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CSCI 77800 Ethics
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Memo - Contact Tracing

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I hope you are having a restful summer and are staying healthy and safe. I am writing today to share important safety information about the fall. As stated in our previous memo, our school and the New York City Department of Education have put a number of policies in place to ensure the safety of our students and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. We are all eager to get back into the school building, but that cannot be done without the most stringent safety protocols.

After careful consideration, it is the decision of our school's administration to **not** use contact tracing applications. We understand that this is a hot topic in the news right now, and want you to know that we did not make this decision lightly. "COVID-19 apps are mobile software applications for digital contact tracing during the COVID-19 pandemic, i.e. the process of identifying persons who may have been in contact with an infected individual." Although contact tracing provides benefits, there are also some drawbacks.

1. Access to Technology

- a. Contact tracing apps require the possession and use of a smartphone. We understand that not every child has a smartphone, and also understand the distraction that smartphones cause in school buildings.

2. Privacy

- a. Students are protected under a number of federal laws to ensure the privacy of their information. We are not yet sure exactly how the data will be handled, stored, or protected, therefore we are airing on the side of caution to ensure your child's data is kept secure. COPPA and FERPA state
 - i. COPPA – Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. Federal law that prevents collection of online data from persons under 13 years of age.
 - ii. FERPA – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Prevents disclosure of information on grades or behavior to anyone other than the student or parent.

Even though we are not using contact tracing applications, please note that we see the value in this and will be implementing a contact tracing protocol of our own. Since students will remain in one classroom for the entirety of the school day, this makes manual contact tracing feasible, plus, we know that your children's information will be kept **safe**. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out!