



January 28, 2021

Dear Urban Families,

Since I last emailed a few weeks ago, much has changed and much remains the same – both in the world and at Urban. Reasons for optimism and frustration overlap and the proverbial "light at the end of the tunnel" seems to wax and wane by the hour. I overheard a student use the phrase "emotional whiplash" in a Zoom break-out group yesterday as she described the hours between the inauguration and a news report about COVID cases in San Francisco. I think we all can relate. Acknowledging that my letters offer more of the same, here are a couple of reminders/updates for your attention.

On the start of *Hybrid Urban*:

Mayor Breed's recent announcement that the City was lifting the stay-at-home order did not include any change or new insights into school reopening protocols or permissions. As before, only when San Francisco County shifts from the state-designated "purple tier" into the "red tier" and after a waiting period will SFPD and the County Health Officer consider "unpausing" our move to *Hybrid Urban*. We are in steady contact with SFPD and will communicate if we learn of any definitive and relevant movement from the state or county.

On the brighter side, it has been wonderful to see Urban students (150+) in athletic activities – on the roof, at the beach, in the park, on outdoor courts – and dozens of others attending weekend hikes, beach walks, al fresco art classes, etc. While certainly not a substitute for in-person classes, we're grateful for any respite from the ongoing realities of our compromised circumstances. I can't say I've observed smiling faces (masks, of course) but it's easy to interpret the body language and sparkling eyes of a young person released from Zoom and interacting with peers.

And for something un-pandemic-related...one staffing shift and one addition for next year:

Geoff Ruth has decided to step down from his administrative duties this summer and will, to the great good fortune of our students, return to the science classroom beginning in the fall. As you know, Geoff has served heroically, helping steer our academic program through the exhausting challenges of the pandemic. I am incredibly grateful that he will stay in his current role into the sunlight of a post-vaccine Urban. In addition to this shift, we plan to fill the Dean of Faculty vacancy created by Jonathan Howland's retirement last year. We are already gathering an extraordinary pool of candidates from inside and outside Urban for both positions for our hiring committees to consider, and we hope to have completed the search processes by the end of February.

As always, please do not hesitate to be in touch with questions or concerns.

Best,
Dan

Dan Miller
Head of School