



April 23, 2020

Dear BFS Community,

It is my hope that this message finds you healthy and safe as we continue to navigate the challenges of our current reality. I am deeply appreciative of all that families and colleagues are doing to ensure that the experiences of all children, from our youngest to oldest, are being cared for and that their social emotional health and well-being remain at the center of all that we do.

After much discernment and consideration, the Board of Trustees and I have reached unity on the decision that we will operate under our remote learning Virtual BFS plan for the remainder of the year, and BFS's facilities will remain closed. As we have listened to counsel for weeks from public health experts, we have determined that we simply cannot reconvene in our physical spaces this semester.

With COVID-19 cases still ongoing in New York and throughout the country and world, we know that we are called to support all measures that will help to mitigate spread and uphold the health of all in our community and beyond. We are dismayed by the need to make this decision, and yet, we recognize that as educators, we are called to make safety our number one priority.

I know that this decision, even if you had already suspected that it could happen, is difficult to absorb because we miss one another. We miss seeing students roam the hallways and chatter along the way. We miss the vibrant and immersive conversations coming from classrooms. We miss our families coming in the mornings, connecting, sharing cups of coffee and dialogue. We miss the bustling pick-up and our afterschool activities. We simply miss our BFS home.

However, with this decision also comes a helpful clarity because it assists us in tapping into our resourcefulness, resilience, and collaborative nature as a school. It allows us to come together in the spirit of designing the best possible version of our school during its remaining spring weeks. As we have already started doing, we commit to thinking about our special end of year celebrations and traditions and ensuring that they flourish. We commit to making sure that our students transitioning to different stages, and especially our Seniors, who are en route to their alumni identities, are abundantly celebrated and honored for their many contributions to our school. The educational journey for all of our students has been a meaningful one throughout their time at BFS thus far, and the time ahead will acknowledge, pronounce, and celebrate all that they have accomplished and given of themselves.

Over the coming days and weeks, there will be several committees responsible for reimagining all end-of-year milestones of our BFS experience. Our efforts will be comprehensive, and they will seek to engage the voices of students, colleagues, and families as appropriate. We will communicate regularly as the ideas unfold, and we will continue to answer your questions as they arise. To that end, we have completed an FAQs document (please see your email for this document) that provides responses to many. Most importantly, we will do *all* possible to lean on the existing wisdom, creativity, and fervor to create something spectacular together.

While this pandemic has been disruptive to all aspects of our lived experience as we have known it, it will not diminish our light. Our inner Lights are ours to connect to - and connect we will - as we rise to meet the challenge of this historic time. We not only will get through this; we will be stronger, closer, and more centered as a result of it. Our Brooklyn Friends School Mission and Quaker Values have sustained us for 152 years, and they will not desert us now.

We are holding our community and the world in the Light.

In peace and friendship,
in partnership with the Board of Trustees

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Crissy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the "C" being particularly large and stylized.

Crissy Cáceres
Head of School