

# MERCY HIGH SCHOOL

RETURN TO LEARNING  
2020-21



MERCY HIGH SCHOOL  
Founded in 1945 by the Sisters of Mercy

29300

## COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE PLAN

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MERCY RETURN TO SCHOOL RESPONSE TEAM



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## MESSAGE FROM ADMINISTRATION

Dear Mercy Parents,

The Mercy Return to School Response Team has worked diligently this summer to develop a framework allowing for a safe reopening of school this August and to address each of the MI Safe Start phases. This plan was developed with care and concern for student learning and health, as well as an ability to remain flexible since conditions and protocols may rapidly change.

A hybrid model for return to school under Phase 4 has been selected for the reasons listed. A hybrid model:

- Is supported by 80% of our parents and students.
- Allows for the return to school in a controlled manner as we closely monitor local COVID-19 infection trends.
- Reduces student infectious exposures when 6' social distancing measures are in place.
- Employs advanced Mercy technology, infrastructure, resources, and staff skills to implement a model that supports academic excellence.
- Encourages ill students to stay home, thus reducing the risk of exposure to others.
- Includes reduced class sizes to help with enforcing hygiene and health standards while accommodating a complicated high school program and schedule.
- Includes social distancing protocols which increase our chances of maintaining a healthy instructional staff for continuity of learning.

As a result, we are committed to a hybrid model for Phase 4, with plans to resume full return to school in Phase 5. Any families who prefer a remote model will be accommodated and may indicate interest. Contingency plans are ready should the need arise to employ remote instruction (Phases 1-3).

The safety, mental wellness and learning needs of our Mercy family is of highest priority. Through adherence to stringent COVID-19 prevention protocols, we commit to providing the excellence of a Mercy education for each of the possible return to school phases. Working together, we can lessen the risks associated with virus transmission to maximize the possibility of resumption and continuity of full in-person instruction as soon as possible.

Please expect an invitation for a [parent Back to School webinar on August 5 at 6:00 pm](#), and a [student Back to School webinar on August 6 at 6:00 pm](#) to answer any further questions you may have. An FAQ document is being developed and will be shared on the Mercy website.

We take seriously our responsibility as educators to do all that we can to help our students continue to grow academically, spiritually and socially through this challenging time. As we all know, there is no substitute for the attention and engagement that is only possible with in-person learning.

We ask your support for the proposed plan as we move toward that goal. We thank you for your support as we work in partnership to navigate these extraordinary circumstances.

Mercy Administrative Team,

*Dr. Cheryl Delaney Kreger '66, President  
Colleen McMaster '81, Associate Principal  
Nancy Malinowski, Athletic Director*

*Patricia Sattler, Principal  
Eleasha Mercer Tarplin '94, Dean of Student Affairs*

# MI SAFE SCHOOLS: MICHIGAN'S 2020-21 RETURN TO SCHOOL ROADMAP

On June 30, Governor Gretchen Whitmer released the [MI Safe Schools: Michigan's 2020-21 Return to School Roadmap](#) to provide guidance, requirements and recommendations for the safe return to school for all Michigan students. Although non-public schools are exempt from many state regulations, **we are required to comply with the health and safety mandates outlined in the Roadmap** in order to actively mitigate the spread of COVID-19 for all Michiganders.

