Dear Upper School Families,

I am writing today to provide a substantive update on our reopening plans for the fall. We are grateful for your attention to our previous letters, which we hope have outlined the framework of our thinking. As David Lourie mentioned, Collegiate will begin the 2020-2021 academic year fully virtual with an expectation that we will return to the building with a staggered schedule, beginning on September 29th. This communication sets a plan for the fall, with the obvious caveat that all of the details below are fully subject to change as conditions in our school community and the city as a whole may evolve. Knowing that conditions may change, our plans for our program seek to be as nimble as possible and allow us to move between fully online and in-person instruction depending on which of these is safest and most practical at any given time. To review the myriad information noted below, we will host a Zoom meeting for all Upper School parents on Monday, August 24th at 8:30 am, allowing us to also answer any questions you may have.

Reopening Schedule:
The School year will begin on September 8th with 9th grade student orientation, followed by orientations for all Upper School Students on September 9th. Online course for all Upper School students will begin on September 10th. These grade level orientations will allow us to introduce students to online learning, the new schedule, to review health and safety protocols and to answer questions and hear concerns. We will then begin a full return to the building on September 29th, following the schedule David detailed in his email. A full schedule of important Upper School dates are shown below.

I know that some of you are considering an online only option for your child. If your family circumstances are such that this remains the best option, we will need you to commit to that option no later than Monday, August 24th, if you haven’t already done so. Please reach out to me directly to alert us of that decision.

Important Upper School Reopening dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 24th</td>
<td>Deadline to choose online-only option</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 24th</td>
<td>Upper School Parent Reopening Zoom, 8:30 am</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 8th</td>
<td>9th Grade Orientation (schedule to follow)</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 9th</td>
<td>Upper School Orientation (all grades, schedule to follow)</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 10th</td>
<td>Begin Online Learning</td>
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<td>September 28th</td>
<td>Yom Kippur -- School Closed</td>
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<td>September 29th</td>
<td>12th Grade returns to in-person learning</td>
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<td>October 2nd</td>
<td>11th Grade returns to in-person learning</td>
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<td>October 7th</td>
<td>10th Grade returns to in-person learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 12th</td>
<td>Columbus Day -- School Closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 13th</td>
<td>9th Grade returns to in-person learning</td>
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Building and maintaining connections between students and teachers will be a top priority as we begin the year online. Orientations and meetings with returning students will serve as the start of what will be a highly engaged online experience this fall.

**Daily Schedule:**
We will adopt a new daily schedule for this initial period of online learning, [a pdf of which is linked here](#). We have designed a much simpler and more consistent schedule with ample time for academics, breaks from screens, and personal and community relationship-building. With multiple 60-minute periods per class per week, students will connect in real time with their teachers and peers. Each scheduled period will begin synchronously and then be used in dynamic ways by our faculty. Our schedule also provides students with moments of connection beyond academic classes in advisory, assemblies, class meetings, student clubs, and individual meetings with teachers. Additionally, we designed the schedule with attention to social-emotional learning and our commitment to equity and belonging work, resulting in balanced days and weeks to educate the whole student.

**Student support and community:**
One of the main advantages of this new schedule is that it provides ample time for both advisory and faculty office hours, in addition to other community times, such as Class Meetings, Peer Leadership, Group Dynamics, and Assemblies, regardless of whether we are learning online or in person. These times are crucially important opportunities to build community and connections and will help ensure that students feel connected with their advisor, teachers, and each other. We will communicate with students regarding what opportunities are required of them, but students should expect to engage with this aspect of the program with the same intention as scheduled academic courses. As in the spring, advisors will remain the first point of contact for all student related matters. The Student Support Team will meet regularly, as we did in the spring, and respond to student needs as appropriate. Divisional activities will continue virtually in the fall, including all our customary events for students and for parents via Zoom.

**Class meeting/academic expectations:**
Whether online or in-person, students are expected to be present for class for the entirety of the class period. Unlike last spring, every class will meet synchronously at the time for which it is scheduled and students should plan on being present for all these meetings. Class meetings are 60 minutes and teachers will have discretion to use that time in ways that best accomplish the learning goals for that day. Teachers will record attendance in Connect and our normal attendance policies will be in effect. Parents must communicate with Kate Ostrander via email ([kostrander@collegiateschool.org](mailto:kostrander@collegiateschool.org)) or phone (212-812-8526) to excuse a student from class or an entire school day. Students can expect assignments and other substantive coursework will be assigned to be completed outside the synchronous class meeting times. Our schedule also allows for regular office hours and dedicated advisory meetings every week, along with all of our customary community activities such as Peer Leadership, Upper School Announcements, Clubs and Assemblies. These moments, among many others, will ensure students feel connected and seen during online learning this fall, as well as once they return to the building.

