



July 31, 2020

Dear Westminster Families,

Westminster is a school that values essential questions. They guide our planning, our discussion, and our decisions, and there is no question more essential than this: What's best for kids? We never lost sight of the importance of this question as we studied all summer how we should reopen school. Here's what we know to be true.

1. Coronavirus is real and scary.
2. The virus has gotten worse in Oklahoma City this summer.
3. There are things that can be done to keep us all safer. We have done and will continue to do those things at Westminster School.
4. Coronavirus has become a political issue. Instead of uniting our country as most crises do, it has exacerbated polarization.
5. The summer slide in educational achievement, like coronavirus, is real. Kids need to be back in school.
6. Kids learn best how to think for themselves and engage with each other while working with caring and talented teachers at Westminster School.

As we've grappled with this question—"What's best for kids?"—throughout the summer, we laid out five plans, or scenarios, for reopening. Most of the summer we were in Scenario I. Earlier this month we shifted to Scenario IIA. Today we are offering another option to our families. You will receive a follow-up email from your division director giving you more details about this new option. Briefly, 3-Day through 1<sup>st</sup> grade will open in Scenario IIB—half grade pods. There is no standard remote option for our youngest children because, quite simply, it's not what's best for them. For children in the 2<sup>nd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades, we will open in either Scenario IIA or IIB and a remote option may be available for those children who want it. The email from your child's division director will lay out the details of how it would work and how to opt in.

In my letter to you over spring break, I said that if we all relied on a growth mindset and community generosity, we'd overcome Covid-19. Kids, teachers, and parents—all of us—showed a remarkable growth mindset as we made remote learning work in April and May. We showed the generosity of the Westminster community in the celebration of our 2020 graduates in June. Now, as we near the end of July, we move into a new year. We're excited about your children returning to school this fall, we're eager to get

started, and we appreciate your support, your adaptability, and your generosity as we continue to seek what's best for kids.

Sincerely,  
Bob Vernon

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