



September 9, 2021

Hello BNS Community,

Guess what? We are 20 days in to 50 years old ... and we are still going strong! This deserves a moment of pause and reflection. We are 50 years in to serving our students, teachers, and parents. We are 50 years in to our commitment to support academic and civic excellence. And we are 50 years in to helping kids develop a love of learning. *That is 50 years well spent.*

I am writing with a couple of important updates after last night's board meeting. The full meeting minutes will be shared with the community in the coming week.

First, the board has updated its [Quarantine and School Absence Policy](#), in an effort to provide clearer guidance on actions that BNS families can take for known, likely, and suspected COVID-19 exposures as well as to document the process of returning to school after a known or suspected exposure. Please note that these are guidelines only and we cannot possibly account for every possible iteration of suspected, possible, probable, or known exposure. *If you have any questions about exposure status or the process for isolation and return to school, please contact our school COVID contacts (Molly Lucier mollycavewmn@gmail.com or TJ Stone tjstonebns@gmail.com), the Board President (kiyah@new-school.org, 919-360-2127) or our board health representative Ash Raju (ashish.raju@gmail.com) or additional information and guidance.*

Second, and related, the board wishes to clarify the conditions under which COVID exposures will be made known to the school. **In accordance with VA Department of Labor law, the school, through an email sent by the board president, will make known to the entire BNS community any known COVID-positive case or a known COVID-19 exposure (defined [in accordance with the CDC](#)) in our community (i.e. with a student, teacher, or member of their household).** Although our school has been cohorting students to increase distancing and to make contact tracing easier, we will still make this information known to the whole school community to that families can make choices that are right for their specific situations.

Families have been making decisions to stay home for numerous reasons other than known exposure to COVID-19, and they are doing this out of an abundance of caution and in order to protect our school community at large. Many of these choices have been made preemptively (without known exposure or known positive COVID testing) and have been readily and quickly

communicated to the health committee, school COVID contacts and/or the school president. Behind the scenes, this group of individuals is fielding questions (of various sorts) almost daily and helping families chart their course through these unknown waters. ***The board wishes to applaud the care the community has shown to each other by reaching out with these questions and taking precautionary steps to avoid any possible or potential exposure to the rest of the community.***

COVID is out there. But we needn't fear it, because we can take action to prevent its rampant spread and we can take action to limit exposure to our vulnerable populations (which includes the unvaccinated children and immunocompromised children and adults in our midst). How can you do your part? Just as you have been: (1) become fully vaccinated as soon as you are able, (2) wear a mask (especially when you are in setting where vaccination status of those that you can physical touch is unknown), (3) do your best to maintain safe distance from individuals especially when their vaccination status is unknown. It also means that you should (4) take a walk with a friend who is also vaccinated, (5) gather in an outdoor picnic with friends, or (6) take your family to the drive in ... ***because 1-6 are the things that are going to pull us through this pandemic.***

On behalf of the BNS board, thank you for being a part of this community.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KAD', written in a cursive style.

Kiyah Duffey
BNS Board President