**Online platforms and Learning Management System:**
This summer, faculty participated in professional development on teaching online. One of our main goals was to streamline the experience for the student. All faculty were trained in how to use Collegiate Connect, the School’s Learning Management System (LMS) for use in and out of the building. Connect will serve as our central hub for teaching and learning in all scenarios. This is where students will find outlines of courses and recurring zoom invites (on the Bulletin Board), resources for each unit (on the topics page) and assignments (on the assignments page).
In addition to other key tools and resources to enhance student online learning, faculty will use a program called Showbie to collect and comment on student work. The purpose of this is to simplify the submission of work and to make it convenient for students and faculty to send, receive, provide feedback, and review that feedback. Google classroom will no longer be used.

To learn more about our virtual classroom experience, you can read more here.

**Coursework, assessments, and grading:**
As our earlier letter indicated, faculty will grade student work as usual and Upper School students will receive grades at every marking period this year regardless of whether students are learning online or in-person. Faculty have spent time this summer planning for classwork and assessments should we be online for any length of time. Feedback for students is a critical part of the learning process and faculty will provide it in a number of ways, as appropriate to the grade level and course. Online tools will make this process more efficient for all, and our new schedule makes time for regular office hours. These times will allow students and faculty to discuss student performance and any course concepts on a regular, ongoing basis.

**Hardware and technical needs:**
Over the past several years, the Upper School has employed a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy. Under this policy, we ask students to supply their own laptop which can be used at home and when in the building. Funding is available to support the purchase of a laptop either through financial assistance for those who receive it or the Supplemental Income Fund, which provides funding of up to $1000 for educational expenses, including technology. We recognize that virtual learning may have additional technological requirements and therefore, we ask that all families complete this form so that we know any technical needs your family may have.

**Upper School health and safety protocols:**
It is important to know that for all of us, a return to Freedom Place South will feel significantly different from our normal experience prior to COVID-19. Many new health and safety protocols will be in place and there will be an expectation that all community members comply with these new measures. The following broad expectations apply to everyone while in the building:

- Submit a negative COVID-19 test prior to student’s arrival for the first time via email to the School nurse (details on testing to come).
- Complete a daily health check on the Magnus app prior to arriving at School
- Present your Magnus health check pass to a security staff member upon arrival to School. Those without access to a phone app, will undergo a health screening upon entering building.
- Remain 6 feet apart from others at all times when in the building and on school grounds and limit movement around the building.
- Wear an appropriate face mask (please reference our Health and Safety protocols for details)
- Parents, guardians, and other visitors will not be permitted entry into the building.

You can find detailed information on our complete health and safety protocols here. Failure to adhere to these guidelines will result in a student not being allowed in the building or needing to be sent home. Please note, while in the building, students will have less discretionary movement. For example, there will be no gatherings of large groups. Upon entering the building, students must proceed directly to the space designated for the activity in question. Elevator use will be significantly restricted. Students will use the
stairs, again with the expectation that they maintain six feet of separation from their peers, to move between floors. Students must adhere to these guidelines at all times when they are in the building for any reason.

**Community Communication and Feedback:**
Much of the feedback received from the spring highlighted to us an increased need for consistent two-way communication. With this in mind, Upper School families can be assured that they will hear from me once a week. This communication will help highlight elements of our program, elevate opportunities for community building, create a central weekly calendar, and clarify broad questions or concerns received throughout the week. Additionally, we will solicit formal feedback from parents and Upper School students regarding our programs at least twice before the end of the calendar year, allowing us to use the feedback to inform our work.

Even under our current circumstances, reopening school is tremendously exciting. Whether this will be your first year at Collegiate or thirteenth, I know teachers and students are eager to return to our vibrant community. I look forward to seeing everyone online and, eventually, back in the building. In the meantime, I wish you good health and relaxation. Please be in touch with any questions or concerns.

Warm regards,

Ben