



Dear St. Michael's Parents and Families,

Thank you for joining our webinars last week and for offering such thoughtful questions and comments on our plan for a safe return to the St. Michael's campus. We will send the archived video recordings of those webinars to all families this week and will follow with the questions raised during the webinars.

Throughout the past three months of intensive planning with our administrative team, medical professionals, and Board of Trustees, we have kept the health and safety of all within our care at the forefront of our work. Decisions have proven highly challenging throughout the past four months as we confront day to day the new information and rapidly changing circumstances in our community, our state, the country, and the world; we could not move forward without your continued feedback and support.

It is above all with the health and safety of our faculty, staff, students, and families in mind that I have decided to begin the academic year online for a minimum of the first four weeks of the 2020-2021 academic year for all students and teachers, beginning Monday, August 17. The earliest possible return date for on campus life will be Monday, September 14. Given the significant rise in infection rates in Pima County and the state over the past month, the sustained high level of community transmission, and the widespread inadequacies and delays in testing, delaying the start of in-person instruction is the most responsible decision I feel I can make. We will continue to monitor the situation and consult with our medical professionals and will open the school as soon we determine it is safe to do so. Opening safely includes refining our own management plan and monitoring very carefully the virus locally.

Many parents and children planning to return to campus will most assuredly be disappointed; however, delaying in-class instruction by four weeks better positions us for a successful school year in this uncertain time. Teachers and staff will continue to plan to meet the demands of integrating both online and classroom instruction and providing the high-quality educational experience that is core to St. Michael's. Further, all students will have the opportunity to start the school year in the same manner, familiarizing themselves with the improved delivery of online instruction and the new safety protocols that we will have in place when they return. This will help us all transition into our changed environment for the new school year.

As always, I welcome your comments and feedback, and I look forward to continuing to navigate these challenging times with your input and support.

Thank you,

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