



## NOTES FROM SPARTAN LANE

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Greetings from Spartan Lane,

Twenty-five more days of summer vacation! It may not seem like it, but each of you still has plenty of time to reflect, recharge and get energized for the school year ahead. It will be an awesome school year on Spartan Lane, and we are excited to welcome everyone back to share our progress and our new colleagues with you. We are fortunate to add [several new faces to our very talented faculty and staff](#), including six lead teachers. We have new colleagues coming from Illinois, Mississippi, North Carolina, Texas, and across Georgia, and all of them are excited to join us at Athens Academy. We had a great deal of interest in our openings and are very pleased with our newest Spartans.

Our guidelines for the upcoming school year were shared earlier in the month, and we wanted to be sure that everyone had a chance to get comfortable with our plans. [You can find them here](#), and please know that we are not taking this lightly. One of the primary reasons for our success has been the trust that we share with one another. This will continue to be critical going forward and we appreciate your partnership. We have a very high vaccination rate among our colleagues, and we will be surveying to learn more about our students 12 and older. Please continue to communicate with us, stay home when not feeling well, and remain vigilant as the delta variant and others merit our full attention. We will continue to speak to the local healthcare community and make appropriate decisions for our school community on a regular basis.

[This article](#) about children and boundaries from the Child Mind Institute is worth sharing with you, as we get closer to a return to school. We are looking forward to more parent conversations and discussions throughout the upcoming school year, as we know that the past eighteen months has been a challenging time for everyone. We cannot underestimate the importance of mental health and social emotional well-being. All of us are here to support our students and families and we look forward to sharing more opportunities to learn with one another in the near future. If you come across a resource that you would like to share, please pass it along to me or one of our counselors.

Enjoy the days ahead—we are excited to have everyone back on August 17. In closing, I wanted to share the following from one of Amber Schmidtke's recent posts about COVID-19. It is a good reminder that the more of us who get vaccinated, the better off we will all be in Northeast Georgia:

*"So the effort to vaccinate as many people as we can, as fast as we can, takes on an even greater sense of urgency. If you've gotten lucky up to this point and escaped COVID-19 infection perhaps this has caused you to think you don't need a vaccine. But make no mistake, the delta variant is more likely to find you than its predecessors. If you've been waiting for whatever reason, it's time to get vaccinated ASAP. [Click here](#) to find a dose in your area. Because I think delta is marching its way through the South. The virus has far easier freedom of movement now with few people wearing masks and people resuming pre-pandemic social interactions. And many counties in the South have such low vaccination rates that I am afraid delta will spread like wildfire."*

**--Amber Schmidtke, PhD**

Go Spartans,

John Thorsen  
Head of School