



A Letter from Burgundy's Admin Team: Questions and Answers

How can we get needed support?

Tuition: [Anne-Marie Schmidt](#)

Technology: [Joe Peacock](#)

Counseling and consultation, mental health referrals, equity questions: [Pat Harden](#)

Need to pick up something on campus: Contact the appropriate staff or admin who can help.

Lower School learning support: [Barb Turner](#)

Middle School learning support: [Chiquita McCoy](#)

Lower School Head: [Elizabeth Lener](#)

Middle School Head: [Jared Givarz](#)

Summer Day Camp questions: [Summer Day Camp Email](#)

Communications & Social Media: [Christen Kinard](#)

Will we extend the school year?

- We do not currently expect to extend the school year.
- In a worst case type scenario, if public schools decide to run classes through the summer or even through June, or in August, if the pandemic ran through summer, we could consider running classes for an extra week near the start or end of summer, as a means of bridging to the next school year.
- In a best case scenario, if the closures of school campuses due to the pandemic were to be lifted at some point, even in early June, then we likely would return to school on campus for whatever assessments and closing rituals we could accomplish. This is a scenario where adding a week or a few days in June might be sensible.

How will students be promoted to the next grade? Will we assess them for readiness?

- Virginia and other states will have to relax the regular mandated minimum number of days in school requirements, and many may forgo standardized testing.
- We are not going to do 4th-7th grade ERB testing this spring but may consider doing testing in the fall.
- We may use in-house year-end assessments to help us plan most effectively for fall.
- We will promote students who previously were on track to be promoted and then 'meet them where they are' next school year; and we'll continue to discuss best placement

regarding developmental readiness questions where conversations already were underway.

- The whole country and whole world will be dealing similarly with similar challenges, we believe.

How are we feeling about remote learning? How successful can it be in 'preparing students for the next year?'

- We acknowledge that remote learning will not be a perfect replacement for in-school learning. There are many challenges and limitations. But many can be overcome or worked around.
- We've had only a quick pilot, but we've learned a good bit already from teacher and parent feedback. Themes thus far include a need and desire for more social and face-to-face time for students with students and with teachers and more synchronous (real-time) teaching.
- We have to be realistic about what children, parents/caregivers, and teachers themselves can manage, particularly as some parents and teachers are supervising multiple children and learning plans while also working from home, and some families and teachers may be dealing with illness and other issues.
- Remote learning will have its strengths and liabilities, and we have to differentiate at home and from the school side to meet kids where they are...and be fair and equitable.
- There is high potential for individualization and self-pacing, even as there are many challenges.
- The remote learning model will improve as we go. We'll look to resources and be alert to fatigue and other challenges the longer we go.
- We'll have to continue to take feedback and demonstrate flexibility as well as purposefulness.

Are there other types of support we can offer students and families?

- We're trying to give special, regular attention through our student support staff to some students who may be more vulnerable academically or otherwise.
- We can work with ExDay and ExDay enrichment and contractors, along with Cove staff, to determine if there are services we can be offering in the regular 'after-school' afternoon hours.

Will we be able to run our Summer Day Camp and Cove Camps as scheduled?

- We believe we will run our camps, possibly with a shorter season or smaller scale, in a worst-case scenario, such as if public schools have mandatory summer schools.
 - We doubt there would be public schools in session for more than a few weeks total in June and/or August. But we'll see.

- We can aspire to a decision by May 15 about the start/status of both the day camp and Cove (BCWS) camp.

What about refund policies?

- We won't be refunding school tuition, because we're still operating our school and working to run an adapted academic program remotely.
- We continue to strive to offer the best of Burgundy that we can offer in a very trying set of circumstances, while honoring the realities faced by families including our teachers and their families.
 - Teachers are working as hard or harder than ever, as are administrators and staff.
 - Like many workers across the planet, our employees are working from home and doing their best to support the Burgundy mission.
 - Regarding our camps, extended day and enrichments, we are evaluating refund policies.
 - Families encountering major financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic can reach out to Kathy Miller, Director of Finance and Operations.

How is Burgundy managing financially?

- We are in decent shape, managing operations carefully, taking care of our employees as best we can.
- We have nearly 250 students enrolled for next school year, not bad, given the current crisis; and additional enrollments, once the pandemic is under control, are likely...
- Summer Day Camp, a major source of revenue, before the pandemic response recently was way ahead in enrollments as compared to recent years and continues to enroll.
- The closure of the physical campus reduces a few expenses like buses for field trips, sports, and Cove trips, though the bulk of our expenses are frontloaded.
- We are prepared to help some families with tuition commitments as we have previously.
- We are maintaining the strongest possible Burgundy value proposition, through hard work and creativity, during this very challenging time, and that will help keep us strong as a school.

How are employees doing?

- It's very hard, people are disoriented and multi-tasking at home and feeling the negative effects of the challenges and reduced services befalling all of us.
- Many of our faculty and staff are also parents; some of us have young and/or vulnerable children as well as older, vulnerable parents.
- Still, generally we've had a very committed and uncomplaining response to a crisis. Pretty incredible.

Will 8th graders have a graduation? What about other Burgundy rights of passage?

- Yes, no matter what. We will hold a graduation at an appropriate time. What it will look like and when it will take place are in question, of course.
- If a reasonably timely in-person graduation looks impossible, we will use our Burgundy ingenuity to create something timely, memorable and accessible to everyone.
- The same ingenuity must be applied to other special events and rites of passage.
- Cove trips, of course, at present look like they are not happening, which is very sad, and the same is true for Wilderness Adventure. The BCWS staff are considering ways to offer fresh-air activities.

Any other budget/finance info?

- We are sending and executing employee contracts.
- Normal and potential belt-tightening and working through each department budget and staffing to evaluate our situation is occurring and continues through the spring.