



COMMONWEALTH ACADEMY

April 7, 2021

Dear Parents,

I hope that everyone had a lovely spring break and enjoyed the beautiful weather we've been privileged to have lately. Being able to spend time outdoors has certainly been something I've cherished after what has felt like a very long winter.

As we are about to embark on the last seven weeks of school and as the country and region start to slowly reopen, I thought it would be helpful for me to reach out again to share with you what the recommendations are and how C/A is approaching them.

Our primary focus continues to be on our students, their success, their physical and emotional wellbeing, and their need for social interaction and consistency. This is what initially led us to make the important decision back in the fall to change our building's structure and take down walls to create larger classrooms. This choice, paired with the vetted protocols we put in place, allowed us to open for in-person instruction in mid-October and to remain open without interruption. You all have been instrumental to our success and we cannot thank you enough for partnering with us.

As vaccines and data on their impact become more readily available, the CDC and Virginia Department of Health (VDH) are finding the results to be encouraging. This has led them to make some changes to their mitigation recommendations, namely around travel and physical distancing in schools.

As things stand currently, the CDC and VDH agree that schools could consider adjusting their distance requirements to increase capacity, so long as their other protocols remained carefully in place, stressing the importance of "not letting up." We are very excited at the prospect of welcoming all our students to campus for in-person instruction and were elated to recently share the news of our full-capacity reopening in the fall.

True to our desire to always evaluate all possibilities, we also evaluated the feasibility of increasing capacity sooner. A close look at the updated guidelines however confirmed that to do so, C/A will need to undertake the construction project to rebuild the walls that were taken down. With seven weeks of school remaining, the existing gap between the supply and demand of building materials, and the time and disruption required to do the work, this is not a project that would be possible to start now nor have completed before the end of the school year. We, therefore, have decided to follow the advice and guidance we have received and stay the course through the end of the school year, while actively planning for our eagerly awaited full in-person reopening in the fall.

With spring days upon us, the approach of summer, and the many restrictions we all have had to live with these past few months, travel is also likely to be on everyone's mind. It looks like we are heading in the right direction, which is encouraging.

I am pleased to report that as of yesterday, the Virginia Department of Health has adopted the CDC's recommendation on travel as has lifted its quarantine requirement post-travel for fully vaccinated people. This is great news but is unfortunately still only limited to fully vaccinated people for the time being. With numbers on the rise again and children not quite yet able to be vaccinated, however, the Virginia Department of Health and the Alexandria Health Department are indeed still recommending that people refrain from all non-essential travel. If essential travel must occur, all unvaccinated travelers should follow the requirements and guidelines that were previously in place. This is why at this time, C/A's protocol around travel for unvaccinated students will remain as it stands (i.e., 14 days of virtual learning following any travel outside of VA/MD/DC).

Thank you again for your understanding, partnership, and support as we continue to navigate through the ebbs and flows of the pandemic together. There is a light at the end of the tunnel. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

My very best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anabelle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anabelle C. Morgan
Head of School