



The Fisher Flyer

Official Newsletter of Fisher Island Day School

August 20, 2020

Dear Students, Parents, Faculty, & Staff,

Following are important back-to-school updates.

Return to FIDS. Heartfelt greetings to our Fisher Island Day School (FIDS) community, wherever you may be enjoying the final days of summer! I was delighted to return to work at FIDS on Monday, August 17, 2020, following successful spinal surgery in late July. It's good to be back at FIDS with the anticipation of a new school year with in-school, in-person instruction. Our decision to reopen is in the best interest of our children. That said, it will not entirely be business as usual given the guidelines for social distancing. For now, there will not be opportunities for large social gatherings, such as our Back-to-School Parent Coffee, Open House, New Parent Reception, etc. We will endeavor to provide virtual options or multiple, smaller-scale events in lieu of these large assemblies. Similarly, FIDS students will have fewer opportunities to interact with students beyond their respective grade levels. Students will continue to receive the exemplary instruction FIDS is known for, but will do so with less room-to-room movement, greater distances apart, etc. Lastly, we will be limiting on-campus visitors. Please know that the aforementioned restrictions will allow us to reopen safely.



We—at FIDS—have been busy making magic this summer by fulfilling the following:

- **Expansion Project:** We have a building! Our expansion is proceeding according to timelines and we are looking forward to a lot more elbow room in January 2021. We are very excited about the benefits this expansion will provide to the entire FIDS community. Having undergone an expansion in 2013, we are adept at mitigating the impact of construction on our academic and extracurricular programs. We thank you in advance for your support.
- **Athletics/Extracurricular Programs.** In addition to teaching social studies, [Mr. Trevor Leafe](#) has been named FIDS's Athletic Director. Prior to working at FIDS, Trevor taught middle school in New York City at the Classical Charter School in the Bronx. He also served as the Advanced Placement U.S. History and Current Events teacher at the Convent of the Sacred Heart in New York's Upper East Side while also coaching track-and-field and cross-country racing. Trevor received his Bachelor's Degree in History from Dartmouth College in Hanover, N.H., where he earned All-American honors and a spot in their Athletic Hall of Fame while competing for their Alpine Ski team. He earned his Master's Degree in Adolescent Social-Studies Education from Hunter College in New York City. Congratulations to Mr. Leafe. More details to follow. Athletics and extracurricular programming will commence on Monday, August 31, 2020. In addition, please be advised that our athletic partnerships with the JCC Miami Beach and Nautilus Middle School will not resume until such time that their facilities reopen.
- **General Maintenance.** Our beloved FIDS is being polished, shined, and sanitized as we bear down on the first day of school. FIDS's maintenance and housekeeping staff are working diligently to assure our schoolhouse is ready to greet our community on August 24th.

First Day of School. Students start the new school year on Monday, August 24, 2020. Our school day begins promptly at 8:15 a.m. Please plan on arriving no later than 8:00 a.m. Please refer to the [FIDS calendar](#) for important dates throughout the 2020-2021 school year.

Faculty and Staff Assignments. There have been minimal changes to our faculty and staff and their respective assignments for the 2020-2021 school year. Please refer to the [Faculty/Staff Profiles](#) on our website for information about our esteemed faculty and their respective assignments for the 2020-2021 school year.

Ducks-In-A-Row. I know that many of you like to use the summer to get your “ducks in a row” for the new school year. We applaud you for that! To assist your efforts, please refer to the [Forms/Resources](#) section of FIDS’s website, which contains useful information to help get you situated for the new school year. We have already personally reached out to each new family who will be joining FIDS in 2020-2021.

First Day of School—Monday, August 24, 2020.

