



FRIENDS'  
CENTRAL  
SCHOOL



Saturday, November 7, 2020

## Dear Families,

The election has moved COVID-19 out of the headlines temporarily, but it remains ever present in our thoughts, actions, and planning. A recent communication from the CHOP PolicyLab indicates that our area is on the verge of what they characterize as “widespread and uncontrolled community transmission” of COVID-19. At this moment, they are suggesting that schools consider a transition to full virtual until the height of this wave of transmission passes.

I am asking for your help in a critical moment of assessing our ability to keep our campuses open. In consultation with our medical advisors, it is absolutely crucial for everyone in our community to prioritize Friends' Central School, AND to dramatically reduce their risk of exposure to COVID-19, it will better help us to keep us safe and open.

Here are the ideas and facts guiding our thinking:

In a recent presentation by doctors from the CHOP PolicyLab, they cited data indicating that mitigation tactics - wearing masks faithfully, maintaining distance, hand hygiene, and ventilation - are very effective. However, schools are seeing children and adults coming to school with infections following exposure outside of school, and this threatens the effectiveness of in-school mitigation. Sometimes, these infections are just bad luck suffered by people who have done everything “right,” but there are recurring themes, such as organized sports/activities, sleepovers, and social or family gatherings that are modest in size where children may not be able to socially distance, may not wear masks all the time, and, with cooler weather, are moving indoors. We are experiencing this phenomenon at Friends' Central, and it has to change so that we have the greatest likelihood of being able to keep our campuses open.

Here are my two requests of every Friends' Central family:

- If your child participates in any outside activity or social opportunities that expose your child and thus our community to COVID-19 and you plan to continue this activity, you must convert to remote-only learning;
- Reevaluate your circle of contacts, and minimize that circle to reduce your total contacts.

I sympathize with the fatigue that comes from our long and steady efforts to stay safe. At the same time, I need to shout from the Main Building turret - we cannot let our guard down, because the quick and foreseeable result will be new infections on campus that threaten our ability to continue in-person learning. Everyone needs to respond to the stark reality of community spread in our area by contracting into a smaller circle of contact.

On behalf of everyone at FCS, thank you for your flexibility in the face of pod closures, your patience with our need to toggle quickly between remote and in-person learning, and most of all, thank you for the many sacrifices you have already made to prioritize the Friends' Central community.

Sincerely,

Craig N. Sellers  
Head of School



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