

Hello, TMI! This is Fr. Scott with your Sept. 4th update. Week two of remote instruction is over and the countdown to return to campus is on! We are just a few weeks away from welcoming students back to campus, so let me remind you of our plan and the path to get there.

This is a lot of information, so if nothing else makes sense, see the attachment that was sent with this email showing the calendar for instruction starting Sept. 14. It's the clearest place to see the plan moving forward. Here is what you will see on that calendar – consistent with our crawl, walk, run model:

- Sept. 14 - All faculty on campus, all days, to do remote instruction from their classroom.
- Sept. 18 - First cohort of students on campus.  
Who better to start with than our seniors! Class of 2021, you are coming to Campus on Friday, Sept. 18, for in-person instruction and we can't wait to see you! Of course, if you choose to stay at home, you're welcome to do so, just let us know (more about that in a minute!).
- Sept. 21- Cohorts of students on campus in small groups all week.
  - M - Grades 6-8
  - T - 9th Grade only
  - W - Community Day
  - Th - Grades 10-12
  - F - Grades 10-12
- Sept. 28 - Hybrid Schedule; (Grades 6-9 on campus on Monday and Tuesday; Grades 10-12 on campus on Thursday and Friday)
- **Oct. 5 - All together on campus!**

I acknowledge that this plan is exciting to some, too slow for some, and too soon for some. I want to remind you that following a phased approach, gradually bringing back larger and larger groups, will better prepare us to be on campus together and stay on campus together. The path, as we have it laid out now, will:

- Ensure our plans on paper work with real humans;
- Allow us to celebrate each class as we start the year;
- Give every grade the ability to practice in a safe cohort – this gives us a safety net as we crawl, walk, and then run;
- Allow for more supervision with all faculty and staff on campus as we orient to returning to campus by having smaller groups come back first; and

- Most importantly, it gives us time to go slow and be deliberate in our actions so that we stay open.

If everyone understands the expectations and are trained and oriented in smaller groups, we'll be more likely to stay on campus for the rest of the year! So to recap:

- Crawl:
  - Sept. 18 - SENIORS on campus
  - Sept. 21 - Grades 6-8 on campus
  - Sept. 22 - Grade 9 on campus
  - Sept. 24 - Grades 10-12 on campus
  - Sept. 25 - Grades 10-12 on campus
- Walk: Week of Sept. 28 - Hybrid Instruction (6-9 on M, T and 10-12 Th, F)
- Run: Week of Oct. 5 - ALL on campus together.

This is the plan for our students to return to campus. And parents, we love you, but you're not invited to campus right now. One of the beautiful parts of our TMI community is the on campus involvement of our parents. You are used to coming to campus, delivering snacks to faculty and staff, coming to parent meetings, volunteering in the Snack Shack, and more. Soon, you'll be able to do that. But for now, we'll be focusing our efforts over the next few weeks on bringing our students and faculty together safely, and then we promise, there will be opportunities for you to join us later, too.

As we get ready to open our doors, here is what we will expect from you when you return to campus. First, that we have your commitment to following the rules and expectations while on campus. That you'll wear your mask, social distance, wash your hands, fill out the daily screening form, and follow the rules. Second, that as a member of this community, you will exercise safe and prudent judgement when you're off campus.

The city of San Antonio has made so much progress and as we go into the Labor Day weekend, we are seeing significant improvement in the positivity rate. As we continue to make progress, we must be careful not to take our foot off the gas in regards to COVID precautions. Labor Day weekend has the potential to set us back. Take precautions over the holiday weekend. Don't attend indoor gatherings, avoid crowding, and wear your masks. Let's do our part to prevent another spike in cases and get TMI and all of our schools in our community reopened.

As we near our return to campus, families that wish to keep their students at home and remain in remote instruction, this next part is very important. As far as notifying TMI, we're assuming that you're all coming back. If you are choosing remote, you'll be choosing remote through the end of the 1st quarter, Oct. 9. If that is your choice, we need to know that by Sept. 8. We're asking you to commit through Oct. 9, and asking you to make that decision by Sept. 8 allows our teachers and our staff to prepare and plan for what's to come. The Remote Instruction Request Form is attached to the email. Again, if you are planning on keeping your child at home, we need that form filled out by next Tuesday, Sept. 8.

This next piece is important to *all* parents, particularly those who are choosing to return to campus. Yesterday, you received an email from signNow asking you to complete a waiver online. This waiver must be signed by both parents in order for your child to return to campus. This can be done electronically and, having done it myself, it's quick and easy. If you did not receive this waiver from signNow, please reach out to our webmaster. You can do that by simply replying to the email that sent you this video.

I also want to address some questions you've raised about finances during this time. One of the most common questions I want to address is lunch, my favorite subject when I was in school! Please understand that some of our food service costs are fixed under our contract with SAGE Dining, regardless of whether or not we serve meals, so our savings aren't as great as we'd like them to be. However, I acknowledge that the cost of tuition includes food service that you are not receiving, in addition to a few other cost savings that are a result of being in remote instruction – such as the class retreats we were not able to sponsor this year and transportation costs that have been minimal while remote.

On the flipside of the ledger, however, COVID has triggered a number of new expenses related to providing a safe and enriching environment. For example, we have spent almost \$50k on new technology and internet bandwidth so that we can improve the remote and hybrid learning experiences. Because we need to keep everyone distanced during lunch, we purchased \$20k of outdoor furniture and floor coverings for the gyms that will allow students to spread out more while they eat with their masks off. We've spent countless dollars on personal protective equipment and sanitation supplies, our staff will no doubt work a lot of overtime to keep the facilities safe and accommodating this year, and I could go on and on.

Please know that we take your financial support of TMI very seriously and work hard to ensure that every dollar is maximized to provide the best education possible. But tuition alone doesn't

cover the full cost of educating a TMI student. And while we've had some cost savings due to not being on campus, we're spending more than we are saving in order to be ready to come back to campus, and stay on campus, safely. We are good stewards of TMI resources.

Some of you have also asked about funds you have on your Café 18 account. While Café 18 will not be open on Sept. 21, we are planning grab and go options such as tacos and wraps starting in Oct. and your funds will remain safe and sound until you're ready to use them.

I know that the announcement last week regarding athletics was a hard one for many. It was hard on us as well. But with the disappointment of no football or cheer, comes the commitment from us to find ways to allow our families to watch your children compete, even if you can't be on campus. So in order to make this possible, we're finalizing some technology to allow you to watch your child compete this year and years to come. The Athletic Department is partnering with the CEC to outfit most of our athletic facilities with live streaming capabilities. We are in the process of equipping both gyms, Fondren Stadium, the baseball field and the softball fields with HD cameras, that will be able to capture all of the competition for both live and archived viewing by our entire community. This is a huge step forward for our program and will allow an even greater audience for our athletes.

As you can see, there are a lot of moving parts behind the scenes and much is happening as we prepare for reopening. If we can make the sacrifice now, families, to be patient, to take our time, and do things the right way – to crawl, walk, run – then we will be set up for success. And once we get on campus, we will stay on campus. I will update you again next week with my next weekly update on Sept. 11th. Until then, know that I love you and I can't wait to see you all back on campus soon. Go Panthers!

**The Rev. Scott J. Brown**

Husband to Kimberly

Father to Parker, Christopher and Angelene

Spurs Fan

Golf Fanatic

Head of School