

# FROM COMMITTEE PHYSICIANS

Dear Parents:

Canterbury joins the ranks of schools across the nation facing the challenge of balancing ongoing concerns with COVID-19 health risks against the negative social and academic development consequences of delaying our children returning to in-person instruction. As we re-open for the 2020-21 school year, we are cognizant of how this decision impacts each of you in different ways.

We have aimed to achieve four primary objectives as we developed the reopening plan:

1. Policies designed to be as fair and safe as possible, to as many people as possible, recognizing the different health risk profiles in various Canterbury households.
2. Policies designed to be consistent with growing medical evidence.
3. Policies that comply with and are flexibly responsible to Governor Holcomb's "Back on Track Indiana" program.
4. Policies that recognize the necessary benefit of in-person student learning and engagement with peers and expert faculty that cannot be duplicated in an online or home-school format.

The "Back on Track Indiana" program has fortunately helped to coordinate our community's efforts and established a road map to get us through this pandemic within our region. However, it also enables wide flexibility in interpretation, providing the advantage of tailoring schools' reopening to be in line with what works best for the school.

Much effort has gone into considering many approaches designed to minimize risk to the students and other household members of those students as well as faculty. However, all of those additional tasks and precautions become comparatively insignificant if our policies enable even a couple children who are actually positive for COVID-19 to engage directly with the other children. For this reason, all efforts to minimize this particular risk should be aggressively pursued. We have considered many viewpoints and proposals for achieving success but have concluded that a large part that is necessary for success lies in the hands of the parents at home. It is critical that now, more than ever, we begin to embrace a culture of keeping our children home when they become ill or meet certain criteria. We must not create resistance when school staff notify us that our children meet medical criteria for going home. The specifics of that criteria may change over time as we adjust to the changing risk level. For many of the single and dual-working parent families, this may prove to be considerably more of a burden than for others and we would not ask this of them if it were not so important in mitigating risk for the entire school.

Please understand that despite the tremendous inconvenience at times, a reduced threshold for keeping children home, and sending them home when they demonstrate illness, is necessary for maximizing a successful reopening and limiting unfair additional risk to particularly vulnerable Canterbury households. As medical professionals ourselves and parents of existing Canterbury students, we ask that you help the school to maximize compliance with these measures to limit what we feel is the greatest risk to Covid-19 spread in the school.

Sincerely,

Canterbury Pandemic Health & Wellness Committee Physicians



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