

January 13, 2021



Dear ASA Families,

I hope this email finds you all well and that you were able to enjoy family and friends in some way during the holiday season. I have great hopes for 2021, despite a rocky start. First, I would like to extend my deepest appreciation for your support throughout the year and for sticking with ASA throughout these difficult times. While not ideal, our faculty and staff have endeavored to do their very best to fulfill ASA's mission in creative ways. Your confidence in and commitment to ASA motivates and inspires us all.

We thought it might be helpful to share some good news and shed some further light on the current educational climate and priorities for this semester.

COVID-19 conditions in Arizona have risen to some of the worst in the nation, but there is some **good news**. As educators, we are included in the current Phase (1B) of vaccine distribution, and many of us are already signed up for the first dose this month! We are so grateful that educators and staff are eligible during this early phase and look forward to implementing our YELLOW (hybrid) model as soon as possible. At our January 25th board meeting we will have a short report and information about the vaccine from our Health and Wellness Council and then prepare for the 4th quarter decision at the February 22nd meeting. We will provide the [Zoom link to Board Meetings](#) in our FEM newsletter and on our website if you wish to attend as a member of the public. Anyone wishing to speak at the beginning of the meeting during the Call to the Public (5:30 pm) will have a 1-minute opportunity to address the Board.

You may be aware of the changes in educational funding that have been instituted this year. Schools who have been in a remote learning mode have received a 5% decrease in state funding, and ASA has therefore received this unexpected deduction. We received special funding through the CARES Act last semester that helped us mitigate a fraction of that deduction. With the recently passed Federal COVID-19 relief Act, the State of Arizona will receive another \$1.1 billion in education aid to schools. We do not know the amount yet, but hope that we will receive enough to both bridge the 5% decrease in state funding we have received to this point and at least a portion of the additional investments we have made in technology, PPE and campus preparations for on campus learning. We continue to raise funds to meet our annual operational goal and tax credit goal that sustain our basic programs. Thank you for your support during the holiday season – we had a remarkable end of year tax credit support!

While we all have endured various struggles during the last 10 months, the social and emotional health of our students continues to be most pressing and of greatest concern. While special time is provided each morning to check in with students during homeroom and provide some Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), we also have an array of other resources that can be accessed by you and your children for additional support. **Please check out this flier, [Five Avenues for Support](#)**, that has a compiled list of resources and contact information currently available - from peer support and school activities, to our own Student Support Specialist, Amy Smith, and other community resources or hotlines. ASA administrative and support staff is here to help guide and support your family.

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Ensuring that all students have a pathway to success during this time is another of our top priorities. Faculty have prioritized content and skills in their curricula to ensure students are prepared for the next course of study/grade and planned between grade levels to ensure smooth transitions and fill any learning gaps. However, we also realize that additional academic support is needed for some students to attain success. Faculty have already devised current year supplemental work and individualized plans to help keep students on track and are considering additional summer opportunities.

Preparation for our traditional 3rd quarter presentations (3QP) are also underway. A cornerstone of the ASA experience and still one of the most transformational experiences cited by our ASA alumni. Presentation Week (March 8 - 12) will precede Spring Break as usual but it will be in a virtual environment with our families. Students will only need to attend their online appointment; there will be no regular classes that week. We will send out more information and sign-ups by January 29.

Finally, we are continuing to plan for an end of year celebration to commemorate our 25th Anniversary and the many student accomplishments this year. Please mark your calendars for the evening of June 3rd. You will not want to miss this re-imagination of our traditional Showcase - stay tuned!

While a bit lengthy (yikes!) I hope this information is helpful, informative, and most importantly reaffirms why you have stuck with us during these historic times. We are with you - and it is heartening to know that you are with US! Thank you for making ASA YOUR school. We are still rooting for 2021 and hold hope for an abundance of better times to come.

Stay well!

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Leah Fregulia'.

Leah Fregulia
Head of School/CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sara Maline Bohn'.

Sara Maline Bohn
Principal

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