



Department of Catholic Schools

Archdiocese of San Antonio

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Dear Catholic School Communities,

I find myself writing this letter to you with mixed emotions after listening to Governor Abbott's announcement today in response to measures being taken to re-open the state of Texas. The governor stated that it would not be safe for schools -- both private and public -- to resume operations on campus this academic year, and schools would therefore remain closed. Of course, our priority is the safety and well-being of our students, families, faculty and staff. So, in that respect, I received the governor's message with hope for what can be re-opened and getting people back to work. Yet, there is tremendous sadness for us in knowing that we will not have the opportunity to gather as a school community with all our students as we end this historic school year.

We are already hearing announcements that many public and charter schools across the state will be ending the academic year early and will discontinue their distance learning. In my discussions with your school administrators, this is not "on the table" for us. I am extremely proud of the work the Catholic schools have done to create a sense of normalcy for your children through their continued learning. The Catholic school administrators and faculty have been extraordinary in their dedication and positive energy! They are truly invested in this ministry of Catholic education, and they take such joy in working with your children. It is our commitment that we will continue with instruction in a distance learning environment through the remainder of the school year. We will continuously monitor the engagement of students and the effectiveness of our efforts to ensure that, while we continue to move forward in the academic environment, we are sensitive to the challenges of distance learning and will adjust our practices accordingly. Our buildings may be closed, but our schools are not!

Each of the schools have begun the planning for how and when your school community will be reunited again. Now that the directive has been given that we will not resume classes in the traditional brick and mortar buildings this year, we are planning on celebrating as a community our successes once it is safe to do so. Your campus administrator will communicate with you directly as that plan becomes more of a reality. Be assured, we are anxious to see you again on campus!

Finally, I want to say thank you to you, the parents and caregivers. When we began the year in August no one could have predicted we would be ending the school year virtually. We are grateful for the feedback and support you have given our administrators and teachers. Together we will not only survive this pandemic, we will return stronger than ever! I pray that we continue to see God's grace and blessings through this opportunity to encounter our children and school communities in new ways.

God Bless,

Marti West

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Superintendent of Catholic Schools

Archdiocese of San Antonio