



Dear Northwest School Community – Students, Faculty, Parents, and Guardians,

As I wrote to the faculty two weeks ago, the most important role I can play as a school leader is to put the wellness and safety of our students, families, and faculty in the center of our decision making, to demonstrate a profound commitment to care, and to practice radical compassion in a time that demands that we be responsive, loving, and supportive of everyone who crosses our paths, in and out of school. And to listen, carefully and with humility, to the ideas of my colleagues and team members.

In the School Reopening Plan that I shared in July, I named our core values as connection, continuity, and community. I referenced the significant safety measures we have undertaken this summer in readying our campus for a safe return to school in a hybrid model (read about them [here](#) for more detail), which includes our hiring a Health Coordinator. And I outlined that we have designed our schedule to be adaptable and accommodating, and to provide spaces for routine, reflection, and individual attention. Since sharing that plan with you, we have continued to monitor the situation in Seattle and in our region. Our primary concern remains providing a safe and healthy learning and working environment for our students, faculty, and families.

Due to the continued rate of spread of the COVID-19 virus in our local community, as well as the most current guidance from state and local health officials, we have decided that the situation does not meet the necessary criteria for safely reopening our campus to in-person instruction at this time. **We are planning to teach first trimester online, through November 19, 2020.** If conditions significantly change before then and it is safe to shift to our hybrid model, where cohorts of students will come to campus in rotations by division, we will do so.

We know this news adds to the uncertainty our international families are experiencing and we have compassion for the confusion and disruption this creates. We will be reaching out to survey our families abroad about what makes most sense for their students' living accommodations and learning experience during the time that we are engaged in remote learning. We continue to prepare the dorm for a possible re-opening for students this fall and we will share more information next week about what this situation would mean. We are also developing plans for how we can more fully support and include international students who remain abroad in our remote learning, with support from teaching faculty and residential faculty in synchronous and asynchronous ways. We remain deeply committed to our international families and highly value their essential part of our community.





We continue to monitor the situation daily to inform our capacity to make a safe return to campus as soon as possible. We remain hopeful and engaged in the work of teaching and learning, and we so long to be back together in the House.

What's next? Our dorm faculty will continue their online orientation and engagement with new and returning international students. We will continue to make our plans for welcoming new faculty and our new and returning students to school, beginning with a new onboarding program for faculty led by Department Chairs Chris Talone and Annette Galindo, and a vibrant and engaging orientation program for students that places Advancing Equity at its core. In the coming weeks, we will share our daily and weekly schedule with you, which follows the parameters I outlined in "Configuring the Schedule" in our [School Opening Plan](#).

When I was on campus this week, I walked down the upper hallway in the main school building. There I found painted on the wall the following quotation by Thurgood Marshall, writing in the 1972 *Furman v. Georgia* case, which asserted that the death penalty was unconstitutional: "In recognizing the humanity of our fellow beings, we pay ourselves the highest tribute." It is my deepest commitment to the humanity, the wellness, and the safety of all members of our community that guides us through these difficult decisions in these difficult times. I welcome your feedback and ideas. And I appreciate your partnership and support.



Meg Goldner Rabinowitz
Acting Head of School

