Dear Overlake Community,

The 2020-21 school year will start at Overlake on August 31 with all students in our distance learning model, *Overlake Online*, until it is deemed safe to return to campus.

This decision was not an easy one to make as fundamentally students learn best alongside one another and in collaboration with one another and their teachers. But this week's recommendations for schools by Governor Jay Inslee made it necessary for us to begin the year online.

The Governor's recommendations place counties into three categories – low, medium, and high based on infection rates and ongoing cases of COVID-19. Currently, King County remains at high risk with the number of active cases. With this delineation, the risk is too high to bring back our students, faculty and staff to campus at this time even with the various COVID safety measures we have put in place.

We will revisit this decision at the end of September and assess where the transmission rate is at that point. We have spent the summer preparing for a hybrid model of teaching and when we are able to return to campus with less risk, we will move to this mode of instruction and have students returning to campus in a staggered approach.

Our faculty and staff will now turn their attention to online teaching and learning. The professional development work that faculty did this summer has set us up well to be ready for this type of instruction.

We will be providing more details next week about what families can expect in those first few days back at school, how we will welcome new students and families to our Owl community, and how we will recognize the class of 2021.

We plan on scheduling several Town Halls in the coming weeks to provide you with the opportunity to ask questions of our team.

Until then, know that we continue to work to ensure that our students, faculty, staff, and families have an Overlake experience both academically and socially robust to foster our strong Overlake community, a place where we all thrive.

Warmly,

Matt