

Wabash.

August 28, 2020

To the Parents of Our Wabash Men,

I'm writing late on Friday afternoon with thoughts of gratitude and concern. Like you, I wake up every day with a certain level of anxiety about whether our Wabash men are safe and healthy and wondering if they are doing all they can to maintain the health of our community.

Well, there's good news and bad news to share, and I need your help so that we can continue to keep these bright, talented young men right where they belong – here at the College.

The good news: Your sons are wearing their masks when they are out on campus and in class, and they are maintaining their distance from each other in our hallways and classrooms. They are adapting to the new normal of our time and they are adopting many of the best practices we've been teaching them since early this summer. We're getting an almost 97% participation rate in our daily symptom monitoring program, the COVID Pass app, which is fantastic.

The COVID Pass app has allowed us to quickly detect a couple of students who subsequently tested positive and have been isolated. Interestingly, the app has also identified a few urgent, non-COVID medical issues, which our doctors were able to diagnose quickly. This is why it is important that everyone use the app every day.

Our random and targeted surveillance testing is doing what we hoped it would, too. We are identifying asymptomatic students with positive COVID-19 tests, getting them in isolation, and quickly conducting contact tracing. We have been reporting these testing results in emails to the campus community and posting them on our [COVID website](#). All of this is going to plan.

Now, the not so good news: We are identifying far too many close contacts from the men who test positive. This week, we have had students test positive who had more than 20 close contacts – that's defined as spending more than 15 minutes with someone with less than six feet of distance. These numbers are far and away larger than they should be given how much we've talked about the critical importance of physical distancing. This must stop and it must stop now or we will exhaust our testing supplies and our ability to care for our students.

We have to get our young men – your sons – to take all of our recommendations and requirements seriously if we are to remain in residence.

As we have planned all along, we are asking those young men who were in close contact with someone who has tested positive to quarantine for 14 days. And in the vast majority of cases, this means sending these young men home to [quarantine](#) with family. We do not want to do this, and we know that you don't want them back at home, either. We must work together to instill in our men the importance of wearing masks AND maintaining their distance from one another if we are to maintain the health of our community.

Wabash is spending an enormous amount of money navigating our way through this pandemic so that our students can be in residence on our campus. Therefore, we are unable to issue partial housing and dining refunds for the period of time students are sent home to quarantine. We simply need to modify their behavior so that we can keep them here where they belong.

Please reach out to your son – today – and remind him how important it is to keep wearing his mask and stay at a safe distance from his brothers. This is especially important on weekends and in the evenings when they are not in a routine.

Thank you in advance for all you have done and will continue to support your sons' success here at Wabash.

Sincerely,

Scott E. Feller
President

