



# MADEIRA

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*A Message from the Head of School*

June 17, 2020

Dear Parents, Students, and Faculty,

I hope you are doing well, and that your families have stayed safe and healthy. With the 2019-20 school year behind us, I wanted to update you on our ongoing plans for re-opening this fall.

### **Campus will fully open in the fall**

We are excited to bring our community back together on campus in August. As I previewed in my [May 29 letter](#), we plan to have a full re-opening of school, with a nimble academic program that accommodates both on-campus and distance learning for classes, Co-Curriculum, and extracurricular activities.

### **Academic program preparation for next year**

Last week, we had several workdays in which our faculty gathered virtually, reflected on their experiences in distance learning, and focused on what they need to do over the summer to be prepared for a blended approach to learning for next school year. M.A. Mahoney worked with them to establish clear parameters for curriculum and course development, including standardized platforms for use with students and guidelines for in-person, face-to-face learning, group work, and discussion forums. Faculty will incorporate strategies that worked well in our distance learning mods, revise and correct those that didn't, and ensure that every student has clarity as to expectations for every course with access to both content and conference time during the day.

### **Virginia state mandates**

Over the past two weeks, Governor Northam and the various state agencies that oversee school operations have issued guidelines for Phase 2 and preliminary guidance for Phase 3 re-openings. Both phases require social distancing. At Madeira, we appreciate our advantage of a large campus with many buildings to give us options in achieving appropriate social distancing. We have measured all our available spaces and are pleased to report that we can welcome all our students back to campus, both boarding and day, and maintain social distancing requirements.

Our blended learning model requires us to reconfigure classroom spaces as well as our daily schedule to allow for social distancing. We are also planning longer lunch periods, community meetings as the first activities of each day, and synchronous D blocks. To protect each other, we will follow public health guidance to wear face coverings in public spaces. As we receive guidelines that apply to residential life, we are incorporating those into our planning for dorms and campus activities.

### **Calendar revisions**

To best meet the challenges of the global health situation, we are planning a staggered return to campus, starting no earlier than August 24. You will be receiving detailed instructions shortly, once we have received everyone's [Safe Return to Campus Survey](#) due June 19.

We are revising our calendar, and it is likely that we will have regular classes on Labor Day and may move to distance learning in the weeks between Thanksgiving and Winter breaks. We will have the final calendar by July 17.

### **“Safety First”**

In this different year, each of us must take extra steps for our own health and for the collective protection of others to help keep the Madeira community safe. As we welcome girls back to campus, we will be following “Safety First” guidelines to mitigate the risk of infection within our community. We will provide detailed information about how students, families, faculty, and staff will be working together to reduce the risk of an outbreak on campus while also continuing to deliver a high-quality Madeira experience for all our girls. You can expect “Safety First” details by July 17.

### **Upcoming communications**

Although I will no longer be here after the end of June, Madeira's new Head of School, Gretchen Warner, and I have been working closely together on the plan for re-opening the campus. I know she eagerly looks forward to working in partnership with all of you toward a great 2020-21 school year.

You can expect to hear from the Dean of Students office about campus arrival dates and procedures in the coming weeks. We will give further details on the “Safety First” guidelines and the calendar by July 17. Gretchen Warner will be in touch in July as well. Should you have any immediate questions, please reach out, and one of the members of my administrative team or I will be happy to work with you.

I will close as I began my tenure at Madeira, with a commitment to continue the legacy of Lucy Madeira in guiding each girl to her personal best. Your daughter will be welcomed, nurtured, and transformed here. I wish this special community all the very best going forward.

Sincere regards,  
Pilar Cabeza de Vaca