

## Communications to The Presentation Family

### **June 15, 2020 - COVID Task Force communication**

Good day, All.

As our new Head of School, Jackie Gallo, said in her email this morning, the administration, COVID task force, and leadership team all are working hard to prepare for a new academic year. While we are still doing due diligence to keep our kids and staff safe during this global pandemic, the intention is to begin school together, at a distance, on our beautiful and spacious campus on August 19.

In the meantime we are pleased to report that, after reviewing current data and guidance from the state and county, the decision has been made to allow camps on campus this summer – providing they meet specific health and safety requirements. These requirements are based on state and county guidance and include limits to number of participants, use of outside or gym areas only, individual equipment per each child, temperature checks, and specific social distance, hygiene, and face covering protocols, and more. Camp directors are responsible for collaborating with the Head of School to adapt their unique programs and articulate these guidelines to participant families.

Please note that Presentation is not planning a camp program this summer but will gladly work with camp directors who are looking for a place to hold their programs and can meet the requirements.

Lastly, in the spirit of prudent caution, we point out this excerpt from the latest SoCo health ordinance:

*"The evidence shows that a significant percentage of virus transmission is from people who are asymptomatic or have very mild symptoms. Health screenings may not detect these individuals. While a given activity may be allowed under this and the Governor's Orders, the Health Officer advises that community members conduct their own risk-based assessment of what activities are appropriate.*

We look forward to sharing more updates as our work continues. See the updated expected schedule of communications below.

July 15 – Plan for opening on August 19

July 30 – Additional details related to school opening plan

Aug 15 – Preparations for and what to expect on the first day of school

Aug 19 - First day of school

If you have any questions from this point on, please feel free to contact our new Head of School, Jackie Gallo at [jgallo@presentationschool.com](mailto:jgallo@presentationschool.com).

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## **June 15, 2020 - A new chapter begins**

Dear Presentation family,

Greetings from Broadway! Today, I officially begin my tenure at Presentation with enthusiasm, energy, and a renewed sense of purpose. Today begins the next chapter.

I'd like to sincerely thank you, Presentation families, for your dedication and perseverance in helping our students successfully complete a challenging school year. Everyone tells me that it is our people that make Presentation a wonderful school and indeed that is true. I hope you find the time to rest and recharge this summer and return to school in August with a renewed sense of purpose and belief in the great progress yet to come for our school and your children.

While you rest, please know that the administration, COVID task force, and leadership team all are working hard to prepare for a new academic year. We will begin school on 19 August, and it is my intention for us to begin together, at a distance, on our beautiful and spacious campus. We will soon be providing you with updates, a timeline, and all the necessary information you need to prepare for the 20-21 school year.

What I love most about summer is that, in the life cycle of educators, we have the time and distance to reflect, reimagine, and recharge before starting a new year. This summer I believe that reflection is extraordinarily critical to our future, because we are also beginning a new chapter with a new administration. I want you to know that this is **THE TIME** for a fresh start. And as summer demands of educators, I invite each of you

to ask yourselves how might we best live out our Presentation values and live up to our mission as a community. Take some time to ask yourselves as I am asking myself...How do I embody the values of love, gratitude, respect, service, and integrity? Do I show kindness to others? Do I serve the community and speak up for others? Do I communicate effectively and help solve problems collaboratively?

In the coming weeks, I will invite you to schedule a meeting so I can have the opportunity to get to know you better. As I've spent the last few years of my career performing educational research as a trained cultural anthropologist, I want to utilize those skills to learn all I can about our school community. I'd like to begin getting to know you, your family, and your history at Presentation, and your goals and aspirations for our community. The key to our future success is collaboration on behalf of your children and I intend to build trusting, honest, transparent, and caring relationships with each family.

WE have the skills, intellect, and empathy to meet the moment and empower our young people. As I noted in my arrival video, the global pandemic and current social suffering we are experiencing as a nation remind us that our mission to provide educational justice for your children will help them become the leaders our nation and world need. I believe in our mission and ask that we rededicate ourselves to it. A renewed and deliberate rededication will allow us to more fully love, learn, and lead.

I am looking forward to building on the strong foundation upon which Presentation already sits, *and*, am determined to build new traditions, innovate, and strengthen our school community. Thank you for your dedication and here's to many more successes and milestones ahead! I will be happy to see you soon.

My best wishes,  
Jackie

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**June 5, 2020 - The next head of school**

Hello Presentation Community, and Happy Friday! Below is a letter – and here is a video – from Incoming Head of School, Jackie Gallo.

Dear Presentation family,

Greetings from Sonoma! I am happy to inform you that I have arrived happily and safely to Sonoma and am settling in. After spending the past months in New Mexico completing my PhD thesis and spending some much needed quality time with my family, I am rejuvenated and preparing to begin my tenure as your Head of School on the 15th of June.

