



January 25, 2021

Dear Stokes School Community,

The question of when and how to reopen schools and businesses continues to be at the forefront of national and local conversations. Even within our own community, balancing issues of students' academic needs, families' needs, and the safety of our scholars and staff is a daunting task.

While we are encouraged by the emerging national COVID-19 response strategy, we still face a long road of recovery until we get to the end of the pandemic. The distribution and administration of COVID -19 vaccines will be tremendously helpful in this process. Locally, some teachers and school staff became eligible for vaccine appointments beginning on January 25, however, as in prior phases of the vaccine rollout, demand has outpaced supply.

Despite the uncertainties, we are confident that we can safely open for in-person learning on a limited basis beginning in our third trimester, March 22, 2021. To maintain safe social distancing in our indoor spaces, we will only be able to have 36 students and 10 teaching staff across both campuses at one time. Members of our academic, student support, specialized education, and language learning staff have been meeting over a period of months to develop criteria to decide how to equitably allocate these in-person learning spaces. The factors under consideration include students who are identified as educationally at-risk, students with existing IEP and 504 plans, and students who are without adult supervision while at home during the day.

In addition to the cohort of scholars who will attend in-person learning, we also plan to invite all K-5 students to the school in small groups for the spring NWEA reading and math testing. By administering these assessments in as close to a normal environment as possible, we will gather important data that will form the basis of our educational recovery plan. We will share more information about testing as the time gets closer.

We recognize the ongoing hardship that the pandemic imposes on our scholars and families. Our goal is to serve our community in a way that mitigates current and future harm. We regret that we cannot welcome all scholars back in person this school year. If your scholar or your family has unmet needs that the school can support, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Erika Bryant". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "E" and "B".

Erika Bryant
Executive Director