

THE TOWN OF
ANTIGONISH

July 29, 2020

Dear Residents of Antigonish,

First, we want to acknowledge and thank everyone for taking the time to reach out to Council on the topic of StFX reopening this fall. We have heard your concerns and we want you to know that we understand. We know many of you are looking for Town Council to firmly state that we are either for or against this decision. The truth is the Town did not get a vote in the matter and does not have the ability to overrule this decision that was made by StFX and the Province of Nova Scotia. Our responsibility now is to step up for our residents and be a part of the implementation process to ensure the plan StFX has presented is followed and properly enforced to keep our community safe.

The Town has always stated decisions like this should be made following the advice and direction of health professionals, not politicians. We have heard from our front-line health care workers at St. Martha's Regional Hospital that there are concerns regarding capacity, testing and community response related to the virus. The physicians of St. Martha's, as part of Nova Scotia Health, are in discussions with StFX to address these concerns in order to facilitate the safe return of students to Antigonish. The Town has emphasized the importance of StFX maintaining their commitment to collaboration with Nova Scotia Health and Public Health in order to address these concerns, which will determine how to move a plan forward that prioritizes the health and safety of our community.

As this situation evolves, we can guarantee you that the Town will be at the table with StFX, St. Martha's and Nova Scotia Health as a voice to share the concerns of our community. This is not an issue we are shying away from and the Town needs to be there to advocate for the people that live and work in Antigonish.

From the very beginning, the Town has followed the directives set by the province and public health officials and will continue to do so. This includes wearing masks indoors and when proper social distancing cannot be maintained, proper personal hygiene, as well as self-isolating when it is required. Whether you are a student or longtime resident - this is your responsibility to yourself, your family and your neighbours. The pandemic has presented us all with a number of challenges and we are not back to our normal yet, but one day we will be, and we need to trust in one another that we can get through this together.

Sincerely,

Mayor Boucher & Council
Town of Antigonish