- Please plan on having your child arrive at school on the first day no later than 8:00 a.m. (See Drop-Off instructions below.)
- Greeters will be on hand to conduct temperature checks and to help direct your child to his/her classroom.
- Please plan on departing from FIDS as soon as your child is directed to his/her classroom so that we may begin the learning day.
- **2020 - 2021 school hours:**
 - **8:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. or 3:00 p.m. – Early Learning**
 - **8:15 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. – Pre-K through Grade 8**
 - **3:05 p.m. – TBD – Active Hours, Athletics, & Extracurricular Activities**

Transportation. Off-island parents will be cleared—one car per family—for **ferry access for the first day of school only.** Bus service will be provided starting on the first day of school as follows:

Morning	Afternoon (3:00 p.m. only)
Jungle Island	Jungle Island
South of Fifth	South of Fifth
North Bay Road	North Bay Road

First Day of School Drop-Off. In order to mitigate visitors on campus, parents will only be allowed to drop off children by using the outer loop in front of the school. This is the loop that runs under the portico—also known as the “kiss-and-go” lane. Stopping, standing, or parking in this lane is prohibited. Golf carts should be parked on the grassy area in front of the school, not across the street. We have no car parking available.

Tropical Storm 13. We are currently monitoring Tropical Storm 13, which may impact weather conditions in South Florida early next week. It is still our intent to open on Monday, August 24, 2020. Should our planned opening be delayed due to weather, we will reach out to you over the weekend. In addition, you can check our website: www.FIDS.org. If you do not hear from us, it means business as usual.

FIDS Fall Reopening—General Information. It is with great excitement and optimism that Fisher Island Day School (FIDS) announces its plans for reopening our facility for the 2020-2021 school year on Monday, August 24, 2020. Our [reopening plan](#) is consistent with the recent recommendation by the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), who advised that students be “physically present in school” as much as possible and emphasize that there are major health, social, and educational risks to keeping children at home. In preparing for FIDS’s re-opening, we have followed the precepts of Florida’s [Re-Opening Florida’s Schools and the CARES Act](#), which supports school-level plans that “maintain in-person learning, the best mode of education delivery for high student achievement.”

Being a small school with low student-teacher ratios, we pride ourselves on being able to quickly adapt to changing situations while providing the best possible overall learning experience for our students. Unlike our larger school counterparts—who are wrestling with capacity constraints—we can safely accommodate our entire student body within our campus. In the best interest of our children, we look forward to having everyone back on campus in August.

The development of our re-opening plan considered the needs of faculty, staff members, and—most importantly—our students. When considering the typical school day, there are several high-risk occasions where students and faculty/staff gather in close proximity—including arrivals, departures, all-school assemblies, lunchtime, and group-based extracurricular activities. Within the context of pandemic recovery, it is essential to carefully manage these situations, including strictly controlling in-class activities and student movement and limiting assembly-type gatherings in order to reduce the likelihood of spreading an infectious disease.

All of our efforts and plans will follow federal, state, and local laws and regulations as a legal basis for resuming school operations and associated educational activities. Furthermore, we expect this to be an evolving plan as we learn more about COVID-19 and how to reduce its spread. This plan will involve helping educate our employees, students, and family members on how to safely operate in this environment. It will also include adopting personal protective equipment policies—in alignment with CDC guidelines—for protecting staff members, teachers, and students. Whereas we expect our policies and procedures to evolve, we remain convinced that strict adherence to a few simple basics will produce the best outcomes for everyone. These steps include:

1. Pay close attention to social-distancing guidelines.
2. Wash hands and apply hand sanitizer frequently.
3. Minimize touching, hugging, or any close personal contact.
4. Wear a mask if unable to maintain proper social-distancing indoors.
5. Stay/go home if you are ill or if your temperature exceeds normal ranges.
6. Refrain from gathering in large groups/assemblies.

The information contained in [FIDS’s 2020-2021 COVID-19 Re-Opening Plan](#) is current as of July 23, 2020, and is based on the best information available at this time

[2020-2021 School Uniforms](#). This past school year, we permitted dual use of our former and new logo-branded uniforms. As a reminder, beginning in 2020-2021, all student uniforms must conform to the new logo standards. In addition, we are no longer accepting donations of gently used uniforms which bear the former logo. Please click [here](#) for school uniform specifications, including face-covering options for students.

2019 - 2020 FIDS Photo Yearbook. FIDS's 2019-2020 yearbook is now available for online ordering. Price of yearbooks will depend on the package ordered and type of shipping selected. The yearbook may be ordered through Shutterfly by clicking [here](#) or on the following link: <https://link.shutterfly.com/e/rw8fpyU806>.

Thank you for your support in making every school year at FIDS a wonderful learning experience for our children. Your partnership is greatly appreciated.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Bell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Michael Bell
Head of School
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