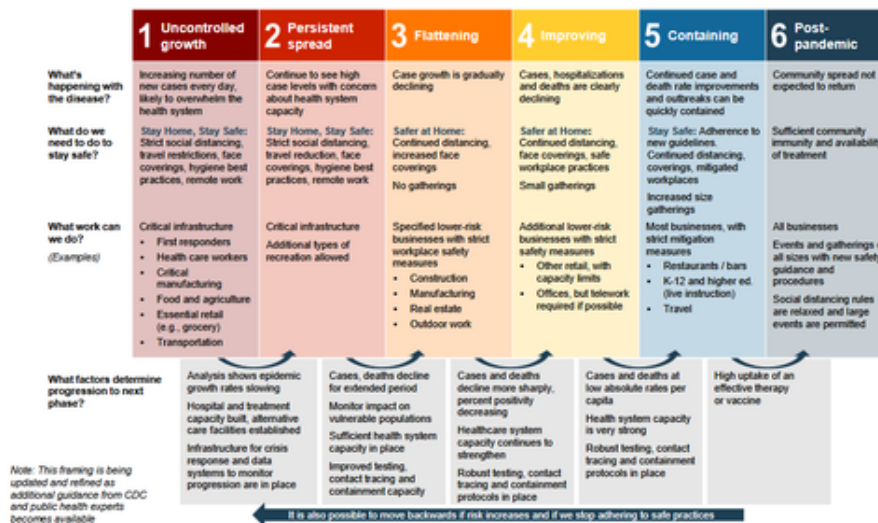
The Mercy Return to School Plan will adjust to support each of the four possible scenarios outlined in the MI Safe Schools Roadmap for the 2020-21 school year:

1. School is open for in-person instruction with minimal required safety protocols (MI Safe Start Phase 6).
2. School is open for in-person instruction with moderate required safety protocols (MI Safe Start Phase 5).
3. School is open for in-person instruction with stringent required safety protocols (MI Safe Start Phase 4). *Southeast Michigan is currently in Phase 4.*
4. School does not open for in-person instruction and instruction is provided remotely (MI Safe Start Phases 1-3).

For the health and safety of our community, in addition to the required components of the MI Safe Start Plan, **Mercy HS while in MI Safe Start Phase 4, will adhere to the majority of “strongly recommended” and “recommended” practices through a hybrid instructional model.**

Our Return to School Plan is in compliance with the [Archdiocese of Detroit's](#) reopening plan that has been filed with the Department of Education.

The social, emotional and spiritual needs of our student body will be supported for each enacted instructional model. External factors outside of our control will dictate which instructional model is implemented. We are prepared to fluidly transition between models as needed throughout the school year, and hope to transition to full person instruction as rapidly and safely as possible.



## ASSUMPTIONS TO PROMOTE SUCCESS OF THE MERCY RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN

In executing our ***Mercy Return to School Plan***, we must keep in mind not only the risks associated with COVID-19 for in-person school programs, but also the known challenges and consequences of ensuring adherence to health and safety guidelines. There is not one, yet a combination of strategies that taken together substantially reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

For the ***Mercy Return to School Plan*** to be successful, the following assumptions must be in place:

- Mercy High School is prepared to rapidly and smoothly transition between learning models to support continuity of learning in response to COVID-19 related Executive Orders by Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer.
- All Mercy staff and students adhere to established **health and safety policies**, including:
  - Performing daily health assessments prior to entering the school.
  - Staying home when:
    - ill and/or exhibiting any COVID-19 related symptoms.
    - exposed to any individual having COVID-19.
  - Practicing 6' social distancing guidelines and wearing of face coverings.
  - Practicing required personal hygiene protocol.
- Students strictly maintain presence with their assigned instructional cohort when a hybrid learning model is in effect.
- Parental support and compliance is present in:
  - Encouraging students to adhere to all established school health and safety protocols.
  - Checking their student daily for COVID-19 symptoms, and keeping her home if she is sick or has had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19.
  - Reporting to the school any exposure or confirmed case of COVID-19.

It is important to acknowledge that there may be COVID-19 positive cases identified within our school, and we will share protocols to help you determine the appropriate next steps when this happens.

The Mercy Administration, in guidance with local health agencies, will consistently monitor the practice and effects of these assumptions and make immediate adjustments to in-person instruction and safety protocol as necessary.

# PHASE 4 MERCY RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN

## PHASE 4: HYBRID LEARNING RATIONALE

During this time of rising COVID-19 infection numbers, southeastern Michigan remains in MI Safe Start Phase 4. The [Governor's Return to School Roadmap](#) requires schools to implement stringent health and safety protocol. Although many safety elements of the plan are mandated while in Phase 4, others are strongly recommended for the health and safety of the community if schools are able to comply. Mercy HS is committed to including all highly recommended strategies as we are able.