The transition committee has been working tirelessly to ensure a smooth transition of administration and we will continue to do so on behalf of your children. I'd like to thank our Board Chair, Jon Sebastiani, as well as Scott and Lauren, for the steadfast dedication to our mission and supporting me as I begin my tenure at Presentation.

These are extraordinary times. It is my hope that all our educators, families, and children find a way to relax and recharge this summer as you so deserve. But do know that the administration will be working hard to ensure we begin the new school year on August 19. The COVID task force and I are working to gather as much information as we can to make sound and responsible decisions in preparation for the start of school. We have a timeline set out and will share decisions and pertinent information as it becomes available to help you prepare for the 20-21 school year.

Beyond COVID, this is an incredibly painful chapter in the American experience. Many people are suffering and we, as a nation, are grappling with how we might best live up to our national values. It is in this context that I believe, more than ever, in the power of a mission based education.

I believe Presentation is effectively positioned to provide the holistic, faith-filled, and empathetic education required to meet the challenges of our times. I encourage you to review the Portrait of a Graduate page on our website to be reminded of the academic, spiritual, and social-emotional skills and characteristics we strive to instill in our

students. To meet the health and social challenges of our times, Presentation graduates are uniquely positioned to become the future leaders to address our global, national, and local challenges.

I will look forward to meeting each of you. I am in the process of scheduling meetings with the Board, our educators, and each family to get to know you soon.

I thank you for your dedication to our school, its mission and values, and wish you all a healthy and safe summer.

My best wishes,

Jackie

(Video Link Again Here)

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### **June 1, 2020 - Strategic Direction communication from COVID Task Force**

Constructing a viable plan to navigate a pandemic requires both a considered perspective and attention to detail. The attached TPS COVID-19 Strategic Direction document lays out the challenge we face and how we have adapted, current thinking on the Fall, strategic guidance for decision-making and our ambition for this time next year. All of this will shape Presentation's plan for opening on August 19, which we expect to share on July 15 (assuming timely release of state and county guidance).

See attached PDF and/or below



## The Presentation School COVID-19 Strategic Direction

### **AN EXCEPTIONAL CHALLENGE**

The global COVID-19 pandemic is affecting lives around the world unlike anything seen in the last hundred years. The impact on both public health and global economies is unprecedented. Repercussions on education systems and the resulting burden on children and societies everywhere are hard to calculate. In order to succeed, schools will need ingenuity, flexibility, resources, empowerment and a supportive community.

At the Presentation School, we are adapting to these challenging times in a way that is remarkably positive and generative. We are fueled by a growth mindset and grateful to our talented and dedicated community of teachers, staff, parents, students and trustees who have pulled together through these difficult times. We are well-equipped to navigate the challenges ahead as an even smarter, more adaptive, more determined and closer school.

### **OUR RESPONSE TO DATE**

Extraordinary efforts by our faculty, coupled with earlier long-term planning decisions and technology investments, enabled us to launch a robust distance-learning program where every child was able to be online with his or her class on the first day of California's statewide shelter-in-place.

This program has allowed us to maintain our high academic standards, keep pace with our regular calendar (including the annual ERB exams) and continue our normal grading system. It has allowed students to matriculate to their next grade level, liturgies and beloved end of year celebrations to continue (in digital form) and 8th graders to graduate with a truly moving ceremony online. It has also given both students and their families a welcome sense of support and normalcy in an uncertain time.

Parent, student and teacher input has been essential to refining our distance-learning curriculum. Data gathered in our school-wide survey will be analyzed over the summer and used to create an even stronger educational program that will apply to every form that school might take in the next year.



The Presentation School  
**COVID-19 Strategic Direction**

**LOOKING FORWARD**

As we look to the future we recognize that disruptions are a fact of life, particularly in Sonoma where we have become used to mandated school closures for wildfire, smoke, rolling power outages and more. We humbly acknowledge that the path for maneuvering through the COVID-19 pandemic is unpredictable and often changing.

Presentation is fortunate to have a unique combination of assets that maximize our flexibility: the intentional small size of our student body; teachers who know all our kids individually; our beautiful 4.5 acre campus with generous outdoor areas; versatile room configurations which allows for alternative use of multiple spaces; and our status as an independent school which enables us to forge our own direction based on what we determine to be best for our school.

**We will navigate the next academic year with “responsible flexibility” by anticipating and planning for a variety of responses to a range of unknowns. Health and safety is our number one priority as we envision returning to campus in the Fall. We recognize that younger learners in our lower school have unique learning needs which are best served by in-person interaction. While our intention is to have all students on campus (state and local guidance-allowing) we will build scenarios for both on- and off-campus situations, developing appropriate protocols for a healthy return as well as refined digital-learning blueprints should they be needed.**

**STRATEGIC GUIDANCE**

Constructing a viable COVID-19 response plan requires both a strategic perspective and meticulous attention to detail. Our task force is actively engaged with national and local health and education resources, comparable best-in-class independent schools in the Bay Area, the California and National Associations of Independent Schools (CAIS and NAIS), SVUSD and local schools, and myriad specialist health, finance, risk management and other experts within our community in order to ensure we are steeped in the best available thinking.

