rooms.
5. Six--foot distancing in all classrooms.
6. Retrofit large rooms for classroom use when necessary.
 - a. Library, Mary Greenleaf Room, Auditorium, Newly designed Student Center, Outdoors.
7. Our new Renovations have outfitted us with an entirely new HVAC for ventilation
 - a. Keep windows open weather-permitting.
8. Use Outdoor Spaces when possible.
9. Enforce new cleaning standards.
10. Provide Hand Sanitizer, Wipes, and extra masks in each classroom.
11. We have set up direct contact with Quincy Department of Public Health who will guide us through any suspected or actual COVID-19 cases. Hold confidentiality.
12. Designate an Isolation space in addition to new Nurse's office.
13. Maximize physical distancing/manage transition times.

14. Three model schedules with the ability to "pivot" dynamically.
 - a. We have a full In-School schedule set.
 - b. We have a remote schedule for "Learning from Home" with some modifications based on feedback from last year.
 - c. We are completing a Hybrid model which plans to bring students to school three times per week and remote two days.
15. Comprehensive Training for Students, Faculty, and Families about both the schedules and adherence to safety and health protocols.
16. Establish thoughtful morning messages on health and safety daily.
17. We have two COVID-19 Response teams: Administrative and Board of Trustees who meet regularly.
18. Music and Theater classes being reimaged.
19. Physical Education classes under review and planning.
20. Reimagining our athletic schedules to include some outdoor skill activities.
21. Promote viral testing and antibody testing.

I hope these give you confidence in Woodward's planning. As we know, things are still changing daily, and we will continue to check records and new guidelines and adjust our plan accordingly. (We are awaiting Governor Baker's next announcement.)

We are staying abreast of protocols of presumed and confirmed cases of COVID-19. We will continue to follow the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) and the Quincy Health Department's recommended precautions and protocols to ensure the safety and health of all staff and students. We plan to immediately consult with Quincy Health Department Commissioner Ruth Jones for specific directions for each individual case. The person with symptoms will be directed to call their primary care physician to discuss the symptoms and the responses that will be implemented that may include testing, isolation, and/or quarantine. Families and staff members will be informed with specific directions to follow. We are fortunate to have a direct and personal relationship with Commissioner Jones. This information will respect confidentiality.

There is a parent virtual tea meeting every Thursday morning at 10 am. I hope you will try to join if your schedule allows to keep informed of our plans and to keep me informed of your needs and thoughts. We plan to send a mini survey to families to gauge your thinking about September. ***We also hope that families will consider not traveling during the several weeks before opening day on September 9.***

I will begin to send weekly updates as September is now on our horizon. There is more to do to complete our plans, and we feel confident in our draft plan now.

And now let me tell you about the building! It is amazing: clean, shiny, new ventilation systems, spacious, and almost ready for students. Teachers are in this week setting up their classrooms, and we will shortly send out a visit schedule for school tours beginning next week. Stay tuned. We cannot wait to show you "Big Blue." Of course, masks will be required, and tours will be scheduled as we must limit the number of people per tour.

Yearbooks will be available also. We know many students are looking forward to receiving.

I will close by again sharing "***We are all in this together***" and will now add a line from the Boston Globe this morning: "***Everybody is in the unknown.***" These are still uncertain times. Things will continue to change. Please be assured that the health and safety of all is a top priority, and we will continue to keep you up to date. If you have specific concerns or thoughts, please let us know.

Meanwhile, please continue to enjoy the summer weather and hope you can get outdoors safely to enjoy the sun and warm air!

Warmly,

Ms. Renee