



SUFFIELD  
ACADEMY

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June 4, 2020

Dear Suffield Parents,

I am writing about plans for the 2020-2021 academic year.

As you know, I wrote to you on May 5 as we were concluding spring term and celebrating the achievements of Suffield's Class of 2020. We had a virtual commencement that I hope you have seen on our website.

We are now fully immersed in organizing details for the fall term. Knowing that each week will bring greater clarity, we are proceeding with the expectation that our students will begin returning for classes as originally planned in early September. This timeline assumes Suffield meets expectations of the State of Connecticut reopening guidelines aimed at ensuring we can take great care of our community.

Please also know we are planning both on campus and remote learning programs for the 2020-2021 academic year. If the state prohibits us from having students on campus we will offer all families partial tuition refunds per term related to room, board, and avoided costs. If students have travel complications and cannot be here for part of the year they should be assured their educational journeys will continue without disruption through our remote learning option.

Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont established a group focused on reopening our state's schools and colleges. [View Reopen CT: Report of the Higher Education Subcommittee](#). Their work has been quite helpful to planning for Suffield Academy. They have asked schools to report on plans related to four specific areas.

- repopulation of the campus
- monitoring health conditions to ensure detection of infection
- containment to prevent spreading of the disease if infection is detected
- shut down if infection cannot be contained or is otherwise necessary

Their most recent communication [on May 29] included the following language.

*Independent schools should consider the multiple models for re-opening their campuses and select the one that makes the most sense for their unique circumstances of program, students served, location, and facility. These models include and are not limited to: a return of all students to campus with a variety of adaptations to meet state health requirements; some students returning and a slow integration of other students by age; cohorts of students on campus at different times; alternating days for students; the use of distance learning to "decompress" the campus population; extending the calendar and day schedule. Schools should be prepared to modify school calendars, the structure of a school day, the physical layout of their campuses, and policies for students, employees, and visitors relative to hygiene, access to campus, and safety protocols.*

Suffield Academy's Campus Re-Opening Task Force is working through these many details with me. The group includes several members of our administrative and teaching faculty along with leaders of health services, dining, technology, and our physical plant. We are focused on all areas highlighted by the state including program and calendar planning, COVID-19 testing access and plans, acquisition of PPE and other equipment, and quarantine spaces on campus.

We know for certain that life on campus will be different. Full-school gatherings like sit-down lunch or weekly chapel meetings will likely not happen in the coming academic year. We are working through plans to create appropriate distance between people in and out of classrooms. We will serve food differently. Our calendar and schedule [annual, weekly, daily] may well be altered. I can assure families far from campus that students will be permitted to remain here during school vacations. There are obviously many questions related to athletics and other activities. We are paying close attention to decisions made across local and state organizations, peer boarding schools, and higher education. As of today's letter there is promising news regarding athletic competition and avenues by which Suffield students can resume play. View the [Intent to Play Letter](#). As with all we do, the safety and health of our students will be at the forefront of all decisions.

Later this summer we will communicate more about expectations regarding testing protocols [types, frequency, response to outcomes], compliance with safety protocols for our students, and acknowledgement of reasonable risk. We will share Suffield's Medical Response Action Plan and ask that all families read, discuss, and acknowledge their understanding of the expectations and responsibilities placed on the school, our students, and our families.

We plan to share additional updates and specifics in July and August. Further details and answers to some frequently asked questions are on the COVID-19 section of our school website. Thank you and best wishes from Suffield.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles Cahn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a stylized "C" and "A".

Charles Cahn III  
Head of School