The Presentation School  
**COVID-19 Strategic Direction**

We are committed to continuing to provide a superb educational experience in a way that fulfills our mission. To that end, we look to our core values of Love, Learn and Lead as we formulate the path forward this Fall:

**Love = We will demonstrate kindness, encourage self-awareness, nurture faith and strengthen community. Everything we do will come from a place of love for our school and its people.**

**Learn = We will continue our focus on critical and creative thinking, effective communication and collaboration. We will be flexible as we gain knowledge that changes our thinking.**

**Lead = We will listen and guide with clarity, empathy, respect and equality. We will take action where action is needed.**

In addition, throughout our pandemic response we will continue to:

- Promote personal connections and interactions that recognize the whole student.
- Nurture talented teachers and staff.
- Provide financial support to families in need of assistance.
- Strategically anticipate possible changes to operating budgets and adjust accordingly.
- Recognize that our school campus is our most important physical asset and ensure that it continues to operate as efficiently and cost-efficiently as possible.
- Aim for pragmatism that benefits all, rather than perfection that benefits a few.

**AMBITION**

We expect to be navigating through many unknowns for an extended but finite period of time. The Presentation School's mission and approach to learning is now more relevant and meaningful than ever. Our hope is that by strategically managing our school in the Fall, we will emerge as a wiser, stronger, and more cohesive community than before.



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## **May 29, 2020 COVID-19 Response Task force Overview**

Congratulations, all, on the last day of this remarkable academic year.

The COVID-19 Response Task Force plans to provide biweekly updates through the summer related to school opening in the Fall.

Below is an overview of who we are, vision, objectives and expected timing of important decisions, as well as what you can expect from Administration and how you can support our school as we navigate this unique time together.

### **Who We Are**

The COVID-19 Response Task Force is comprised of individuals with expertise in education, pediatrics, finance, operations and communications and a vested interest in the health and well-being of The Presentation School and its community members.

- Scott Parker\*, Outgoing Head of School
- Lauren Miller, Outgoing Assistant Head of School
- Jacqueline Gallo\*, Incoming Head of School
- Jon Sebastiani, Chairman of the Board of Trustees
- Heidi Williams\*, Trustee and Transition Chair
- Lora Eichner, Trustee and Pediatrician
- Scott Shapiro, Finance Committee Member
- Alex Haley, Lower School Curriculum Director, Kinder teacher
- Jamie Mitchell, Assessments/Technology Director, 5th grade teacher
- Emma Evanson, Incoming Admissions Director
- Shanna Rodgers, Business Officer

*\*Main contacts*

### **Task Force Vision**

The task force is envisioned to collaborate and advise on the immediate needs/concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the re-opening of The Presentation School in August 2020.

The task force will operate with respect towards diverse perspectives and remain 'responsibly flexible' in the ever-evolving climate of a global pandemic.

## **Objectives**

Our primary objective is to ensure that The Presentation School is prepared in its approach and flexible with its options to provide a safe, healthy, and fulfilling educational opportunity for students in the 2020-2021 school year.

Specifically, we will strive to:

- Curate a collection of data to enable informed decision-making related to COVID-19 and its effects on the educational experience of Presentation students and families in 2020-2021.
- Provide the Administration and Board of Trustees with expertise and guidance in making COVID-19 related decisions in line with local, state, and national guidelines.
- Develop recommendations and procedures in relation to the school's mission and values, ensuring the continued operation of a mission-driven institution.
- Operate with respect to diverse perspectives, maintain a commitment to 'responsible flexibility', and respect the communication chain and confidentiality of task force operations.

## **Expected Timing**

We aim to provide biweekly updates through the summer, currently planned as follows – pending release of appropriate guidelines from the state of California and Sonoma County:

- June 1 – Strategic direction and guidance for decision-making
- June 15 – Decision on summer camps
- June 30 – Updated considerations from national and local authorities
- July 15 – Plan for opening on August 19
- July 30 – Additional details related to school opening plan
- Aug 15 – Preparations for and what to expect on the first day of school

## **What to Expect from Our Administration**

As we learn more and flex to meet changing national, state and local requirements, along with the evolving needs of our teachers, students and families, our Administration under incoming Head Jackie Gallo commits to:

- Continue to uphold our mission.
- Provide transparency in decision-making.
- Ensure a clear chain of command.
- Communicate regularly.
- Listen and understand individuals' points of view.
- Ensure an equitable plan to maintain health and safety while learning in the Fall.

### **What You Can Do to Support Our School**

As part of The Presentation School community. We all have shared responsibility to navigate the coming months together. We ask that you:

- Persevere with us in the knowledge that this chaotic time will end.
- Continue to demonstrate our values of Love, Learn and Lead.
- Share what you love about Presentation with your friends.