



COTTING SCHOOL

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October 26, 2020

Dear Cotting Community,

It is with deep gratitude that I write to you today at the start of our fourth week of Phase 2, 4 in-person days per week. Our ability to be so successful this far is not luck. It is the result of careful planning (with incremental in-person learning steps from 25% in July to 50% in September to our present status), community vigilance and cooperation, and above all, the tremendous work and dedication of the Cotting faculty and staff.

In the plans we submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) in early August, we targeted November 3rd to move to Phase 3. In Phase 3, we will offer 5 in-person days and begin to bring back some additional staff members.

In the past week we have had thoughtful input from our staff, Cotting's Parent Advisory Council, our Medical Director, and our Board of Trustees. All of the feedback confirmed our inclination to pause at Phase 2 until mid-January. We believe this pause reflects the COVID-19 trends in Massachusetts. We also feel this is an important step as it helps us preserve our current in-person educational and therapeutic services and helps our entire community maintain as much balance as possible during this difficult time.

We heard from both staff and families that our remote day each Wednesday provides an important respite from masks and other PPE, and limits the risks and stress that crop up during in-person learning. Additionally, this pause brings us through the upcoming holiday season where many health experts expect a continued rise in COVID19 cases and brings us further through cold and flu season. Finally, members throughout our community see the value in continuing to practice and improve our remote teaching and learning skills so we are well-prepared in the event that we need to move to a fully remote period.

We have not arrived at this decision lightly. We know that it will be a hardship for some of our Cotting School families. We also recognize that this will be disappointing to many Cotting faculty members who long to be back in the building. Our primary goal throughout this pandemic has been the health and safety of our community. We believe that a pause at Phase 2 until mid-January supports that objective and the physical and

mental health of our staff and students. We will continue to communicate with you as we near the New Year. Thank you, again, for the support and collaboration from all members of our community. We are all in this together and value the work that everyone is doing to keep Cotting safe and healthy.

Best regards,

Bridget Irish
Vice President & Chief Operating Officer

Cotting School will continue a Phase 2 school schedule and will not move to Phase 3 on November 3, 2020. (Update as of 10/26/20)

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