



Dear St. Michael's Parents and Families,

As always, I encourage you to read this email message in its entirety. It contains important information regarding childcare help for SMS families during our four-week online start.

Thank you very much for your thoughtful comments and words of support this week regarding our decision to begin the 2020-2021 academic year online. I have listened carefully and appreciated hearing a variety of opinions from parents and families about a safe return. As has been the case since May, when we began our extensive planning efforts for the coming academic year, we have kept the health and safety of all as the first priority. I will continue to keep this priority at the forefront and to rely on the expert guidance from our medical professionals in the St. Michael's community—with the support of our Board of Trustees and administrative team—to assure a safe return to campus for students, families, and faculty.

Pima County issued a letter this past Tuesday, two days after our own decision for an online start was sent to all of you, last Sunday, making clear that no school in Tucson will be safe for an on-campus return on August 17. Many schools in Tucson—independent, Catholic, charter and public alike—have also since decided to start their academic year online; some have not. I encourage you to read the County Administrator's letter, which includes a summary of public-health 'markers' the County is monitoring closely, as our own planning group has been doing, to understand the parameters for safe re-entry for schools. On or before August 7, the County will further issue a set of recommended benchmarks for schools, the first locally defined guidelines for schools, and we will consider these same criteria in our decision as well.

As you all are aware, we will begin the academic year online on Monday, August 17. We anticipate opening our doors for a return to the physical campus on Monday, September 14, and continuing with our distance-learning program at that time for families who wish to remain at home.

Online Start

We have made considerable changes to our online program since March. We will present the full program in writing this coming week, with division-specific webinars to follow the week of August 10, with me, our two outstanding division directors, and faculty representatives from each division.

Childcare Help

With the support of our Board of Trustees, we will partner with the Tucson YMCA throughout the four weeks of our online start to provide childcare for St. Michael's families at four YMCA sites in Tucson, beginning the week of August 17, from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily, for children aged 5–12.

The YKids Choice program has been operating as a state-approved childcare facility since March, with excellent supervision and no reported incidents of illness or infection. Children who attend the YKids program will be provided a staff-monitored and physically distanced space to complete their live or recorded Zoom classes, independent academic work, and other class requirements. Space is limited, and registration begins this coming Monday, August 3.

This opportunity will be in high demand for Tucson families; if you have interest in the YKids childcare program, please reply to this email, directly to me, indicating your

interest by or before tomorrow, Sunday, August 2, at 6:00 p.m. For more information in considering the YMCA opportunity, please connect [here](#).

Thank you for understanding the complexities we all face this year, for reaching out to friends within the St. Michael's community to provide and offer support, and above all for responding to these difficult challenges with generosity and grace.

Sincerely,

Brendan Sullivan
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