

QUID NOVI

THE NEWSLETTER OF NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS



IMPORTANT CHANGES TO YOUR MASTER CALENDAR

by John Heaton, Headmaster

As we move into our final week of school—we finish the term on **December 18**—there is an important change that will affect you as we move into the New Year. **We will be extending our Christmas Holiday from January 6 to January 11.** Read on for my explanation.

First, our nursing staff continues to monitor the data made available by the local Public Health Department. We have information that is available publicly on the VDH Pandemic Metrics website that was designed to help schools make decisions, and it shows a surge in COVID-19 cases that concerns us. Perhaps this is the Thanksgiving surge that many anticipated, but whatever it is, Centra and other health care providers are taking it seriously.

Second, there are four positive COVID-19 cases in the high school in the last ten days. It is difficult to say how many of these are school related, given the widespread transmission rate. Our decision to pivot the high school to online for the term was exactly the proper call. Moreover, one faculty member has tested positive and the nursing staff has responded appropriately in this case. All of this together has affected programming, causing us to cancel our service of Lessons & Carols.

Thus, as we enter another major holiday season, the medical staff has recommended—and I concur—that it would be wise for us to alter the academic calendar in January. We never make such a change lightly and admit

that this change represents a further disruption to school life. **Our decision is to change the return date from the Christmas break from Wednesday, January 6 to Monday, January 11.** This will give us a full 14-day “quarantine” from Christmas Day, and a 10-day “quarantine” from New Year’s Day.

Our assumption is that many families will travel to visit relatives, just as they did over Thanksgiving. We can reasonably anticipate another increase of cases in our community. Our strategy, therefore, provides families with a built-in time frame to return home and monitor their children before sending them back to school. It is quite likely that cases will surface before **Monday, January 11.** A delayed start, therefore, will buy us extra time to suppress transmission at school.

As always, we urge you to be vigilant, careful, and reasonable in your holiday plans. Families need to be together. It’s essential to our basic need for love and care of our relatives. We also need to care for our school community and take steps to maintain healthy practices. Remember, our goal is to stay in school. Even a small outbreak across grades can quarantine multiple cohorts of children, so we ask you not to let down your guard.

A separate advisory will be sent to athletes for more information on how they are affected by the calendar change.



FUNDRAISING REPORT

	GOAL	LAST WEEK		THIS WEEK
Annual Fund	\$30,000	\$27,247		\$35,497
General Scholarship	\$10,000	\$13,922		\$14,440
Foundation	\$200,000	Pledged	\$364,500	\$385,000
		Received	\$67,566	\$190,454

Please consider New Covenant Schools in your giving. All gifts are tax-deductible to the extent that the law provides. Donations may be given through cash, check, stock transfers, or IRA distributions. Contact **Dayna Renalds** in the Development Office for more information.

E T C E T E R A

EVERYONE

LUNCH ORDERING

Lunch ordering has reopened after briefly shutting down last week. Since school will reopen **January 11** rather than **January 6**, any orders already placed for **January 6-8** will be cancelled and credited to your lunch account. The deadline has been extended to **December 31**. Since the deadline falls during Christmas break, this is your final reminder! After the deadline, parents are unable to place orders, so please order in a timely manner. Helpful information on the ordering process may be found on the school website by clicking **My NCS>My Meal Plan** and then **View Instructions for Ordering Lunch**. Questions may be directed to dwilliamson@newcovenantschools.org.

CHRISTMAS DRESS DAY

All students, faculty and staff are invited to dress in Christmas attire on **Friday, December 18**. They may wear a Christmas themed top along with jeans. Grammar School girls may wear a Christmas dress, if desired.

LOST AND FOUND

All items in the Lost and Found bins will be purged this **Thursday, December 17** before Christmas break. Take time prior to that date to go through and retrieve your child's lost items.

NEW SIBLING APPLICATIONS

The deadline for current families to submit a NEW student application has passed. You may still apply for your NEW student. Apply now to avoid potential wait pools by using this link: <https://www.newcovenantschools.org/admissions/apply-here/>

CHRISTMAS BREAK

**December 21-
January 8**
Classes resume
January 11



TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP) —APPLY NOW!

TAP is now accepting applications for the 2021-22 school year. The link to access FACTS tuition assistance applications is <https://online.factsmgmt.com/aid>. When applying, you will be asked to submit your 2019 tax returns. The fee to apply is \$35, and is charged by FACTS, not the school. Please note that applications will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis similar to last year. The deadline to apply for TAP is **January 31, 2021**, but you will benefit by filing early. **So do not delay in applying!** Please refer to an email sent on **Thursday, November 5** for detailed instructions.

CHRISTMAS BREAK SCHEDULE

School will be dismissed for Christmas Break on **Friday, December 18** at **11:00 am** for students in Pre-K-8th grades. All students return on **Monday, January 11**. Have a Merry Christmas!



YEARBOOK: SENIOR ADS

Parents of seniors,

In keeping with tradition, you can celebrate and congratulate your senior student with a custom-designed ad in the yearbook.

Just provide photos and your message and the yearbook team will do the rest. Reserve your ad by **December 18**. Photos due **January 8**.

Ads are available in half-page slots @ \$75. Contact **Mark Hernandez** at Mhernandez@newcovenantschools.org to reserve your senior's ad.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

CHRISTMAS FOOD DRIVE

The MS Student Council has organized a food drive to support the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank during this Christmas season. We will be collecting nonperishable food items during this week through **Friday, December 18**. All Middle School students are asked to participate to help the food bank and to compete with the other MS classes. **The class that brings in the most food items will receive a free dress day!**

PLEASE NOTE

The school nurse email address is: schoolnurses2020@newcovenantschools.org