

July 31, 2020

Dear Seven Hills Families,

I am writing to update you on our re-opening plans for the 2020-21 school year.

At the moment, we still plan to resume in-person learning on Tuesday, August 18. It was very helpful to have your feedback from the survey a couple of weeks ago. Though there is, understandably, a good deal of concern, the majority of you expressed a strong desire to have your children return to in-person learning, given the robust safety protocols we have developed. And, fortunately, the trendlines for Hamilton and the surrounding counties have improved in the last couple of weeks, so, at least at the moment, we are feeling more comfortable about opening for in-person learning.

That said, the situation is very fluid. Some recent models call for cases to escalate in Ohio and the surrounding states in the coming weeks. Accordingly, after a great deal of consultation with state and local public health officials and our COVID-19 Advisory Team, we have determined that Seven Hills, like a great many schools in our area and around the state, will be guided by the directives of the [Ohio Public Health Advisory System](#), using its Level 1-4 rating of exposure. Using this system, Hamilton County is, at the time of this letter, at Level 3 (red). If, however, Hamilton County is upgraded to Level 4 (purple), we will transition to our remote learning model for all divisions. There are, of course, other circumstances, particularly a spike in cases within our own school community, that might also trigger this transition.

Hybrid Learning Option

Based on the survey, though we expect the vast majority of students to return to in-person learning, we do want to provide a remote learning experience, even while school is in session for in-person learning, for those families may not yet be comfortable.

To provide as much continuity as possible, we are requiring that those who opt for remote learning do so for a continuous period of at least four weeks. You will, however, be able to revisit your decision every four to five weeks.

A more detailed explanation of the program, as well as a signup form are available at [Hybrid Learning Option](#). If you wish to avail yourself of this option, please submit your form by Friday, August 7, at the latest. To help you think this through, we are holding six divisional Zoom information sessions: Doherty PK, Lotspeich PK, Doherty K-5, Lotspeich K-5, Middle, and Upper, to answer any questions you might have. The dates and times are listed at the end of this letter. You will receive a Zoom invitation directly from the division head.

Community Health Commitment

As I know you understand, maintaining the safest possible environment will require the concerted efforts of our entire community: teachers, students, and their parents. We cannot do this alone! To formalize our expectations of everyone in our community, we are asking all of our families to review the current draft of [COVID Safety Plan](#) with their children and to read and sign a Community Health Commitment by logging in to our School Forms Online module at [my.7hills.org](#). I would ask that you review these documents with your children, and sign and return before the start of the school year. Even under these challenging circumstances, we are committed to providing an enriching educational experience for your children and to doing so as safely as possible. Now, more than ever, we will need your full-blooded partnership and support.

Updated Protocols in the Event of Confirmed or Suspected Illness

Most of the elements of our safety plan that were outlined in my July 5 letter have remained the same, but I did want to make you aware of these updated [protocols for confirmed or suspected illness](#), based on new guidelines from Cincinnati Children's Hospital, the CDC, and local health authorities. These protocols outline the procedures we will use if a student (or faculty/staff member) becomes ill on campus, as well as quarantine and return-to-school requirements. Given how quickly the science is moving, we will, of course, continue to provide updates as these protocols continue to evolve.

Though the vast majority of protocols are already outlined in Safety Plan, we are still fine-tuning the details of new procedures for Drop Off and Dismissal, Before Care and After Care. You can expect another letter at the end of next week with a link to a new area of the website designed to house all the information you will need.

I appreciate, more than I can fully express, the confidence that you have expressed in our planning efforts. As so many of you have been kind enough to recognize, our administrative team, the school nurses, and, of course, our faculty and staff have worked tirelessly to develop

these robust protocols which, we believe, will provide a safe and engaging learning environment for everyone in our community. I'd especially like to thank our COVID Advisory Team, Dr. Lara Danziger-Isakov, Dr. Chris Peltier, and Dr. Samir Shah, who have devoted countless hours to guiding us in developing our approach.

It will be, I'm sure, a learning year for all of us, but as we always do, we will do our best to make the necessary adjustments to ensure the best and safest experience for your children.

It's been great to see so many of our students in our summer camp programs and, now, drifting back for athletic practices. We have missed them — and you — and we are excited about coming back together as a new year dawns.

Warmly,

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

Christopher P. Garten,
Head of School

Zoom Meeting Dates and Times

Doherty PK: Aug. 6, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Lotspeich PK: Aug. 6, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Doherty K-5: Aug. 6, 6 - 7 p.m.

Lotspeich K-5: Aug. 6, 6 - 7 p.m.

Middle School: Aug. 5, 6 - 7 p.m.

Upper School: Aug. 5, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.