

Letter from Superintendent, Dr. Lisa Brady

October 1, 2020

Dear Dobbs Ferry Parents and Community,

It is October 1st and we are extremely excited that our students and teachers have remained in school since we opened on September 8th. I am sure that you are aware of closures in school districts across Westchester and Putnam counties and the threat of closure is a reality that can happen at any time. We must remain vigilant and behave responsibly at all times - both in school and in the larger community.

Mandatory Health Screening

We appreciate parent compliance with the health screening form each morning and we need you to continue to be attentive to this important part of our health and safety protocols. Please remember that it is critical that you do not send your child to school with any of the symptoms on the screening checklist. Doing so results in an unnecessary burden on our health offices and your child being sent home - requiring you to obtain a COVID-19 test for your child and temporary removal from the instructional program even when the test is negative. We are seeing an increase in symptomatic children each day and we have been fortunate that none of the subsequent tests have been positive for COVID-19.

Communications Regarding Covid-19 Cases in our School Community

In the event that the Westchester County Department of Health notifies us of a case of COVID-19 among Dobbs Ferry students or staff, we will immediately notify parents via email. The length of any resulting closure and/or quarantining requirements will be determined in consultation with the Department of Health and the school medical director. All districts are required to report daily attendance and any positive COVID-19 tests among students or staff to New York State, and you can access the New York State COVID Data Dashboard at [NYS Covid Report Card](#).

Masks, Social Distancing, Hand Hygiene

Students have been very responsible with mask-wearing inside our schools but we remain concerned about what we see when students are off school property, in the community, and engaged in athletic activities. The wearing of masks, maintaining social distance, and frequent hand washing remains our most effective defense against the transmission of the virus. All of us, adults and young people, need to continue to be serious and responsible with these easy to follow measures.

Travel Advisory

Be mindful of where you are traveling and keep informed about the states which are on the [NYS Travel Advisory](#) list. When you travel to one of these destinations there is a mandatory 14-day quarantine even if you return and obtain a negative test for COVID-19. This results in children being out of school for a significant amount of time and is easily avoided by staying aware and being informed.

Large Social Gatherings Among Students

You have probably seen or heard in the media that a number of school districts have been returned to full remote learning due to large gatherings among high school students who are not practicing social distancing, not wearing masks, drinking alcohol, and endangering their schools and communities with their behavior. These types of parties, even if they are outside, can lead to the Department of Health advising districts to close temporarily because these gatherings can contribute to the development of a COVID-19 hot spot. This behavior not only has the potential to lead to school closures but can also jeopardize sports and other activities that are just beginning to get back on track.

We are very fortunate so far this year. We have worked hard as a school community to open our schools and keep them open. The road ahead is long and fraught with pitfalls both in and out of our control.

Let's keep steady on our path and continue to move ahead - one good day at a time.

Best Regards,

Lisa Brady, Ed.D.
Superintendent