



July 27, 2020

Dear BUA Community,

I hope that this message finds you well. I look forward to meeting many of you this week during one-on-one Zoom sessions with those parents who are new to BUA community and in group sessions with our returning families in grades 10, 11, and 12. Connection is critical to what we do, now more than ever, and I'm grateful to you for making the time.

I am writing with a few updates on our reentry planning and a preview of what's to come, supplementing the [updates](#) that Dr. White and I sent along in May and June.

Save the Date: Reentry Webinar

Next week, we will write to you to share our latest thinking about a reentry plan for the fall, including details about the academic schedule, health and safety protocols, facilities updates, and logistics. Please **save the date for a webinar** during which we will talk more about our planning and address your questions: **Thursday, August 6 at 8:00 p.m.** We will follow up with Zoom information next week.

Parent Survey Results

Thank you for completing the Parent/Guardian Reentry Survey. We received **responses from over 90% of our BUA families**, a beautiful testament to the engagement and thoughtfulness of this community and a reflection on the importance of the decisions we will make together in the next several weeks. Your input has helped us refine our plans for reentry, and we look forward to sharing more during the webinar next week.

There is a danger in summarizing data like this. So much of what we heard was family-specific, and every family's experience is different. Our intention is to meet the needs of each family, to the best of our ability; please continue to reach out if you have particular concerns. I thought it would be helpful, though, to share some of the high-level insights from the survey so that you can understand some of the ways in which your feedback is shaping our planning:

- While nearly all parents express some natural level of concern about a return to campus, most families prefer for their children to learn on campus in the fall.
- Parents' eagerness for their children to learn on campus reflects the value they place on peer-to-peer connection and the connections between teachers and students.
- The most common parental concerns revolve around the logistics of commuting to campus (see below).

- There is a strong preference for a schedule that brings students to campus for fewer than five days per week, in part to reduce the number of commuting days.
- It is important to families that the school sets clear expectations for health and safety protocols and creates the conditions where students who are symptomatic or may have been exposed remain at home for the designated time.
- There is a corresponding desire for a robust option for students who are at home to join in-person classes synchronously and not feel like they are missing out.

The Reentry Task Force has synthesized your feedback and has incorporated your thinking into our planning. We look forward to sharing a detailed roadmap next week and answering your questions.

Transportation

Supporting families with transportation concerns has been on our minds since our planning began. The survey reaffirmed that this is an important topic for many of you. Given BUA's central urban location -- one of our chief assets and the thing we love about BUA -- most students traditionally rely on the MBTA to get to and from school. We have been following the [protocols the MBTA is putting in place](#) for trains and busses in light of the pandemic and will continue to do so. BU Today also published a [piece](#) recently specifically focused on Green Line updates.

In an effort to support our families, we are taking several proactive steps:

- In June, we shared a [Fall 2020 Transportation Survey](#) about families' plans for commuting to and from BUA. If you have not had a chance to complete that survey, or your thinking has changed since the survey was initially released, please take a moment to [fill out the survey](#).
- Based on the responses to the transportation survey, BUA will work to connect families who indicate that they are interested in carpooling with others in their area.
- Recognizing that it is likely that more of our families will drive to campus in the fall, we are designing a schedule that will allow for slightly staggered start and end times to alleviate congestion, and arranging for extended building hours for students if they are dropped off before the start of the school day and to wait for rides at the end of the day. More details to come next week.
- We are working with our colleagues at BU in an attempt to improve logistics around drop-off and pickup.

Investments in Health, Safety, Facilities, and People

Over the past several months, BUA and BU have made significant investments in critical areas to prepare for the fall. Those investments have been possible due to the generosity so many of you have shown through your donations to the annual fund and through our relationship with the University. The investments include:

- Webcam and microphone technology for every teacher and classroom to allow students learning from home to engage synchronously with their classmates.
- A/V updates to the Black Box theater and the gym.
- Several hundred tablet desks to temporarily replace our current classroom furniture and allow for 6-foot spacing between students.
- Upgrades to our central air handling system to enhance performance and improve in-building air quality, including moving filtration to MERV 13 standards.
- An additional swipe-card reader on an external door, allowing for four active entrances/exits during peak times to reduce crowding.
- Three new hand-washing sinks, in addition to sanitizing stations in every classroom and in our common spaces.
- Signage throughout the building and around campus to provide visual cues about traffic flow, room capacity, protocols, and community expectations.
- Access to BU's on-campus COVID-19 testing and contact-tracing system.
- A web-based daily health screening attestation system for all students and staff.

We are also proud to have, so far, been able to meet 100% of the incremental financial need of our families during this crisis.

We will be in a position to share many more details next week. In the meantime, we welcome your questions and suggestions.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher Kolovos". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "C".

Chris Kolovos
Head of School