



## BUA Mask Policy Update

4/21/22

Dear BUA students and families,

I hope this note finds you well. Earlier this month, we [wrote](#) to announce a move to a mask-optional approach at BUA. I have been so pleased with the respect that members of this community have shown one another as people make the choices that feel right for them, and it has been nice to see some smiling faces.

Unfortunately, we also have seen an appreciable increase in positive tests recently. Eight BUA students and two staff members have tested positive since April 6. This tracks with similar increases at BU, as you can see on [BU's COVID Dashboard](#) (with rates similar to those during the Omicron surge), and around the Boston area. And, for the first time during the pandemic, we suspect transmission within our community over the past week.

In consultation with our partners at BU and on the recommendation of our parent Health Advisory Team, we have made the hard decision to **temporarily return to a mask requirement effective immediately**, applicable to all BUA spaces, including classrooms, common areas, school meetings, indoor athletics, and rehearsals. We will follow up with students directly about protocols for meals, but we will again encourage spacing, small groups, and eating in well-ventilated areas.

The reason for this shift is not primarily student-health related. Health effects of COVID in our community remain largely mild, as we would expect in a highly vaccinated population. Instead, we are taking this step as a precaution so that we can maintain effective in-person learning at a critical time of year. If there were community spread in the coming days, that could result in a significant proportion of our teachers at home, making in-person school impractical, and a significant number of students missing in-person school as we head toward exams. The other concern is for those students and staff members with loved ones at home who are vulnerable, particularly unvaccinated young children or elderly or immunocompromised family members. This community sacrifice will help ease the concern of those members of the BUA family during this challenging period.

This move is temporary. We will assess conditions as we go and, as always, stay in close contact with all of you.

We also very much want to make the year-end rituals lively and joyful. The spring features our students in the theater and on stage. This is the season of prom, parties, and of celebration for our seniors and their families. Our hope is that by taking this step now, we can make it possible to be more flexible about precautions for those events later in the season, particularly for our seniors.

This is not the note I wanted to write. The pandemic continues to offer lessons in humility. It also calls for adaptability. As we adapt, I'm grateful for the support and guidance of experts who not only know the science but also appreciate and love this community. And I'm grateful for the

patience and trust that all of you continue to demonstrate.

As always, please reach out with any concerns at [academy@bu.edu](mailto:academy@bu.edu).

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Christopher Kolovos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Christopher" and last name "Kolovos" clearly legible.

Chris Kolovos  
Head of School