

MILTON ACADEMY

—DARE TO BE TRUE—

Dear families,

I have enjoyed opportunities to connect with many of you via Zoom over the past several weeks. As a global society, we have witnessed seismic changes touching almost every aspect of our lives. It is a source of great pride and encouragement that the Milton community's dedication to its students remains constant. We will continue to pursue moments of connection to support that steadfast care for our young people.

As our remote-learning program advances through the remainder of this academic year, your partnership and feedback have been incredibly helpful. Our faculty have worked tirelessly to maintain connections with our students and deliver our program despite the challenging circumstances. As we round out this year with plans to celebrate Milton students in a number of ways—including Graduation—we have also been working on plans for the fall.

We intend to begin the 2020–2021 academic year in person, with on-campus teaching and learning in September, if permissible under guidance from Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker and other government and public health officials. The health and safety of our students, employees, and community at large are intrinsic to our planning. Recognizing that we must be flexible in response to this pandemic, we are planning for multiple scenarios to ensure the safe delivery of a rich, engaging educational and community experience for all students.

The School has convened task forces focused on areas that will inform our fall planning and direction. Led by members of Milton's leadership team, these groups include representatives from across the School, working in consultation with outside experts. Their charges are to evaluate and make recommendations in key areas critical to the next phase of our pandemic response: hybrid-learning programs that mix in-person and remote instruction in the Upper, Middle, and Lower Schools; health services; residential life; communication; and finance. Following directives set forth by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and health experts, Milton's Board of Trustees and I will use guidance from these groups to make final decisions for the upcoming academic year. Our focus includes:

- Campus scenario-planning, including possible adjustments to the academic calendar and school day
- Detailed planning for each division's hybrid-learning program, including guidelines around in-person, synchronous, and asynchronous learning; recommended tools and teaching approaches to enhance our curriculum delivery regardless of student location; and steps the School will take to pivot quickly between on-campus learning and remote learning, if necessary
- Maintaining Milton's rich culture of connectedness and community among students, faculty, and staff—a fundamental Milton value

- Consideration of extracurricular activities and student organizations, including athletics, music, performing arts, and more, despite potential limitations for in-person gatherings
- Development of health protocols based on government and public health guidelines and guidance from physicians at Boston Children's Hospital, including accommodations for students whose health needs require special attention
- Modifications to enhance our health center and satellite nurse locations throughout campus
- The use of space across campus, including guidelines for room density, social distancing, and paths of travel
- Adjustments to our boarding program, including flexibility for international students affected by travel restrictions

In addition to the areas that task forces are focused on, our faculty will engage in professional development programs over the summer to ensure that each division is prepared to deliver our hybrid-learning program in the fall.

Although we would all welcome the certainty of a specific date for announcing our fall opening, our reliance on external guidelines for all schools makes it too soon to know. Instead, I offer a promise of continued updates over the next several weeks, with a target of late July to early August for an announcement about how the fall semester will begin.

We will continue to engage our community as planning develops and more information becomes available. In the coming days, you will receive an invitation to join your child's principal and me for a Zoom session to hear more about our work. As in other years, you will also receive important divisional information in the coming weeks and months to prepare for the start of school. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to your division's leaders or my office.

I want to thank you again for your ongoing support. In our necessary response to these historic challenges, we have lost something irreplaceable: our time together during the many milestones of spring at Milton. Yet I am inspired daily by the strength of our bonds—the innovative ways our teachers have conjured digital classrooms, the inventiveness of fun and exciting virtual student activities, and the outpouring of support from Milton families and alumni. In rising to meet this adversity, Milton will continue to demonstrate that the power of our connections transcends the bounds of geography.

Sincerely,

Todd B. Bland
Head of School