

September 8, 2020

UPDATE ON GUIDELINES FOR REOPENING SCHOOLS FROM LOS ANGELES COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

Dear Webb Community,

Late last week, in calls with educators on September 2 and September 4, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health offered a series of updates on the community spread of COVID-19 and its effect on plans for reopening schools. We wanted to share that information with you and how it might affect our plans at Webb.

The calls began with officials sharing a number of positive signs that indicate the work to slow COVID-19 in Los Angeles County is succeeding. The 3-day average of hospitalizations was down 46% (~1,000 people hospitalized), 3-day average of cases was down to 1,130, and positivity rates for testing were down to below 5%. Again, these are all encouraging signs.

Using the State of California's current public health metrics on COVID-19, LA County is still at the highest risk level (purple/widespread). Moving forward, if certain health metrics are met, LA County could drop to the red level (substantial), which would allow for the possibility of school openings. To do so, new cases must fall below 7 cases per 100,000 people. It is currently at 10 cases per 100,000 people. The positivity rate would need to stay below 8%; it is currently below 5%. And finally, when LA County moves to the red tier it must remain there for at least 14 consecutive days. This would make October 7 the earliest possible date schools could open in Los Angeles County.

Again, this scenario is based on guidelines issued by the State of California. However, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health has an overriding authority to issue its own re-opening guidelines. The department announced last week it will likely be more restrictive than the State of California regarding the criteria for reopening schools—based on the size and diversity of the population. Public health officers now predict early November will be the earliest possible date for allowing schools to reopen.

This situation remains fluid, based on incoming public health data. Working with Webb's Medical Advisory Board, we will continue to monitor public health guidance and report updates as we receive them. **We expect to make a decision regarding Webb's plans for time module two (10/26 – 11/24) by September 21.** In the meantime, if you have questions please let us know at parents@webb.org.

Sincerely,

Taylor Stockdale
Head of Schools

Dr. Theresa Smith
Associate Head of Schools