



## CHRISTIAN BROTHERS ACADEMY

850 Newman Springs Road • Lincroft, NJ 07738-1698

CBA Community,

Unfortunately we have once again reached a combination of circumstances that, under the current NJDOH rules, will not allow us to remain open for in-person instruction. In addition to the three cases I informed you of on Monday, we have been notified of three more positive cases, as well as additional individuals with test results pending. This brings our current total of confirmed COVID cases within fourteen days, involving people who have been present in the building, to six (6). Persons considered to have been in close contact with the latest positive people have been notified separately from this message and given quarantine instructions; if you did not receive a message to that effect, you/ your son is not considered to have been in close contact.

Two of the last three positive cases, and some additional possibilities with results pending, are faculty members, requiring the quarantine of a number of other faculty and staff. This situation, together with faculty who have been unable to return to school after Christmas break, either because they tested positive or because they've been quarantined due to exposure, renders the operation of in-person instruction nearly impossible. There are simply not enough faculty and staff to run the school in a productive way. Furthermore, over one third of our student body has chosen to go on virtual instruction at this point, making for a very disjointed classroom environment. Lastly, COVID cases in our region are at their highest levels since the early days of the pandemic, greatly increasing the potential for exposure and putting any effort on our part to continue in-person, on tenuous ground.

In view of aforementioned circumstances, CBA's entire student body will move to the fully remote, online learning schedule beginning tomorrow, January 15th, and continue online through Friday, January 29th. Our first day back on campus will therefore be Monday, February 1st. Moving forward in the near future we could be looking at a "two weeks in school, followed by two weeks online" model. That is not our wish, but it seems to be how things may work out. We still feel it is better from a mental health standpoint to afford students the opportunity to come to school, interact with their friends and teachers in person, even for these short periods, than to simply remain fully online indefinitely. We are hopeful that vaccination appointments will soon open up for K-12 educators, who are in phase 1-B of the NJ vaccination program. This will be a step in the direction of keeping the school open for longer periods of time.

Making this move now because of our staffing situation, should allow the continuance of our athletic programs and some extracurricular programs, which are not necessarily impacted by the current limitations of our workforce. Moving to virtual instruction in a time where the COVID numbers are spiking will also reduce the potential exposure to the students involved with athletics



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and extracurriculars, allowing them to continue, as well as reduce the potential for those students to expose others in school. We hope at least to be able to continue to provide some of these opportunities to students in these smaller, controlled environments, which can be isolated cohorts.

Again, we are hopeful that there is light in view at the end of the tunnel, but we are sadly just not there yet. We pray that the COVID numbers in our area will decline soon and that the vaccine will become more widely available. In the meantime, let us continue to engage in best practices for preventing COVID spread.

Please join me in praying that those students and faculty who are COVID positive experience mild symptoms, and have a speedy and full recovery.

Thank you again for your continued cooperation and efforts during these difficult times.

God Bless,

R. Fales