



May 28, 2020

Dear BUA Community,

As the school year comes to a close, we celebrate our extraordinary students. They have shown the kind of resilience, grace, kindness, good humor, and abiding curiosity that we have come to expect from them and that will serve them so well in their lives after BUA. We celebrate our faculty, who, seemingly overnight, transitioned to remote learning without sacrificing the passion, challenge, and connection that are hallmarks of the BUA experience. And we celebrate all of you, not only for your support of these young people and this school, but for the way you have supported one another in these trying times.

They say that a crisis reveals character. We are so heartened by what this experience has revealed about our BUA family.

You'll notice that this letter is **signed by both of us**, the interim and the incoming heads of school. As we approach July 1, we will reach out with more details about the head of school transition and opportunities for meet-and-greets. For now, though, we write to update you on our planning for the 2020-2021 academic year. All of our thinking about the upcoming school year has been done as a team. This partnership is not new; the two of us have been working together, intensively and joyfully, throughout the year to ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible.

### **Reentry Task Force**

We have formed a Reentry Task Force, whose mandate is to: (1) determine, in collaboration with the University and in accordance with local and state guidance, when in-person classes can resume on campus; and (2) develop plans and put the resources in place for next year. In addition to the two of us, the task force will include BUA Director of Operations Paige Brewster; two BUA faculty members, Olive Brown and Daniel Ford; Laura Jenks, chief of staff to Boston University Provost Jean Morrison; and BUA parent Dr. Mark Poznansky P'20, P'24, director of the Vaccine and Immunotherapy Center at Massachusetts General Hospital.

This group will not work in isolation. We will collaborate with our excellent faculty, whose passion for their craft is matched only by their concern for our students; we will coordinate closely with our colleagues at BU; and we welcome feedback from all of you.

### **Planning for the Fall**

We have every hope and intention of returning to campus this fall in a way that is safe for all involved. While much remains unknown, we can promise the following. In September, BUA will offer a challenging and engaging academic program. We will be ready with world-class remote learning solutions as needed, building on our experience this spring. We will find ways, in person and otherwise, to build community -- important for all of us, but particularly for the newest members of our community. And throughout the year, we will leverage the **expertise and resources of Boston University** to ensure the safety of our community, the efficacy of our technology, and the strength of our program. Recently, [BU announced plans](#) for an on-campus COVID-19 testing facility and program; the University's overarching plan for the fall semester will be released shortly. Being part of a major research university has many advantages, some of which are particularly pronounced right now.

When and how we return to campus will depend on forthcoming guidance from state and local officials; will be informed by conversations with Boston University leadership; and will rely on our best judgment about what is safe and effective for our community. Until a vaccine is widely available, any on-campus program will look different than it has in the past. We want to share with you our early thinking based on the information we have at this time.

One of the scenarios we are preparing for is a **hybrid on-campus model**, designed with appropriate accommodations for physical distancing in the classroom and incorporating remote elements as needed. We are looking at a number of options for how we can achieve lower density in our learning spaces, which we expect state and local officials will require. That will necessitate creative thinking about our classrooms, BU learning spaces, staffing, scheduling, and remote-learning models to supplement our in-person programming. We will also offer remote options for those students who need or elect to learn from home.

Public health officials tell us to be prepared for flare-ups and intermittent periods of broad stay-at-home orders. We are taking this into account as we do our planning. Whatever in-person learning plan we develop, we will be ready to transition smoothly into remote learning as needed.

Our planning for these contingencies is well underway, due, in part, to how much we are learning from our networks in real time. We are learning from schools around the world that have already reopened their campuses to students. And we are working side-by-side with our colleagues from every corner of BU -- technology, health, safety, facilities, undergraduate programs, and graduate programs.

## **Regular Updates**

Over the coming months, we will reach out to you with updates about our work and plans for the fall. We will be as transparent as we can.

If you have questions or concerns, we ask that you please bring those to us. We may not have all the answers, but we will listen. And the more we hear, the better able we will be to address your questions and offer the best possible experience for students next year.

### **How Can We Help You?**

All of our lives have changed over these past few months. That said, the public health situation and economic fallout have impacted some families in our community more than others. If your family's economic situation has changed, if you have concerns about the fall, if BUA can help, **we want to hear from you**. Please don't worry alone. You can reach out to either of us at any time. And, at the close of this message, we have offered a short list of others you can contact with particular concerns.

### **The Financial State of the School**

The school's financial picture remains strong, thanks to healthy enrollment -- **we project the largest enrollment in the school's history** -- and the generosity of so many of you. We have incurred additional expenses to make the transition to remote learning and other community-building initiatives this spring, offset by the handful of areas where we have found incremental savings due to being off campus. Unlike some of our peer schools, we do not qualify for and have not applied for government funding through the Payroll Protection Program. Nevertheless, we have retained our faculty and staff -- those dedicated people to whom you entrust the care of your children.

### **How Can You Help?**

Many of you have reached out to ask what you can do for the school and for those members of our BUA family who are having a particularly hard time right now. We are humbled by and grateful for your outreach. The BUA Parents Network recently initiated a [Parents Helping Parents program](#), where families can offer services or expertise to one another-- a beautiful testament to the spirit of this community.

We have already experienced an increased demand for tuition assistance and other financial support from families whose circumstances have changed recently. While funds are limited, we are responding to those requests and remain committed to supporting as many families as possible. Recognizing this priority, **the Class of 2020 recently designated its senior class gift to support students with incidental expenses next year**; even in the midst of their unusual senior spring, our newest graduates are focused on making sure the full BUA experience is available to others. The twentieth-anniversary Class of 2000 has also risen to the occasion, offering a \$10,000 challenge gift as part of BUA's recent Terriers Helping Terrier alumni giving campaign to support our families.

If you find yourself in the position to support other BUA families, the best way to do that is by making a tax-deductible gift to [BUA's Annual Fund](#). All gifts to the Annual Fund come directly to BUA for our sole use, and our priority for those funds, now more than ever, is supporting our families.

### **In Closing**

We often talk about how our students are **capable of extraordinary things**. We have seen that recently, not only in the way they have shifted to remote learning, but also in how they have committed themselves to recreating those moments that bring our community together: Classics declamations, Senior Thesis presentations, debate tournaments, trivia nights, online senior spotlights, and so many more. They have been as creative as they have been resilient.

These students deserve no less from us. We are on our way to building a program for the fall that not only serves our students but is a model for schools around the country and around the world, leveraging the resources of a major research university and all the strength of a nimble, tight-knit high-school community. We are grateful for your partnership as we embark on this work together.

Warmly,



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Incoming Head of School  
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**Questions**

Please reach out to either of us with any questions. In addition, please feel free to reach out to the following with specific concerns.

Mental Health and Wellness

Stacey Weiskopf, School Counselor

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Financial Aid and Technology Needs

Paige Brewster, Director of Operations and Financial Aid

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Supporting BUA

Margo Cox, Assistant Director of Institutional Advancement

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Academic Support

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