



SAINT IGNATIUS

Cleveland • Jesuit • 1886

11.19.20
A.M.D.G.

Dear Parents,

Peace of Christ.

I write to communicate Saint Ignatius High School's plans moving forward between Thanksgiving and the end of Christmas break and for the beginning of the second semester.

Schedule Plans Moving Forward

After deep consultation with our medical experts and a review of the data, the academic administrative team and school administration determined that the most prudent way for us to proceed as a community is as follows:

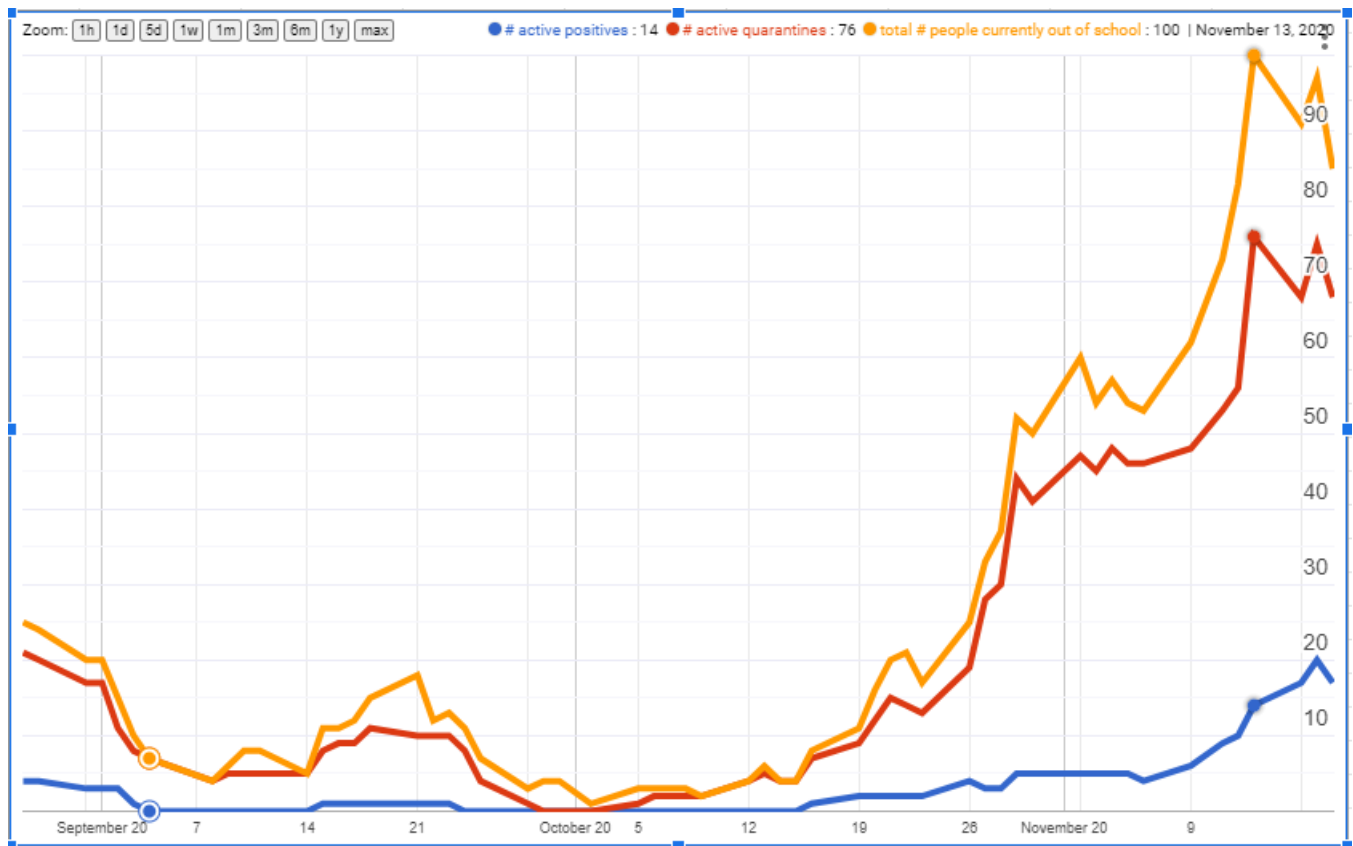
- From **November 30** through **December 18**, our classes and exams will be conducted virtually, and we will follow the Off Campus schedule.
- On **January 4, 2021**, classes will resume virtually for one week to allow trailing positive cases to be discovered and properly isolated.
- On **January, 11, 2021**, we will return to our On Campus schedule with the A/B rotation.
- Once we return in January, we will reevaluate our plans and consult with our medical team.

