



Dear BUA parents and students,

In a difficult time for our community, I feel fortunate that the pandemic remains under control at BUA. There have been no positive tests among our students, faculty, or staff this year. That is a testament to all of you who willingly make sacrifices, follow protocols, and help one another so that we can continue to learn and be together. I am so grateful.

I am writing with a few important COVID-related updates.

Influenza Vaccine

In consultation with our parent health advisory team, we have determined that the right thing for our BUA community is to **require all students to receive an influenza vaccine** by December 31, 2021.

We have reached this decision for several reasons. The flu poses health risks on its own, even if those are ones that, as a society, we have borne before without a vaccine mandate. We have learned many things during the pandemic, and the need to be proactive in the face of public health challenges is one of those lessons. In addition, the confluence of what is predicted to be a bad season for flu (and other respiratory illnesses) and the ongoing COVID pandemic poses a significant threat to in-person learning in the winter months. Our attestation system asks students to report COVID symptoms, many of which resemble flu symptoms. A flu outbreak at school could trigger a potentially large number of symptom reports, with the resulting need for those students to stay home from school for some time. If those numbers are high enough, it may jeopardize our ability to sustain in-person learning. We cannot control all respiratory illnesses, nor can we predict the efficacy of the flu vaccine this season. But if the flu vaccine makes it more likely that we can continue with on-campus learning, we believe that this is the right decision.

Like we do for other required vaccinations, we will accommodate medical and religious exemptions to this policy.

To **upload proof of influenza vaccination**, parents/guardians should:

- Log into their [SchoolDoc](#) account
- Click on the Enrollment Paperwork section in the middle of the screen, then choose the immunizations section from the list on the right side of the screen
- Scroll to the bottom of the page and select whether the student has received the influenza vaccination or not
- If yes, continue on to upload the student's vaccination documentation and enter the date of vaccination

- If no, you may leave the date of vaccination blank, but please upload any appropriate documentation confirming the medical or religious exemption

For assistance uploading to SchoolDoc, or to request more time to meet the influenza vaccination requirement, please contact our Director of Operations and Finance, Derek Dettorre, at dettorre@bu.edu.

We know that many of our students have already received the flu vaccine and that others will receive it in the coming weeks. There may be some families, though, for whom a requirement like this raises questions or concerns. If you have concerns about the policy broadly or about what it means for your family, I invite you to please reach out to me directly (ckolovos@bu.edu) for a conversation.

Attestations in the Winter Months

As we enter cold and flu season, I also want to offer a reminder about the importance of faithfully reporting symptoms on the daily attestation. There was understandable pressure before the pandemic for students to come to school when they had cold symptoms so as not to miss out or fall behind. The pandemic makes it much more important that we fight that pressure. We ask students to please err on the side of caution when completing their forms each morning. We will continue to make it possible for students who are at home due to having reported symptoms -- and feel well enough -- to watch classes and follow along by Zoom; we simply ask that you inform the front desk before 8:00 a.m. to request access. And, as always, teachers will be understanding and flexible with students who miss classes and will make time to work with those students outside of class.

Like you, I very much look forward to the day when letters like this will no longer be necessary. Until then, I feel lucky to be navigating these obstacles with all of you and am inspired by what this community does in the face of unprecedented challenges.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Christopher Kolovos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Christopher" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Kolovos".

Chris Kolovos
Head of School