

Head of School COVID-19 Update - April 9, 2021

Good afternoon Montcrest families,

Less than 24 hours after our decision to close to in-person learning on Monday evening, the Toronto Medical Officer of Health invoked a Section 22 Order under the Health Protection and Promotion Act and closed schools, including all Independent Schools, across Toronto. The following day, Premier Ford declared a third provincial emergency and placed the province in a Stay-At-Home order. That means for at least the next four weeks we are back to ***leaving the house for essential reasons only, socializing with members of our own household, and continuing to avoid all non-essential travel.***

While we may see a brief extension of remote learning after the April break, ***I am confident we will return to in-person learning*** due to renewed restrictions across Ontario. I know that last minute changes are very disruptive to your lives, particularly our working parents and those with our youngest learners. In order to assist you in planning for the unknown, I would offer that I am cautiously optimistic for an April 20th return to in-person learning. That said, I encourage you to prepare yourselves mentally, emotionally, and professionally for a 1-2 week extension of remote learning. If Ontario is going to extend any of the existing school closures they will need to inform everyone sometime next week. As always, as soon as I know anything I will share it with you. Montcrest fully intends to continue to follow the guidance of Toronto Public Health (TPH) now that community restrictions are aligned with the significant rise in cases.

Schools in and of themselves are safe and certainly Montcrest has proven to be. That said, our success continues to rely on a combination of factors including abiding by restrictions, maintaining vigilance and locally and provincially enforced safeguards. Our health and safety protocols have demonstrated a high level of integrity and I know that each of us continues to do all we can to keep ourselves and those around us safe and healthy. That said, we know there are schools with cases of COVID-19 that have done everything "right". There are no guarantees and I know that feels terribly unsettling.

My commitment to you is this: I will continue to listen to experts in their field, apply knowledge and measure opinion, and consider the needs of the community I serve; students, staff, faculty, and parents, all in order to make the best decisions I can for Montcrest School. Our Board of Governors, the staff and faculty, medical professionals, scientists and my colleagues across Canada continue to inform each decision and I continue to welcome feedback and thoughts from all of you. No one person can manage this alone and a great many people in our very own Montcrest community have provided their expertise and wisdom over the last 13 months. Thank you.

In the meantime, I hope you all have a restful break and thank you for your continued support during this crazy, crazy time. If you need me, you know how to find me.

Erin Corbett
Head of School