Rationale

On Tuesday, November 17th, members of our Administration met with Dr. Robert Salata, M.D. from University Hospitals (UH). As previously communicated, Dr. Salata is the Physician in Chief and Master Clinician in Infectious Diseases at UH and a leading epidemiologist in the world who has consulted with us since June of 2020. Currently, he is part of the team leading the study of the Pfizer vaccine for COVID-19. Dr. Salata also knows our community intimately as his four sons attended Saint Ignatius in the 1990s and 2000s.

Dr. Salata strongly recommended that we remain in virtual learning between the holidays. He described the current situation as “bleak” and the third wave of the virus -- the first being in March and the second in July -- as the “worst.”

We are all aware of the explosion of cases across Cuyahoga County, the state of Ohio, and the country. Our internal cases as a school continue to rise and are consistent with the broader community. Please note the graph below which illustrates the data on our campus:



With many, though not all, families planning to gather over the Thanksgiving holiday and some traveling, we anticipate that these numbers will continue to rise both externally and internally for the foreseeable future.

While we are not seeing student-to-student spread in school, each student case results in an average of 8-10 additional students required to quarantine based on the Ohio Department of Health's contact tracing guidelines. Furthermore, the virus remains contagious 24-48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms.

Returning to in-person learning, something that we all desire, would simply result in more quarantines, which in and of themselves, create disappointment, anxiety, frustration and concern among our students, families and teachers. And just because we *can* return does not mean we *ought* to return.

Saint Ignatius High School is a community that is interconnected with many other communities -- families, cities, counties, job locations, other schools, etc. We must do our part to help slow the spread of the virus. Unlike the beginning of the school year, the immediate future includes three holidays that create an environment where families -- both local and from out of town -- will gather, increasing the likelihood of greater spread.

Our decision is grounded in the belief that the overall health and well being of our entire community -- students, faculty, staff, and families -- is primary. Throughout our extensive deliberations, conversations, and discernment, we deeply considered the following: the advice of medical experts; student and faculty mental and physical health; parent desires and needs; our virtual instruction capabilities now as compared to those of March 2020; the realities of our primary classroom buildings; the recent stay-at-home orders from Lorain and Cuyahoga counties; and many more factors. The process was thorough, deep, and rooted in data and our shared values.

There is no pedagogical debate about whether or not in-person learning is more desirable than remote. The greatest concern for our community right now is the health and safety of our people. Furthermore, our faculty spent a significant amount of time, energy and resources (over 7,000 hours) over the summer to prepare for this moment, which, frankly, we thought would have occurred in September or October. They are prepared.

Your son's education will continue at a high level, just as it has the last three months. Our decision provides predictability and a clear way of proceeding that will enable teachers to effectively plan and engage students in a meaningful way. Plans regarding final exams will be shared at a later date.

I am fully confident in our exceptional faculty's ability to deliver a rigorous learning experience for our students to complete the semester.

Extracurriculars

We will continue to cautiously proceed with limited extracurricular activities and athletics. Unlike gathering over 750 people on campus at a time, these activities gather in smaller groups and cohorts. We also know that students have especially sacrificed so much during this historic pandemic, and we feel compelled to do our best to keep these outlets going.

How You May Help & Partner with Us

According to Dr. Salata and other medical experts, the virus continues to spread at large family gatherings, bars and restaurants, at the gym, and other social gatherings. We ask parents to continue to partner with the school and the larger community for the betterment of the common good by:

- continuing to wear masks in public
- avoiding large gatherings
- practicing physical distancing
- washing and disinfecting your hands regularly
- continuing to report positive cases throughout the entirety of our remote learning and break to our community by completing this [form](#).

While travel is being discouraged by the [CDC](#), we understand that some families have plans to travel for or around the holidays. If your family plans to travel near the New Year, we ask that you inform us of your travel plans by completing this [travel form](#). Your son will need to quarantine for fourteen days from the date of his return to Cleveland before returning to campus in January.

Finally, as we draw near to Advent and the season of hope, let us be grateful for the several months of in person learning that we collectively achieved at Saint Ignatius High School, for the remarkable work of medical professionals, scientists, first responders, and teachers who have gone to extraordinary lengths for our communities. Brighter days are ahead for all of us.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony T. Fior '02". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and a distinct '02' at the end.

Dr. Anthony T. Fior '02
Principal