Dear Xavier colleagues,

Now that we have completed the spring semester and move into the summer, I want to provide an update on plans for the fall semester, including the COVID vaccine.

As you have already heard, Xavier plans to maximize in-person instruction and activities this fall and return to as normal an environment as possible. The exact structure of instruction and activities are still to be determined, but we know that we are simply better in person. We proved that we could hold classes and live on campus during this academic year. Of course, we will continue to follow appropriate safety protocols with our aspiration to return to our cherished Xavier experience as quickly as possible.

Xavier has successfully managed the challenges that have come with the pandemic, and we will continue to meet the challenges before us as we always do – together. TriHealth has been an incredible partner, and their medical expertise and guidance have been critical factors in our community’s success. Additionally, we have seen strong adoption of the COVID-19 vaccine over the past few months, especially since late March when the majority of our undergraduate community became eligible to receive a vaccine in Ohio. Numerous vaccine clinics were hosted in Cintas Center, including a clinic specifically for Xavier students on April 7. Xavier’s final COVID Dashboard highlights that our community’s total positive active cases ended at their lowest levels of the entire academic year. Vaccinations, combined with Xavier’s health and safety protocols, have helped keep our community safe.

Looking ahead to the fall semester, Xavier University employees are urged to make every effort to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. All approved vaccines have been proven safe and effective, and vaccine appointments are readily available near Xavier’s campus. Full FDA approval of the vaccine or additional guidance from the CDC or state of Ohio may cause the University to decide to require the vaccine, so please get vaccinated now. The more vaccinated our community is, the better position we will be in this fall.

In addition to the personal protection provided by the vaccine, Xavier joins with other Catholic organizations to promote vaccination as an act of charity and solidarity with others that will help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and build immunity against the virus. TriHealth has helpful COVID-19 vaccine FAQs to address common questions or hesitations about the vaccine, and all Xavier community members are encouraged to reach out to their medical provider with specific questions or concerns.

Students have already been asked to upload their COVID-19 vaccination records and as soon as a system for managing employee COVID-19 vaccination records is identified and implemented, we will ask employees to do the same. Together, the student and employee records will help the COVID-19 Task Force and Xavier leadership understand vaccination rates in our community.
Xavier is reviewing what we’ve learned from managing COVID in our community during the last academic year, along with guidance from health partners, to make data-informed decisions. Vaccination data will help determine health and safety guidance for the Xavier community, such as surveillance testing for both students and employees in the fall.

While it has been a difficult year, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to our faculty and staff for your commitment to one another. Our *All For One* spirit has never been more evident.

I’m sure I reflect the sentiment of the Xavier community in looking forward to a more normal academic year beginning this fall.

As always, you and those you love most are in my prayers.

Michael J. Graham, S.J.
President, Xavier University