



January 29, 2021

Dear Waverly Community,

There has been some hopeful news this week. Rates of infection are declining in the county, hospitals are less strained, the CDC is optimistic about the efficacy of safety protocols for in-person learning, and all the while, first responders and citizens over 65 are steadily getting vaccinated.

As we consider reopening school, we must continue to focus on the ongoing challenges and proceed cautiously. Pasadena still remains in the Purple Tier, which means that the virus is widespread and that school reopening is significantly restricted. We remain mindful that injustice abounds. There are communities locally and nationally who continue to suffer disproportionately during the pandemic. The inequities that exist in access to healthcare, and the headlines about system-gaming to jump in line for vaccines are also part of this complex time.

Please keep in mind that although the CDC is calling for schools to reopen, all local health department protocols and requirements for returning to school during the pandemic are still in place. (For your review, previous letters sent to the community outlining these parameters can be accessed [here](#).) There is an additional state framework with which Waverly must comply to bring students back, introduced in mid-January; the paperwork has been submitted and we are awaiting approval and further instruction. Finally, the tentative window for Pasadena area independent school teachers (in the 1B category) to be vaccinated in the first two weeks of February has been moved due to an unpredictable supply of vaccines. A vaccination date for educators in category 1B in Pasadena is unclear. We are in frequent communication with the Pasadena Health Department and other area independent schools. We will send updates as they become available.

All the while, we will not be discouraged. The administrative team has been meeting regularly to assess scenarios under which we can safely bring students back to campus, while engaging in discussions with Waverly employees about the benefits and limitations of bringing students back under the 25% provision. This has included a survey about each person's ability and comfort level in returning to campus before being fully vaccinated. We are wholeheartedly supporting our colleagues' choices about whether to return to school without a vaccination, just as we will accept families' choices to opt out of in-person activities until they feel ready. We plan to create scenarios with all available Waverly employees to offer in-person social-emotional connections for willing students.

Please note before reading further, that the plan below is based on current data and guidelines, which are subject to change. With that in mind, here is our potential plan:

- We will offer optional opportunities for students K-12 to return to campus for supervised, cohorted activities, complying with the expectations outlined in previous letters, which can be accessed [here](#), between February 16 and March 26. These activities will occur outside, at the Farm, or on the middle and high school campuses. (Please note that the elementary campus is still under repair and is currently unavailable.)
- We will continue to offer remote learning to all students to maintain the academic program.

Here's what we need from you:

- **[Please take this brief survey by Tuesday, February 2.](#)**
- For those of you who are considering a return to campus, we ask that you maintain the strictest possible interpretation of the recommended protocols beginning on February 2 in accordance with county guidelines. While many of you are practicing this level of protocol adherence, we remind all to practice mask-wearing and physical distancing outside of your home at all times, to avoid large gatherings with other families, and to limit non-essential tasks. If this level of sacrifice is excessive for your family at this time, please do not opt in to the in-person activities. The safety of all community members is crucial as we undertake in-person learning.

We've had individual discussions with families in the past week which span a wide range of feelings and expectations about in-person learning. We recognize that some of you will feel hope and excitement; others might feel disappointment, even skepticism. We will continue to provide the best learning opportunities that we can in our remote platform. Our admiration and

appreciation for the teachers' work during this unprecedented time, and our students' pluck and resilience, is profound. And of course we are grateful to you, the parents and guardians, for your continued support. Thank you for all that you do.

Looking forward,

Heidi Johnson
Head of School