Dear Codman Families,

We hope this message finds you well.

The long awaited initial guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) on re-opening was released last week. Governor Baker, Commissioner Jeff Riley and expert public health officials worked to produce a set of guidelines for holding school this Fall.

High level, here are a few of the highlights from the guidance:

• The state’s Return-to-School Working Group has collaborated with public health officials from Mass General Brigham Health System and the American Academy of Pediatrics (MA chapter) and believe that children are 1) less likely to become infected with COVID-19, 2) have low incidences of transmitting the virus, 3) less likely to transmit the virus to others if infected.

• The wearing of cloth face masks/coverings has been 80% effective against the transmission of the virus to others.

• Physical distancing of 3 to 6 feet is appropriate for face to face interactions/classroom desk configurations.

• Scholars in grades 2 and higher and all staff members must wear a face mask/covering on buses and in school.

• Schools should group students into cohorts that learn, transition, and eat together wherever possible. We're encouraged to limit transitions of students & groups into other classes outside of their own.

• Hand washing and hygiene practices and expectations must be taught and adhered to by all members of the community.

• Students must be current on their vaccines before they start school.

The State is requiring that we develop 3 separate plans for students returning to school: a plan for in person learning for all students, a hybrid plan that includes some students on campus and some learning from home and a plan that is entirely remote learning. All 3 plans will require us to operate school differently than we did pre-COVID. All 3 plans will need to start from a place of keeping students, staff and Codman community members healthy. We know that we will need to submit our plans to ESE in August, but don’t yet know what the feedback / approval process will be. We'll wait to hear and continue preparations in the interim.
Codman staff are currently working on the following in preparation:

1. Our Operations team has ordered and begun receiving health equipment, including masks, sanitizer, disinfectant and the like. We're working closely with our partners at the Codman Square Health Center to ensure a healthy school environment.

2. Our Teaching and Learning team are building curricula with remote learning as the primary lens, building in opportunities to expand to in person learning where possible.

3. The COVID-19 Planning Team that we formed in March has been meeting 2x per week to provide support to community members affected by the virus. Our Student and Family Support team and Health team will pick up the work of this group to prepare for the Fall.

The past few months have brought challenges and opportunities to our school community. We have been challenged to deliver learning in a new way and quickly ensure that the new way was both accessible and effective. Many people came together and so much positivity came out of our work. Opportunities for individual schedules emerged, classroom engagement soared in our Middle School STEM classes, and our seniors got early exposure to a more self directed approach to education through remote learning. As a school, we have spent time appreciating the positive while also taking the time to assess the challenges we faced and continue to face. In order to make sure we’re hearing from you, the families we serve, we are asking for your support in communicating your needs with us through this short Family Survey. We appreciate your time in advance, as we are well aware that we are far better when we hear from our families!

ESE has promised additional guidance during the next few months, and we will be ready to respond as that guidance is issued. We don't yet have all of the details we need, but we have more than we did yesterday. And each day, we plan to build our pathway a little bit further. If you have questions/concerns/comments please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

Sending strength, health and healing,

Thabiti Brown Pam Casna
Head of School Principal

Resources:
- [MA DESE Fall Reopening Guidance](#) (Released on June 25, 2020)
- [Massachusetts Reopening](#) 2020
- [City of Boston Reopening](#) 2020