To the Brescia community,

What a year it has been! Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, our students, faculty and staff have been challenged like never before and ultimately tasked to rethink their entire university experience. We know it has not been easy.

Yet, as you have heard me say many times before, I find myself inspired each and every day by our community. Through my daily interactions, I have learned about the many ways that we have responded to the pandemic—acknowledging our struggles and celebrating our successes—while continuing to show kindness and compassion in supporting each other along this journey. This is both uplifting and a true testament to the Brescia experience.

Today, the provincial government announced that Ontario will move into a four-week province wide shutdown beginning Saturday, April 3rd, 2021. With the end of the academic year quickly approaching, we know that you have questions about the Fall semester and what you can expect for the 2021-2022 academic year. Rest assured, Fall planning has begun, with broad consultation across campus, where we are taking a proactive approach to prepare for multiple scenarios.

At this moment in time, we will delay any official communication on Fall plans for the coming days as we await further decisions on potential restrictions based on changing local/provincial public health policies as well as the increased presence of variants of concern.

As we continue to prioritize honest and transparent communications, we want our Fall announcement to reflect the reality of our current situation, while remaining optimistic for the future.

While we are very hopeful that life at Brescia and in our world will soon return to a state where we can gather in-person, we know that this will likely not be a possibility for some time, and that our community still has work to do to ensure a smooth, successful year ahead.

It is for this reason that we feel our community deserves a break. I am pleased to let you know that Brescia will be closed on both Friday, April 2nd and Monday, April 5th for the Easter holiday – reopening on Tuesday, April 6th. Some activities (online learning, essential services) will continue to run; for employees who are not able to take Easter Monday off, employees will have the flexibility to take this day in the coming weeks, as approved by your manager. Employees who have already requested this day off will see this returned to their bank of holiday hours.
In addition, to help kick-off the unofficial summer season, Brescia will be providing employees some additional wellness days. These days will occur around the Victoria Day and Canada Day long weekends, to extend our time off in an effort to relax and reset. The new summer wellness days are:

**Friday, May 21st**  
**Wednesday, June 30th**  
**Friday, July 2nd**

These days will allow for an extended Victoria Day long weekend (May 21st through 24th) as well as a five-day Canada Day break (June 30th through July 4th). During this well-earned break, we encourage our community to disconnect, get outside and spend some time with those closest to them. It’s important for us as a community to pause and relax, so that we are re-energized and inspired to continue our important work ahead.

We understand that some Brescia activities such as campus essential services will proceed as scheduled during these extended holiday closures; summer sessional courses will also continue during this period. Faculty or staff involved in these activities will be in a position to take this personal time at a later date. I want to thank and acknowledge the members of our community who are supporting our students over these extended breaks.

Our community has worked so very hard this year. We are close to the finish line at the end of the term. Students, you are in the “home stretch” and the entire community is cheering you on. I will continue to update you as plans move ahead and wish you a peaceful, relaxing long weekend.

Thank you again,

Cheryl Jensen, BSc, M.Ed.  
Interim Principal