



*Dr. Brian N. Guenther, President*

July 11, 2020

Dear San Marcos Academy Families,

At this time, San Marcos Academy will open in Stage 2 of our Communicable Disease Action Plan (CDAP) according to our previously published 2020-2021 school calendar. Through the work of the COVID Reopening Task Force, the CDAP was updated to better respond to the needs of this current pandemic. The current CDAP may be found on our website at [smabears.org/covid-19-info/](https://smabears.org/covid-19-info/). Along with the CDAP you will find more information regarding our plans for opening. Every day, new COVID-19 information is being discovered as scientists and medical professionals are able to study and test this virus. Our plans to reopen are subject to change as circumstances warrant. This may mean that prior to August 10, 2020, the reopening stage may change.

### **CDAP: Stage 2**

The CDAP was developed to broadly address any communicable disease that may affect our campus populations. This allows our academic and residential life teams to develop more specific guidelines for students, teachers, and staff. As these are developed in greater detail, we will update the [smabears.org/covid-19-info/](https://smabears.org/covid-19-info/) page and notify you through the communications office via email.

According to Stage 2, all faculty and staff will report to the campus. All classes will be offered in-person, on campus. There will be a distance learning option available to those families who do not feel comfortable sending their students to campus, at this time. In order to better account for absences, there will be a requirement for parent and administrator approval to utilize the distance learning option.

In this stage, intensified sanitization protocols will be in effect for all buildings and rooms. Day Students will not be allowed to stay after school unless they are involved in athletics, clubs, or tutorials. Consequently, the Rec Center will not be open to Day Students. After School Care will still be available for Lower School students with health and safety protocols in place. Athletics will continue as directed by our athletic organization, TAPPS. You will find their most recent updates at [tapps.biz](https://tapps.biz).

Campus visitors will be restricted to those with appointments and must submit to temperature and health screening by the Student Health Center nurse.

In Stage 2, the residential life program will operate with intensified sanitization protocols and health and safety guidelines. There will be a specific building set aside for quarantine and isolation purposes.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be provided and required for our faculty and staff when working with and among students. Additionally, faculty and staff will be required to submit to temperature and health screenings by the Student Health Center nurse. Sodexo, our food service company, has provided their plan for dining which may be found at [smabears.org/covid-19-info/](http://smabears.org/covid-19-info/). This includes the option for parents to send students with their own lunches and snacks for the school day. SMA will provide picnic tables, in various locations, so that students may be able to dine outdoors.

Students in the Lower and Middle Schools will operate within a cohort model with a specific emphasis on cleanliness and distancing. SMA will suggest that students over the age of 10 wear a face covering (mask) when moving through halls or outside of their cohort. Lower School students will still be able to participate in PE and recess, and have many other outdoor opportunities for learning with health and safety guidelines in place. Lower School academic halls traffic flow will move in one direction. More details will be provided as they are developed.

Students in the Upper School will operate in cohorts when possible with an emphasis on cleanliness and distancing. Again, SMA will suggest that Upper School students wear face coverings when moving through the halls or outside of their cohorts. All academic hallways will move in one direction with appropriate signage for foot traffic. More details will be provided for Upper School students as they are developed.

### **Boarding Students**

In order to improve sanitation and enhance social distancing for our male boarding students, whose current residence hall features communal bathrooms only, we will be relocating our male students into a dormitory building with suite-style bathrooms with no more than four students per bathroom.

This two-story residence hall, which houses two hallways, has previously been utilized as a female-only dormitory. For 2020-2021, we will be designating Robinson Hall as the female residence area and Kokernot Hall as the male residence area. Although there will be a common main entrance for the building, each hallway will have a separate entrance as well as separate laundry facilities. Campus ID

card locks, cameras, and video doorbell systems will be installed at each entrance, to be monitored by the residence life staff. As has always been the case at the Academy, male students will not be allowed into the female hallway, and female students will be prohibited from entering the male hallway.

By relocating our male students, we will be freeing up dormitory space in Crook Hall and Byrom Hall that can be utilized as a quarantine or isolation facility, should that be required by a student or a resident staff member who shows symptoms of any communicable disease. More details regarding the boarding students will be updated as they are developed.

### **Parent/Student Survey**

Thank you for taking the time to respond to our Reopening Survey for parents and students. I have compiled all of the results and am making them available to you. You can read through the results and comments at [smabears.org/covid-19-info/](http://smabears.org/covid-19-info/). Please note that certain information in the comments have been redacted to best protect the anonymity of the respondents.

### **Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)**

Governor Abbott and the State of Texas are providing San Marcos Academy with the following items free of charge. We will be receiving these items through the local education agency (LEA) and will be able to make these items available to our faculty, staff, and students as needed.

- 1,015 Disposable Student Masks
- 2,368 Disposable Adult Masks
- 235 Reusable Student Masks
- 610 Reusable Adult Masks
- 81 Adult Face Shields
- 2,754 Disposable Gloves
- 2 Infrared Thermometers
- 39 gallons of Hand Sanitizer

### **Conclusion**

I am certain that there are countless questions to be answered. As more information is available, it will be sent through Mrs. Henry's office and updated on [smabears.org/covid-19-info/](http://smabears.org/covid-19-info/). All other campus changes that have occurred over the summer will be explained in a newsletter that is currently being compiled and is nearing completion for distribution.

I believe that we are making the most informed decision for our students, faculty, and staff. If you have read through the comments from the survey, you know that varying opinions and concerns have

been voiced by our families. I understand if our decision is not what you wished for your student this coming school year. I will trust that you are making the best decision for your students, even if that means you feel that you must withdraw them from San Marcos Academy. Please understand that I have made this decision not only as an administrator, but as a father of three SMA students.

In all things, my hope and faith are found in a relationship with our Savior, Jesus Christ. My prayer for this year comes from Psalm 91:3-4, "For he will rescue you from every trap and protect you from deadly disease. He will cover you with his feathers. He will shelter you with his wings. His faithful promises are your armor and protection."

By His Grace,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brian Guenther". The signature is stylized with a large initial "B" and "G".

Brian N. Guenther, Ed. D.