

HEALTHY DEERFIELD

WINTER TERM



Healthy Deerfield Expectations for Students and Families Over the Break and Traveling From and To Campus:

We were successful opening school this fall because of the high levels of cooperation we received from you—our students and families—prior to arrival to campus. We are deeply grateful for that support. Because our students avoided large gatherings, observed physical distancing, and followed other common-sense strategies such as masking and excellent hand hygiene, they arrived to campus healthy and virus free.

Now, as infection rates increase across the United States and internationally, these simple expectations are even more important, so we ask that all students and families redouble their efforts now and after the holidays. During the time leading up to students’ arrival for Winter Term, we will ask them to update their daily symptom checker to help encourage healthy habits, to avoid large gatherings, and to follow the expectations outlined in [our community pledges](#).

We ask that students arriving by plane or public transportation take special precautions: We will provide surgical masks and wipes to all students before they leave campus, and share a new Healthy Deerfield video with some helpful travel suggestions. Please also be aware of the State of Massachusetts’ current travel order: [details may be found here](#).

Pre-Arrival Testing:

Prior to arriving on campus for the Winter Term, students must take two PCR tests—a slight change from our fall approach. These tests will be provided by Deerfield through Vault Health—the same testing provider we used for our pre-arrival tests in the fall.

As in the fall, families must log into Vault, this time using the same account credentials from the fall. **No student should travel to campus until they have received notification of a *second* negative result from Vault.**

The first test should be taken and mailed on January 2; the second should be taken and mailed on January 5.

Our international families should follow the same protocol (two tests) and timeline. Unfortunately, because Vault Health cannot mail tests to destinations outside the United States, international students will need to obtain a COVID-19 PCR test through an alternative vendor, and bring to campus documentation of their negative test results. Our international

families should be sure to use a testing site that has been approved/certified by their government. We also encourage our international families to contact the [Chen Center](#) or the [Student Life Office](#) should they have any questions or if we may support them in any way.

Winter Arrivals: Streamlining Our Approach

You might recall that the Fall Term included three distinct phases: Quarantine, Quiet, and Emerging. At this time, we have studied each of these phases closely with the student experience foremost in mind. That careful review now allows us to refine our approach to the opening days of the Winter Term—accelerating our progress to “Emerging” while also preserving the community health requirements of “Quarantine.”

Saturday, January 9 and Sunday, January 10

Our partner lab at Rutgers processes Covid-19 tests seven days a week, but they do not accept samples on Sunday. Therefore, if possible, ***we ask all Saturday returners (Juniors and Seniors) to arrive on campus before 2:00 pm.*** This will allow us to collect samples, get them to the lab via courier before it closes on Saturday night at 9:00 pm, and then have them processed beginning on Sunday morning. Samples from students who return on Sunday will also be

delivered to the lab by courier for processing that will begin on Monday morning.

As in the fall, to help ensure a smooth transition to campus, we ask that students limit the amount of luggage they bring back to campus. And, we again ask that parents remain with their cars and refrain from going into dorms.

Late Arrivals and Approach to Onboarding:

Students who encounter travel cancellations or who are not able to arrive on campus on their designated days may “onboard” beginning on January 19 and each subsequent Tuesday thereafter. That process involves testing and a three-day supportive quarantine period in the Health Center before transitioning back into dorm life.

TIMELINE



MID DECEMBER

Order tests from Vault

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2

Take and mail test No. 1

MONDAY, JANUARY 4

Winter Term begins remotely

TUESDAY, JANUARY 5

Take and mail test No. 2

SATURDAY, JANUARY 9

Juniors & Seniors arrive on campus

SUNDAY, JANUARY 10

9th & 10th Graders arrive on campus

DAYS 1-3

Arrival Quarantine: Safe and Brief

We anticipate that arrival Quarantine, which is the time it takes for all students in a Squad to receive negative arrival PCR test results, will last two to three days. Recognizing the challenges of our fall arrival Quarantine, we're making some adjustments for this phase in winter.

- Students will be allowed outside during arrival Quarantine in supervised Squad-based groups of three to four as long as they remain masked and distanced from other students. This adjustment will allow for some socializing and will also allow faculty and advisors to interact more naturally with students.
- We will modify our approach to meals so that all students have two warm meals each day; these meals will be from the Dining Hall, local take-out providers, and food trucks.

DAYS 4-6

Transition to a “New Quiet:”

After all students have received negative arrival PCR results, we'll transition to a new phase of campus life: “New Quiet.” Classes will begin in person—indoors with strict adherence to masking and distancing requirements; students will spend time together on their halls—masked and distanced; they'll pick up food from the Dining Hall and eat in their rooms; out of the dorm, they can socialize outside their Squads, as long as all students are masked and distanced; there will be many opportunities for exercise such as walking, running, and hiking.

DAYS 7-14

Emerging

“Emerging” will begin when students receive negative results from their “Day Five Confirmation” tests; it will extend through Day 14 after their arrival on campus. Co-curriculars will begin, and Squads will eat together in the Dining Hall. All students will be able to spend time together, masked and distanced, in indoor spaces. The library and other spaces—including the Athletics Complex, the lobby of the Hess Center, and sections of the Koch—will open to Juniors and Seniors during study hours.

