

*Saint Mary's Academy*  
6905 Chef Menteur Highway  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70126-5291

Office of the Principal

July 16, 2020

Dear Parents,

First, let me thank you for your support and understanding as we, as a community and school family, responded to the unexpected invasion of COVID-19 in March. I am very proud of the way our SMA students, parents, employees, and school leaders handled the demands we were faced with to protect everyone as we continued to educate our students during these most unusual circumstances. As you know, there continues to be concerns and questions related to how schools plan to reopen in August 2020. While we are in the business of educating, our first priority is the safety of our students and our employees. Please Be **Assured**, we have been working diligently on our **SMA 2020- 2021 Smart Restart Plans**. **Our desire is to return to school utilizing a Hybrid Blended Learning Format with enhanced safety and cleaning procedures.** However, we must be proactive and be prepared during these ever-changing times to continue educating our students if and when circumstances change, as predicted, throughout the year related to the health and safety of our students and employees. **We plan to open school the week of August 31, unless otherwise notified by the Archdiocese, the Louisiana Department of Education and/or the Federal Government.**

We have gathered input from parents, employees, community stakeholders, administrators, state leaders, the Louisiana Department of Education, The Archdiocese of New Orleans, and medical professionals via surveys, committees, and a task force. Our administration, department leaders and faculty have been planning for increased safety procedures that can be taken at every level. We are working on three scenarios:

1. **Enhanced Traditional Plan-** We would continue school as normal with enhanced safety precautions in place such as increased hand sanitizer availability, increased frequency of cleaning of high touch areas, limited visitation to campuses, limited movement of students, six feet distancing etc., in order to possibly prevent the transition to a hybrid or full distance learning option. **(Phase 3)**
2. **Hybrid Blended Learning Plan-** Hybrid would be a combination of distance learning and face-to-face instruction with increased safety and disinfecting measures as listed above, which could be done in a variety of configurations. This would only be enacted if the Governor's Executive Order required us to maintain a social distance by staying at home, to limit the number of people in groups, etc. **(Phase 2)**

- 3. Full Distance Learning Plan-** All students would participate in the learning of new material, continued standard pacing, interactive lessons, graded assignments, and assessments. This would be enacted if the Governor's Executive Order closed schools again due to health concerns. (If there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in school, we may enact full school closures and use total Distance Learning.) **(Phase 1)**

As we move forward, we are also taking into consideration that we have medically compromised students. All parents will have the option of choosing the Distance Learning Plan as opposed to physically coming to school. Guidelines will be shared with you in the very near future to help you with your decision.

As we continue our **2020-2021 Smart Restart** planning process, we will keep you updated. Thank you again for your continued support and positivity as we strive to do what is best for ALL of our students and employees during these challenging times.

Serving you and keeping you in prayer,

  
Sister Jennie Jones, S.S.F.  
Principal