



Urban Assembly School of Music and Art

Dear UAMA Community,

I hope that everyone has had the opportunity to relax and enjoy some of the warm weather during the past few weeks. I'm reaching out to share updates to our planning for the fall, and work that we will continue throughout the summer. As of this moment we are preparing a learning plan that will include all UAMA staff and families, and respect everyone's decisions about coming into the school building. We are working hard in four distinct areas: how to open safely, student learning, striving for racial equity, and inclusive education. As with last year's year-long staff focus on the New York Times, 1619 Project, all of these topics will remain part of our school's professional development program throughout the coming year, and likely beyond. We are in the process of convening working committees in each of the four areas and look forward to your feedback through surveys that we will make available in the coming weeks.

Here are the most pertinent announcements regarding our planning for the fall:

RETURNING TO THE SCHOOL BUILDING:

As I am sure you are aware, there are no definitive plans for returning to the school building in the fall. Guidance from the Federal, State, and local Governments has been at odds with each other, and to compound the matter, the DOE, UFT, and CSA have all been sending mixed messages as well. All of this is to say that when we are given clear guidance we will immediately turn-key that information to you so that as a community we can digest and make sense of it together.

Until that time the DOE has asked that school communities develop an instructional plan based on their guidance that takes into account a variety of scenarios that include both live and remote instruction. Below are some outlines that our different committees will work toward developing:

- The first 3-4 weeks of the school year will be spent with the whole school studying and learning together through a schoolwide interdisciplinary project. We will incorporate activities to foster deep learning and to build and rebuild our community of students and teachers.

- We will design all learning activities so they can be completed entirely online through remote learning or through in-person instruction. Nobody will lose out on the connection to the UAMA curriculum or community by not returning to school. We support every family's choice.
- We will use technology to increase connection between students and teachers to the best of our ability especially for those students not attending in person.
- As we begin to design several models for returning to school and we will ask for your input through surveys later this summer. The models will reflect the most up to date recommendations from the CDC, the NYC Department of Health, as well as the Department of Education. We are also completing our own investigation of our physical space to make sure that recommendations we receive reflect the reality of our school.

I hope that you know, during this very uncertain time, that every member of the UAMA administration, staff, and faculty are thinking of you and working to build a school community that supports all of our stakeholders. It is my commitment to make school engaging and meaningful for every student, whether it takes place fully or partially in person, or not at all. As things begin to unfold I will keep you all posted as we monitor the news.

Sincerely,

Paul J. Thompson
Founding Principal
Urban Assembly School of Music and Art