

A Letter from the Louisiana Heads of School of ISAS

Dear Parents,

As the leaders of the 15 schools in Louisiana accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest (ISAS), we have been collaborating with one another this summer to design effective policies and procedures to safely welcome back students to our campuses this fall and to proceed with a rewarding school year. Such mutual support and cooperation is and has been a hallmark of the ISAS and has been especially helpful in the midst of this challenging time. Large or small, urban or more rural, the schools of the ISAS in Louisiana are committed to working together for the best interests of the families and the 8,000 children we collectively have the honor to serve.

With the guidance of the Department of Health and state medical advisors, each Louisiana ISAS school will be implementing similar protocols to provide safe campuses in response to COVID-19. These protocols include but are not limited to:

- Limited access to campus buildings for those not students, faculty, or staff
- Health screening and symptom monitoring procedures for those who are coming to campus
- Face covering protocols
- Social distancing and grouping students into cohorts where practicable to contain exposure
- Policies of quarantining for those diagnosed with COVID-19 as well as for those who have been deemed exposed to such individuals.

What is clear is that this pandemic is going to be affecting our school communities for some time. Although these steps will limit the spread of the virus, there is no guarantee they will exclude all asymptomatic carriers. Those who elect to have their children rejoin our school communities understand and accept that there is likely to be some spread of the infection. The Louisiana ISAS schools stand with the American Academy of Pediatrics that stated in its recently released (June 25) [COVID-19: Guidance for School Reentry](#):

- School policies must be flexible and nimble in responding to new information.
- Policies should be practical, feasible, and appropriate for each child and adolescent's developmental stage.
- All policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school.

It is important to emphasize that everyone's actions affect the entire community; thus, it is the responsibility of ISAS schools—and their constituents—to lead by example, embrace accountability, and implement best practice guidelines for the welfare of our students and our state. This requires institutional and personal attention and sacrifice for the good of all. Public mask-wearing, conscientious social distancing, and the limiting of group interaction are necessary steps outside of school to control the spread of COVID-19 and increase the chances that we can continue to offer the meaningful, in-person educational experiences that ISAS schools are known for. Your understanding and cooperation are most appreciated.

We will continue to collaborate and adjust to serve our communities, care for our families, and help our students grow and thrive. We are grateful for your trust and support and look forward to a great year together despite the unusual circumstances.

Thank you,

Yvonne Adler, Schools of the Sacred Heart, Grand Coteau
Kevin Avin, Stuart Hall School for Boys, New Orleans
Paul Baker, Episcopal School of Acadiana, Lafayette & Broussard
Bill Bridges, Alexandria Country Day School
Ian Craig, Metairie Park Country Day School, Metairie
Kimberly Field-Marvin, Louise S. McGehee School, New Orleans
Kathryn Fitzpatrick, St. Andrew's Episcopal School, New Orleans
Sr. Melanie Guste, Academy of the Sacred Heart, New Orleans

Joe Kreutziger, St. George's Episcopal School, New Orleans
John Morvant, Christ Episcopal School, Covington
Charleen Schwank, St. Paul's Episcopal School, New Orleans
Merry Sorrells, St. Martin's Episcopal School, Metairie
Dale Smith, Isidore Newman School, New Orleans
Justin Smith, Southfield School, Shreveport
Gary Taylor, Trinity Episcopal School, New Orleans