In forming our Return to School Plan, we considered the effect a spread of COVID-19 will have on our entire community. A hybrid learning model best mitigates this impact to optimize in-person instruction and reduce the risk of frequent school closure.

A hybrid learning model involves dividing the school into rotating cohorts, with one cohort in physical attendance and the other actively participating real-time from home. 6' social distancing measures can be enacted because of reduced class size.

We believe that adhering to social distancing when returning to school provides us the greatest opportunity to prevent the spread of the virus within our community, and is the best chance in reducing unexpected school closure due to a detected case of COVID-19.

Factors contributing to Phase 4 decision making in support of hybrid learning include:

- Supported by 80% of our parents and students.
- Allows for the return to school in a controlled manner as we closely monitor local COVID-19 infection trends.
- Reduces student infectious exposures when 6' social distancing measures are in place.
- Employs advanced Mercy technology, infrastructure, resources, and staff skills to implement a model that supports academic excellence.
- Encourages ill students to stay home, thus reducing the risk of exposure to others.
- Includes reduced class sizes to help with enforcing hygiene and health standards while accommodating a complicated high school program and schedule.
- Includes social distancing protocols which increase our chances of maintaining a healthy instructional staff for continuity of learning.

# PHASE 4 MERCY RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN

## HYBRID MODEL TECHNOLOGY

To enhance the remote learning component of a hybrid model, we have enhanced our digital learning platform to include Swivl technology. Swivl devices are employed in each classroom to allow the teacher to move freely while live-streaming lessons. Students participating remotely work interactively throughout the lesson with their teacher and peers for a more engaging student experience. Lessons are recorded and posted for student access in the event a student is ill and needs to make up course content.



## MERCY AUGUST BACK TO SCHOOL DATES

**August 17:** All staff report in person

**August 19:** Freshwoman Virtual Welcome Day & Building Tours

**August 20:** Only Hybrid Group KC for Welcome Back and Orientation

**August 21:** Only Hybrid Group SF for Welcome Back and Orientation

**August 24:** Full Instructional Hybrid Model begins with Hybrid Group KC in-person/  
Hybrid Group SF remote



# PHASE 4 MERCY RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN

## HYBRID DAILY SCHEDULE

Hybrid learning allows for full synchronous instruction even on days that students participate from home.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Cohort KC Present Cohort SF Remote	Cohort SF Present Cohort KC Remote	ALL STUDENTS REMOTE	Cohort KC present Cohort SF remote	Cohort SF present Cohort KC remote

The following considerations are built into the daily hybrid schedule:

- Rotating student cohorts will be in school on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Students will attend for in-person instruction 2 days a week with teachers on-site for each of these days. All students will attend classes remotely for a shortened schedule on Wednesdays.

This pattern was chosen as it allows for more equitable student in-school presence with the greatest opportunity for student engagement and teacher connection time.

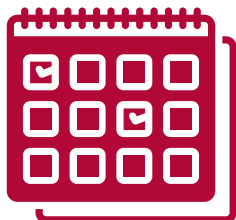
- 45 minute classes, 10 minute passing time, 20 minute in-class lunch.
- On-site students will remain in the classroom after 4th hour for lunch period to ensure hygienic and social distancing practices are followed.
- Unscheduled hours will be suspended while in Phase 4.
- The online Wednesday schedule allows for 30 minute class time for teachers to support class and individual student needs, Adviser Group connections, time for teacher office hours, and supports department and staff meetings for continued program development.
- Wednesday expectations for remote classes for **all** are:
  - Required student interaction per teacher needs, this is not an “off day” for students or staff.
  - Scheduled class time may serve as review/instruction/remediation as the teacher feels necessary to best support class needs.
  - After the last class of the day, students may be called in for extra AP sessions if needed, or to make up assessments.



# PHASE 4 MERCY RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN

## DAILY HYBRID SCHEDULE M, T, TH, F

This schedule allows for 45 minute instruction time, 10 minute passing and disinfecting time between classes, 20 minute lunch.



