



SAINT ANN'S SCHOOL

Vincent Tompkins
Head of School

January 29, 2021

Dear Saint Ann's Community,

With one week to go before our February break, I am writing with several important updates on the steps we are taking to safeguard the health and safety of the Saint Ann's community.

Post-February Break Plan

As an additional step to protect the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff we are planning to test our FULL in-person community for Covid-19 the week of February 15, following mid-winter break. We have decided to hold classes remotely for two days following February break in order to have all test results back before we return to school in person on Thursday, February 18.

As you know, following the winter break we identified several positive cases through both our pool testing program at school and PCR test results submitted by community members. While the total number of cases was relatively small, had we resumed in-person learning immediately following the break while surveillance testing was ongoing, we would have needed to quarantine, for ten days, approximately 173 students and teachers across multiple grades and divisions who would have been in contact with those who tested positive. Our plan for the week following February break aims to once again avoid that type of substantial disruption to in-person learning, and to reduce both risk and anxiety. The most recent public health guidance about several Covid variants that may be significantly more contagious, the advice we have received from members of our own medical advisory group, and the experience of other schools that have had to quarantine significant numbers of students and staff in recent weeks, all lead us to take a cautious approach to our return from February break, when we know that travel and indoor gatherings increase the risk of positive cases within our community.

Please read carefully the attached document (click link below) which contains the details of the testing plan and academic schedule for the week of February 15, as well as the plan for the distribution of test kits next week.

[Click for Post Feb Break Schedule Jan 2021.pdf](#)

New Mask Guidance

We are strongly suggesting that all students, faculty and staff consider upgrading from cloth to surgical or KN95 masks, or double up on masks while at school. [Public health experts](#) as well as members of our own medical advisory group are suggesting that better masks may help reduce risk from more contagious variant strains of Covid. Whatever mask students, faculty and staff choose to wear while at school should be well-fitting.

Continued Vigilance During Vaccine Rollout

This was a week of mixed news on the pandemic. The vaccine rollout continues, distribution has begun to increase, many members of our community are receiving their first vaccine doses, and the city is considering reopening limited indoor dining as the post-holiday curve has flattened. Yet as eager as all of us are to see the end of this crisis, as exhausting as it has been for parents, teachers, staff, and students, there are many rounds to go in this fight and we cannot let our guard down. New, more



contagious variants require heightened vigilance and sustained care for ourselves and one another. Please keep masking, keep distancing, continue staying home and getting tested immediately if you or your child feels sick.

I continue to be grateful and proud of the entire Saint Ann's community's commitment to sustaining and protecting one another through these extraordinarily difficult times.

Lunch

As a reminder, there will not be lunch service for students coming to school in person on Monday. We anticipate resuming lunch service on Tuesday but will keep you updated.

This Week's Numbers

This week's confirmed employee case of Covid has been added to our [data dashboard](#).

All of our internal pool testing of in-person students and staff came back negative this week.

Have a restful weekend.

Yours,