



Dear Upper Campus Families,

When school begins later this month, we will have been in our pandemic mode for over 5 months. If someone would have told me a year ago we'd be in this scenario - preparing educational models, striding with and responding to a pandemic of the Covid-19 magnitude - I'd chalk it up to a science fiction summer beach read (in a locale likely an airplane ride away) followed by a couple of beverages of choice at a big group play date with the kids wrestling in the background. Yet here we are. And, frankly, I feel exceedingly fortunate as we move forward as a school.

I couldn't believe this more strongly, we'll be better because of this experience. Sure, it's not easy and it doesn't look like it will get easier soon. Yet the resilience, perseverance, inner sturdiness, and compassion that has to coalesce with an informed optimism and hopefulness will, I believe, improve all of us individually and collectively. Of course, this improvement and betterment transfers to the reason why Trinity exists - the children at our school.

Finally, having had a Zoom call with the entire Upper Campus faculty and staff this afternoon, I couldn't be more impressed with their drive, desire, and commitment to the students and families at Trinity. It's quite remarkable and a privilege to work with such an expert and dedicated group of educators.

The intent of this note is to provide important updates to the start of the school year. There will be other updates as we approach the start of the year. The facts:

The Waiver Process

Trinity **will assess and apply for the Waiver** that would allow our Kindergarten to Grade 5 students to be on campus. We are in touch with the San Mateo County Office of Education and the waiver process is still forthcoming for county schools. With any process in bringing students back on campus, the health and safety of our students, families, faculty and staff is our top priority. State information on the Waiver process can be found here: [Waiver Process: California Department of Public Health](#).

First Day of School Changed from August 19 to August 26

We had prepared for a full return to campus on August 19. Our planning process changed in a substantive way when San Mateo County was placed on the watch list and Trinity moved from approximately 2 students per class in distance learning to the entire Upper Campus. Therefore, the **first day of school will be August 26**. Essential in this modified process will be two days where

students will onboard with their teachers - on August 24 and 25. I know this is a significant change for families and may present further challenges for parents with children on both campuses. I apologize for the inconvenience. Nevertheless, we must plan the optimal learning path for our students. With the entire faculty and staff returning on August 12, we need additional time to prepare the program through continued professional development and training as well as orienting the students.

Student Onboarding

We feel it is essential that students have the opportunity to meet their teachers, see their classrooms, become oriented to the learning process and distance learning, pick up materials (such as iPads), and run through a couple of safety protocols before the start of the year. To that end, **a sign-up will be sent next week and students will come to campus at different intervals on August 24 and 25.** Parents/Guardians are encouraged to be with the student. If families are not comfortable with their children coming to campus, we can make alternate arrangements for the pick up of materials.

A reminder for Kindergarten and New Families on August 20 we will have Kindergarten Orientation at 1:00 and New Family Orientation at 2:15 (details to follow).

The Daily Schedule

The daily schedule at Trinity will **be a full-day schedule** with the exception of not having Extended Care to start the year. The Trinity faculty has been working very hard to extend and enhance the learning process for the students. For those of you who were at Trinity last year, we had Distance Learning 1.0 (two weeks) which was asynchronous learning to ensure predictability and support through Google Classroom. This was followed by Distance Learning 2.0 (10 weeks), which was synchronous, and the Seesaw learning platform was adopted and executed as well as larger community gatherings. We are now preparing Distance Learning 3.0 where we understand the strengths and limitations of being screen dependent contrasted with screen referenced. To use but one example, a textbook and a workbook serve as references, prompts and at times extended work for learning, our iPads should serve a similar purpose although still a vital one. The Trinity Distance Learning Plan is here [Trinity Distance Learning Plan](#) and a sample of a daily schedule is here [Sample Upper Campus Schedule](#).

Interest in Social Pods

We absolutely know that students learn in social constructs and this includes physical proximity. A number of families have asked if the school can facilitate social pods for the students to be in physical proximity and/or recommend outside groups for activities that may serve the same purpose. **While we await further guidance from the county on what is allowed, we will continue to explore models** where there is the potential for small social pods. Currently, this is something being discussed among my professional and local networks although there does not seem to be a near term school solution. We will continue with virtual group activities (i.e. Bingo, Chapel) and look to expand our offerings in this area.

I wish you only the best as we navigate through this extraordinary time. We'll get through it together and find ourselves improved on the other side.

As always, my door is open if you have any questions.

In appreciation,

Matt