Period 1	8:00 am - 8:45 am
Period 2	8:55 am - 9:40 am
Period 3	9:50 am - 10:35 am
Lunch	10:45 am - 11:05 am
Period 4	11:05 am - 11:50 am
Period 5	12:00 pm - 12:45 pm
Period 6	12:55 pm - 1:40 pm
Period 7	1:50 pm - 2:35 pm

## WEDNESDAY ONLINE SCHEDULE (FLEX DAY)

This schedule allows for 30 minute teacher customized class support, 10 minute transition between classes, 20 minute Adviser Group.

Period 1	8:00 am - 8:30 am
Period 2	8:40 am - 9:10 am
Period 3	9:20 am - 9:50 am
Period 4	10:00 am - 10:30 am
Advisor Period	10:40 am - 11:00 am
Period 5	11:10 am - 11:40 am
Period 6	11:50 am - 12:20 pm
Period 7	12:30 pm - 1:00 pm

# PHASE 4 MERCY RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN

## HYBRID COHORT GROUPS

We are currently determining how to best establish our hybrid cohort groupings, and will communicate to students and parents as soon as possible. We understand the need to keep sisters and ride shares together.

## ADVISER GROUPS

Adviser groups continue to be an important Mercy structure in building relationships and providing opportunity for teachers to support student care. This is especially important during this challenging time. Adviser groups will be held weekly with required attendance on the Wednesday Flex Day schedule. Advisers may opt to schedule rotating grade level advisor group sessions to better connect with individual student/class level needs. Counselors will continue to use advisor group time as needed to connect with students and avoid interruption of instructional time.



## LUNCH & CAFETERIA

For the safety of our Mercy community, students will eat lunch in the classroom directly following 4th hour. Students are encouraged to bring a bag lunch since there will be limited time throughout the morning to visit the Cafeteria for Grab-and-Go options.

Social distancing during lunch time is mandatory, since students will remove masks to eat. Students must replace their mask before leaving their seat. Students should disinfect their hands before and after eating and are encouraged to bring a personal supply of alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. For the health and safety of others, students are required to bring personal disinfectant wipes to clean up their own desk space after eating.

The following Cafeteria measures will be in place:

- Grab-and-Go options will be available for student pick up prior to 4th hour.
- Students are encouraged to pick up lunches prior to the start of school if possible.
- Increased point of sale stations. Proper PPE for all Cafeteria Staff, including facial coverings at all times.
- Temporary removal of vending and slushie machines, and access to microwaves.
- Floor markers to promote social distancing.

## GROWING THROUGH ONLINE ACADEMIC LEARNING

### *Remote Only Learning Option*

We are excited to personally welcome Mercy students back to a new school year as we introduce our Hybrid Learning Model. We value the personal contact that enriches overall student learning, and are committed to providing as many traditional experiences as is safely and reasonably possible for all students.

Returning to in-person instruction is concerning to our students who have underlying health conditions that put her or family members in increased risk due to the possibility of COVID-19 exposure. For this reason we are offering the Mercy GOAL (Growing through Online Academic Learning) program.



Mercy students who have health or safety concerns may opt to participate in classes 100% remotely through the GOAL program while we are in a Hybrid Learning Model. Registered students commit to the GOAL program through the end of the first semester, unless Mercy returns sooner to full in-person instruction.

Students selecting this option will actively participate in live instruction as scheduled throughout the school day using enhanced remote streaming technology and attendance will be recorded. Teachers may opt for GOAL students to work independently and off-line on modified lessons when necessary.

Students selecting the online option agree to:

- be on time for classes and **actively participate** in each class lesson and activity.
- complete all class activities, assignments and tests within the assigned due date.
- follow Student Code of Conduct policies as outlined in the [Mercy Family Handbook and Code of Conduct](#) for attendance and acceptable course participation protocol.
- remotely attend adviser group, class meetings, club meetings, counseling sessions, open teacher office hours as requested, and any other required extracurricular student meetings/activities.
- meet as requested outside of regular scheduled hours with teachers, student project groups and counselors in order to keep learning on track.
- independently complete alternative assignments or assessments as needed to best demonstrate learning given the possibility of access limitations to classroom materials and resources.

