



Florida School for the Deaf & the Blind

Do More. Be More. Achieve More.

August 21, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

On behalf of the FSDB campus community, I hope that you and your family are well and looking forward to the start of the 2020-21 school year. For those of you who I haven't had the pleasure to meet, I'm the administrator of business services, and I'm currently serving as the interim president until the FSDB Board of Trustees appoints our new president.

Our teachers and staff have returned to campus and are busy planning for the unique challenges that lay ahead. We're excited about the arrival of students whether physically at school or learning from home. No matter the choice* you've made, FSDB is well prepared to welcome your child in a safe and comfortable environment so they may develop the knowledge and skills for lifelong success.

As we have planned for both brick and mortar and Innovative Learning Environment (ILE) models, we have continued to enhance our state-approved 2020-21 FSDB Reopening Plan. Please take some time to familiarize yourself with what's outlined in the plan as we look forward to partnering with you to make the start of the school year as seamless as possible. Information for parent drop-off/pick-up instructions and bus transportation information as well as many other details are included.

I'd like to highlight just a few items given the importance of each. First, our annual Family Open House on Sunday, Aug. 30 will be very different this year due to social distancing requirements. As such, only our boarding students and their families may come to campus from noon to 4 p.m. (unless a day student family needs to drop-off medication). Families may enter through the main gate (Genoply St.), via San Marco Ave. or through the Causeway Gate (May St.). Due to the pandemic, this year's event has been modified as follows:

- All visitors must wear a cloth face mask when social distancing is not feasible.
- Dorms will be open to allow entry to your child's room. Only one adult may accompany each student. Temperatures will be taken of students and their parent/guardian before entering the dorm.
- No classroom visits with teachers will be allowed. School buildings will be closed. Teachers will be sending welcome materials electronically.
- The Health Care Center will be open to check-in medications.
- Parent/guardian ID badges will be made in the Dragon's Lair (Kirk Auditorium); custody documentation may be dropped off as well.
- The Student Bank in Pope Hall will be open to set up your child's account.

- Kirk Auditorium (Deaf Department) and the Music Building (Blind Department) will be open; please turn in any remaining enrollment paperwork at these locations. Staff will be available to answer questions or help with form completion.

Parents/guardians of day students are encouraged to visit campus starting Monday, Aug. 31 to have their ID badges made.

The second item involves our face mask procedures; please note that:

- Students and staff will wear cloth face masks when unable to social distance. This means masks will be worn:
 - On buses
 - Upon arrival and dismissal to campus
 - During class transition times
 - When walking around in classrooms
 - In restrooms
 - Prior to and after eating meals and snacks
- There will be breaks from wearing a cloth face covering throughout the day. Removal of face masks will be incorporated into our schedule and closely monitored by teachers and staff. Face coverings may be removed:
 - When six or more feet of social distance can occur
 - Once seated behind a desk shield
 - When eating a meal or snack
 - During physical activity when able to social distance

As students start the year on campus or transition back from ILE after the year begins, it will be imperative that all students and their families adhere to FSDB safety protocols. Regular screening by families at home and compliance with wearing masks at school will be necessary to minimize the health risks to everyone on campus.

I am confident that by working together, we will have a wonderful and safe start to our school year!

Sincerely,

Julia Mintzer
Interim President & Administrator of Business Services

**Should you wish to change the learning option for your child (brick and mortar to ILE or vice versa), FSDB requires at least one week notice to make such a change as it has an impact on the allocation of resources that support student services including transportation. This is for situations that are not COVID-related.*