



UNIVERSAL FAMILY OF SCHOOLS

Universal Alcorn • Universal Audenried • Universal Bluford
Universal Creighton • Universal Daroff • Universal Institute • Universal Vare

January 4, 2021

Dear Universal Families,

Thank you for your continued patience during this evolving situation. As with all our work, student and staff safety are our highest priority. Due to recent events with the increasing number of coronavirus (COVID-19) positive cases in the Philadelphia region, the increased positivity rate since late November 2020, and the arrival of the COVID-19 variant in the United States, we are taking the necessary precautions to prevent the spread of illness.

As we negotiate this uncharted territory, we believe that the time has come for the Universal Family of Schools to make an important decision. Virtual instruction will continue indefinitely. In November 2020, I notified you that we anticipated returning to in-person instruction on January 25, 2021. However, our plans to do so were contingent upon doing so safely and with minimal risk to students and staff's health and safety.

Presently the risks of returning to in-person instruction outweigh the rewards. Great care and research went into this decision; however, we regret the hardships; this may continue to cause some families. At this time, we believe that is the right step to take for the health and safety of our families, employees, and the community at large — primarily to protect our students and employees who are immunosuppressed or at greater risk due to age and other reasons.

We are committed to providing you with timely and accurate updates on our public health authorities' best recommendations and guidance. We'll continue monitoring the situation and will proceed accordingly. In the meantime, we encourage everyone to access the latest, most accurate information about COVID-19 from the World Health Organization (<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>), the CDC (www.cdc.gov/covid-19), and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (<https://www.phila.gov/programs/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/testing-and-data/#/>).

Sincerely,

Dr. Penny Nixon
Superintendent/CEO of Universal Schools