



A Message from Head of School Ben Williams

Dear Cate Families,

As I write, those students who are taking yoga in the afternoon are on Commencement Lawn and the soothing sounds of the music accompanying their workout is drifting through my open window. After the always busy finish to the first trimester and the welcome reprieve of Fall Break, the start of the second trimester finds us already in stride. We are building momentum again in this new season.

Among the many things we will celebrate over the coming holidays is the beginning of a new calendar year. No doubt volumes will be said and written about 2020 in the time ahead, about life and loss, about justice or its absence, about the world as it is and the world as we might make it. As we usher in 2021, it is the latter expression that will compel us all at Cate.

Winter Break - Return Processes and Procedures

Indeed, I write specifically today about our return to school in January and the moment when we can resume our individual and collective efforts toward meaningful learning, growth, and change. Our plans identified in our calendar and in our handbook remain in place. And we will follow similar protocols with respect to onboarding as we did when we welcomed students to the Mesa in September:

Boarding Students

- Boarding students are expected to quarantine for 7 days prior to their return to campus
- All 9th and 10th grade students return on **Saturday, January 9**.
All 11th and 12th grade students return on **Sunday, January 10**.
 - PCR testing will take place immediately for all students

Day Students

- Day students will be tested on campus on **Saturday, January 9** (9th and 10th graders) and **Sunday, January 10** (11th and 12th graders).
 - PCR testing will take place immediately for all students upon return to campus.
 - Return times may be scheduled via a link available shortly.

- upon return to campus.
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- Students must produce a negative COVID-19 test result within 7 days prior to return. Magnus Health forms will allow families to record these results.
- A second PCR test will be administered 7 days after a student returns to campus.
- Quarantine on campus will last until all of the second round tests are returned (approximately 24 to 48 hours after the second test is administered on day 7).
- Students must produce a negative COVID-19 test result within 7 days prior to return. Magnus Health forms will allow families to record these results.
- Day students are expected to quarantine for the 7 days prior to their test date on campus and to quarantine at home for the duration of the quarantine for boarders on campus.
- Day students are allowed on campus once boarders clear quarantine.

We will run virtual programming during the week of quarantine, much like we did in the first trimester, with the expectation that we can revert to in-person instruction on or about Monday, January 18. We have all learned the challenge of planning in the midst of this pandemic, and the current levels of contagion around the world could certainly have impact on our intentions. As I noted in our most recent parent Zoom call, we intend to monitor the situation very carefully over the next several weeks. **If we believe that for reasons of safety our students should not travel back to the Mesa on the aforementioned schedule, we will communicate that fact and any new travel expectations on Monday, December 21.**

We are hopeful, of course, that no adjustments will be necessary. It has been heartening to affirm throughout the fall and early winter that we can operate safely and effectively. We are confident that we can continue to deliver the program that our students want and need through the winter and spring. But, we are mindful of the threats that we cannot control and the risks that are untenable. We will work towards the opportune moment to resume our collaborations together at Cate, be that by adhering to the current plan or adopting some new iteration that circumstances dictate.

In the meantime, we will enjoy this final week we all have together on the Mesa and anticipate the celebrations and spirit that always accompanies this time. A season of giving is welcome in any year, but it takes on special significance in this one.

Servons,
Ben



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