

Friday, September 25, 2020

Dear Parents,

I would like to wish you a meaningful Yom Kippur and an easy fast.

Boruch Hashem, school has gotten off to an excellent start, both from an educational and a health perspective. Your partnership in helping us adhere to our covid protocols has been instrumental in our successful beginning.

“Eizehu chacham, haroeh es hanolad - who is the wise person, one who is cognizant of the future.” The Yom Tovs of Sukkos and Simchas Torah are known for being Yom Tovs of special Simcha. While they provide a tremendous opportunity for religious growth, they also present tremendous challenges given the covid environment. In a “normal” year this Simcha is expressed in numerous social interactions including hosting/being guests, extended-family get-togethers, Sukkah hops, Chol HaMoed trips, dancing and singing on Simchas Torah, and much more.

Recognizing the continuing evolution of the covid situation, we at YGW have been discussing the policies and procedures necessary to continue our learning in a safe environment for our students and staff after Sukkos break.

The Girls Division will conduct remote learning for all classes beginning on Tuesday, October 13. This is necessitated by community developments beyond the Yeshiva’s control. The Girls Division will re-open for in-person learning on Monday, October 26.

The Boys Division will continue its current hybrid-learning program of half-day in-person studies after Yom Tov on Tuesday, October 13, as scheduled. The expansion to the in-person General Studies program is scheduled to begin Monday, October 26. Please see the policy below for the boys’ requirements to return to campus on the scheduled return date of October 13.

The leadership team, in consultation with our medical advisors and the Rosh HaYeshiva, has put forth the following policy that will be in effect for the return to in-person school:

- Travel and hosting guests outside of one's immediate family is discouraged.
- All students and staff will be required to complete an extended Health Screening before being cleared to come to campus after Yom Tov.
- If the family/student chooses to travel outside of the Greater Washington community, a student may be required to start after Yom Tov on distance learning up to a time of 14 days. If, and for how long, a student will have to do distance learning will be dependent upon the level of risk incurred by the travel. It will take into account the specific location, preventive COVID- 19 behaviors, mode of travel, date of return and other factors. If your family travels, you must be in touch with the YGW covid team at CovidBoys@yeshiva.edu before your son is able to return to in-person school.
- If your family hosts guests from outside the community, a temporary move to distance learning will be required. The only exception to this rule is in a case where the out-of-town guests practiced social distancing, wore a mask outside at all times, avoided large gatherings for a week prior to arrival in Greater Washington, and received a negative covid PCR test upon or immediately prior to their arrival. If you had guests from outside the community, you must be in touch with the YGW covid team at CovidBoys@yeshiva.edu before your son is able to return to in-person school to make sure proper protocols were followed.

- Additionally, all students must daven in socially distanced minyanim over the entire Yom Tov with full compliance in mask usage. If compliance with masks and distancing cannot be enforced, a quarantine period will be required.

These guidelines are in consonance with our intention to continue the safe and positive educational environment implemented for this academic year.

We will update you as the changing situation warrants. All policies, including updates that have occurred since our opening, are available in our Covid Resource Center at www.yeshiva.edu . If there are specific questions not covered in the policies or FAQ, please contact your division's covid liaison at CovidBoys@yeshiva.edu or CovidGirls@yeshiva.edu .

I thank you for your continued cooperation, pray for the speedy end of the *mageifa*, and wish you and your families a *gmar chasima tova*.

Rabbi Yitzchok Merkin
Headmaster