

Dear Ascend Families,

Thank you for your partnership as we launched the 2020-2021 academic year. This is a school year like no other and we are so proud of what our Ascend community has already accomplished together. Our 5,700 students are learning to use their new laptops to engage in daily learning. To date, we're seeing 93% of our students in their virtual classroom each day! Early reports from our teachers are that the students are overjoyed to be learning "live" with their fellow students. We also know that there are many challenges associated with this shift to remote learning and that every family is working hard to navigate the unique circumstances this brings to their own home. We deeply appreciate everything you are doing to make this possible.

As previously communicated in the [Return to School Family Guide](#), the decision was made to start this academic year in 100% remote learning mode and then reassess the situation every six to eight weeks throughout the year to determine when and if in-person learning experiences can safely be made available to a portion of our students. As we continue to settle into remote learning during Phase One, we are also preparing for Phase Two which begins October 19. Based on several factors described below as well as input that we have gathered from staff and families via the previous surveys and town halls, we have now made the decision to continue with remote learning through Phase Two, which means that **all students will continue to learn at home at least through November 24**. While the majority of families have indicated that remote learning currently supports their family preference, we also acknowledge that there are some families who were looking forward to an earlier return to in-person learning.

Ascend believes that learning happens best when students and teachers are together in person, and we continue to monitor the situation in our community, adhere to our guiding principles, and listen to our families, staff, and leaders to determine our next steps. What we've heard is that our community will benefit from an extension of time in remote learning mode while we deepen insights drawn from the experiences of schools across the country that have resumed in-person learning, test and practice new procedures, and build community readiness and confidence in our return to in-person school.

In the meantime, we'll continue to work on the challenges some have encountered during remote learning. Thank you for your patience as we work with our technology support partners to ensure that every Ascend student has consistent, effective, and reliable technology to support their daily learning activities.

We value every member of our Ascend community and our shared passion for making every student's learning experience truly excellent. Please continue to engage with us throughout the year and let us know what's working for your

family and where we can better support you. As always, you can direct any questions, comments or suggestions to your school principal.

Sincerely,  
Lisa Margosian  
Interim CEO