

Monday, September 28th

Dear Friends,

As most of you are aware, the COVID Task Force, College of Teachers, and TWEA Board of Trustees have been diligently working on our reopening plans for in-person learning. Thank you to those who took the time to respond to the recent poll, and to all who have reached out to the Task Force and other individuals to share your concerns and your hopes. Mostly, **thank you** for sticking with us during this extraordinarily difficult time.

The poll results were not surprising: a majority of families are ready to return to in-person learning on campus, some are not sure, and some are not ready at this time. With this in mind, and with a deep desire to proceed with the utmost of caution and care, we are announcing the following plan:

- **Three Grades classes, an upper, lower, and middle will begin on campus next week, Monday, October 5th, with half days.** For a variety of reasons, **these classes will be Grades 2, 5, and 8.** This will give us a chance to ease into the program, still support distance learning with specialty subjects in the afternoon, and keep an eye on the metrics. These classes can expect more information from their teachers in the next few days.
- **The remaining Grades classes will be staged to begin in-person learning after the Fall Break, exact dates TBD.** This approach will allow us to watch the metrics, give us a chance to perfect our in-person program, and respond to the needs of each class, socially, pedagogically, and logistically. We will give families at least one week's notice to prepare for this shift.
- **Early Childhood will add another cohort to begin Monday, October 19th.** If you are interested in joining this cohort, please contact Tessa at gradesadmin@tucsonwaldorf.org. **Please note:** 1. We are prioritizing enrollment for faculty children and current Sky Garden, 2. We are offering 3:30 pick up only, 3. This class is NOT CONTINUOUS. New placements will be considered when EC opens in full.
- **The Essential Care program will continue to operate to meet the needs of families who need it:** essential workers or those already enrolled, because siblings have started in-person learning, or to accommodate full-day care during a half-day schedule. Remember that Essential Child Care will be taking the Fall Break.
- **We have asked the Finance committee to approve the extension of the “Withdraw by” date in the TADS contracts,** knowing that these decisions can be extremely difficult for families to make. We certainly don't want to lose families at this point because of this added pressure that we can relieve. **We will keep you posted about that extension.**

We are aware that some of you will be unsatisfied with anything less than a fully-formed plan; however, this incremental beginning to the staged reopening allows us to answer the cry we have heard from you — school needs to reopen! Certainly, there will be details to work out but the metrics and protocols are in place; we feel confident that the children will be as safe as possible at school. Then we will have hard evidence to help us move forward toward a full reopening of campus. Additionally, if we have learned anything during this pandemic, it is to be

flexible, patient, and ready to make decisions that may need to be altered. Things change rapidly, but our steady path forward — with continued care, thought, and open communication — will get us through. We have made it this far, with so much gratitude to each of you, and we are confident we can get through this next phase together!

Warmly,

Leadership Council