DAYS 15 +

Emerging 2.0

After 14 days on campus with negative test results from students, we'll feel confident that the incubation period has passed, and we'll transition to “Emerging 2.0.” That's the “new normal” phase we've been in this fall for the past few weeks. Students will be househoused within their Squads, which will allow them to remove their masks in their halls and move in and out of one another's rooms. We'll also look to open the Greer; co-curriculars will allow intermittent contact; and, in close consultation with members of the Student Programming Committee, we'll prioritize fun and connectedness in weekend activities. ***Of course, all of these plans rely on strong community health indicators and negative test results.***

New for Winter Term! We will also make the following changes:

- Over November and December we will construct a dining pavilion directly adjacent to the Dining Hall. It will be fully winterized with state-of-the-art ventilation.
- The Dining Hall will serve breakfast and students will be able to study in this space in the morning as in years past.
- Once we establish a strong baseline for community health, we will plan for modified sit-down meals Mondays through Fridays. These will happen in two shifts with banquet seating, daily announcements, and student waiters.

- We have tightened and improved our daily academic schedule and included scheduled time for advisory, clubs, and alliance meetings.
- School Meeting will take place in the Athletics Complex's field house.
- Green and White school-wide competition will continue with frequent livestreaming of varsity-level games for families to enjoy.

- Construction of an outside skating rink will soon be underway on the lawn behind the Main School Building. It will be used by our hockey players, intramurals, and for other weekend student activities.
- Brian Barbato and his Student Programming Committee are already hard at work planning for the winter. They're exploring a wide range of activities, including the possibility of a Winter Term “KFC” and a winter carnival.

Travel On and Off Campus

All of our medical and science advisors have encouraged us to “tighten the bubble” as much as possible during the winter months. While we can never fully bubble the campus, the greater the integrity of that bubble the higher level of confidence that our campus will be secure from infection; that will provide an additional layer of protection for our community and allow our students to interact more freely.

With your support, we will continue with the restrictions we initiated this fall: limiting students’ travel off campus, and restricting travel to campus by family members and others. As part of this effort, all of our Admission Office’s outreach will remain virtual.

Welcoming Day Students

To further strengthen our campus “bubble” and ensure community health, day students who do not currently live in Academy housing will move onto campus for the term; those who do not want to live on campus will have to learn remotely. Our Physical Plant team is already working to convert a few buildings on campus into dormitory spaces.

We’re eager and excited to welcome day students to campus for these nine weeks, and we’re encouraged to know that, in this way, they’ll be able to participate in all facets of student life here at Deerfield without the burden of travel to and from campus. This change might also allow us to expand the scope of Emerging 2.0 in a way that would not have been prudent in the fall.

Update on Remote Learning

Our commitment continues to be to in-person, on-campus learning, except for those facing travel and visa restrictions and other extenuating circumstances. ***While our students will arrive back to campus on either January 9 or 10, we will commence classes online for all students on Monday, January 4, 2021***—thus, every student will be a remote learner during the first week of the term. For that week and beyond we will adopt our new provisional Winter Daily Schedule, which includes time for our Academic program and important meetings, including School Meeting and time with advisors.

For those students with extenuating circumstances, remote learning will continue to be available. We have learned much about how to deliver quality teaching to students who are online and interacting with a group of in-class students; however, we continue to improve on this front. Prior to the start of the Winter Term, our teachers will have the opportunity to share their experiences with each other so that we can be even better in the upcoming term.

In preparation for the Winter Term, on November 12, students had the chance to meet with their Winter Term instructors to get a preview of their new courses. Teachers shared any necessary learning materials with them (e.g. textbooks, workbooks, microphones, etc.). These items were also shared with the Academic Dean’s Office and will soon be sent to students who are currently remote.

We remind you that we have a Remote Learner Support Team that has been led by

Megan Hayes-Golding, our Assistant Dean for Online Learning; teachers Sheryl Koyama and Jess Pfeffer continue to provide academic support for all students. And finally, our capacity to be best prepared to support our remote learners does rely on having accurate information; please contact the Academic Dean’s Office as soon as possible if your student will be remote during the Winter Term.

Student Wellness

Though we are, indeed, uniquely fortunate to be able to offer an in-person school experience for our students, the stressors of this pandemic are real and manifest differently from student to student. So that we are equipped to offer individualized support to each, our faculty will all undergo additional training designed to address feelings of isolation and anxiety before students return to campus. As well, our Counseling Office is forming an Advisory Council of students to help inform effective, attentive support. Finally, our new schedule will allow for regular advisory meetings, thereby positioning advisors to provide steady, ongoing guidance over the full course of the term.

Contingency Planning

Given the changing health landscape, we know that we need to be prepared to modify our plans if public health indicators change or the State of Massachusetts alters its guidelines or directives. To that end we are actively planning for a variety of contingencies.

We would ask that you do the same and preserve as much flexibility as you can with travel arrangements. We remain confident in our preparation and planning, but know that we may need to change direction, alter our plans, or delay the return to campus. Should we decide to delay the return to campus, we would communicate this information to you no later than December 28. As you know, we are currently many weeks away from students returning to campus and much can change between now and then; as always, we want to make our decisions based on the most current data and information.

Thank you for your continued support.

**QUESTIONS?
Additional FAQs
may be found here:
deerfield.edu/healthydeerfield/FAQS**