Students participating in the GOAL program are eligible for all athletics and extracurricular activities.

Any student who becomes ill throughout the school year, is asked to quarantine, or is unable to return to the classroom for other reasons will temporarily transition to the GOAL program until she is safely able to return to in-person hybrid instruction.

To start the school year with the remote only learning option, families must request a spot by completing the [online registration form](#) before **August 14**. Registrants will be notified of their acceptance into the GOAL program prior to the start of school.

## PREVENTATIVE SAFETY MEASURES

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person. COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness, and spreads when people are in relatively close proximity, through respiratory droplets generated. There currently is no vaccine to prevent COVID-19 and the best way to avoid being exposed is through practicing social distancing, wearing a face mask, handwashing and disinfecting commonly touched items.



To promote a safe return to school for staff and students, Mercy HS is implementing the following health and safety strategies that are discussed in this plan:

- Required summer professional development for all instructional and student support staff to complete a trauma-informed and resilient schools course.
- Hiring of a school nurse to assist in education, monitoring and prevention strategies.
- Implementation of 6' social distancing practices throughout the school day.
- Instillation of hand sanitation stations throughout the school.
- Inventory of hand sanitizer and disinfectant materials in all classrooms.
- Increased installation of touchless faucets and soap dispensers in bathrooms.
- Marked one-way traffic patterns throughout the school.
- Personal protection barriers installed at the Reception Area and Attendance Office.
- Signage throughout the school promoting proper hygiene and social distancing.
- Required use of a face mask for all students, staff and visitors.
- Daily COVID-19 symptom reporting screening for all staff prior to building entry.
- Parent daily COVID-19 symptom screening of all students prior to building entry.
- Restriction of visitors with strict symptom screening and record keeping prior to being allowed entry to the building.
- Restriction of eating throughout the school outside of scheduled classroom lunch period.
- Limitation of commonly shared classroom materials.

### PREVENTATIVE SAFETY MEASURES CONTINUED...

- Classroom disinfection policy between classes of personal space and shared objects.
- Assigned student class seating whenever possible to limit physical interactions.
- Hiatus on full school in-person assemblies, dances and other large group gatherings. We are exploring options for safely celebrating Mass.
- Modifications to drinking fountains to remove spout functionality.
- Suspension of unscheduled hours to limit student physical interactions throughout the school.
- Students with permanent off-hours will be assigned a room location.
- Offering of Cafeteria food choices to Grab-and-Go options, with increased point of sale stations.
- Increased disinfecting of commonly touched surfaces and bathrooms throughout the day, including routine use of electrostatic sprayers to help prevent the spread of pathogens.
- Hosting on-site fall flu clinic to help prevent further spread of disease within our community.
- Coordinating and monitoring of student school entry and exit points to reduce arrival and dismissal traffic.
- Isolation and reporting protocol for staff and students exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms.
- Designation of a COVID-19 response team.
- Staff and student training on the proper use of PPE (personal protection equipment), safe hygiene practices and identifying COVID-19 symptoms.
- Routine communication protocols with the Oakland County Health Department to monitor local COVID-19 infection trends.
- Process for reporting, managing and communicating a COVID-19 positive case within the school community, including when the school or area of the school would need to shut down.
- Implementation of a digital student check-in/check-out attendance practice.
- Increased ventilation as possible in each classroom, including the opening of windows as weather permits and newly installed windows along the south hallway for better air flow and temperature control.

## HYGIENE PROTOCOL

COVID-19 spreads when people are in relatively close proximity, through respiratory droplets generated by coughing, sneezing, or talking to an infected person. Among the most effective preventive measures – when used consistently and in combination – are masks, physical distancing, handwashing, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces.

The health and safety of Mercy students and staff are our top priority when making the decision to reopen school for in-person learning in the fall. The following health and safety requirements have been developed in collaboration with health professionals, local health agencies, and CDC guidelines.



Keeping the Mercy HS community safe from the spread of COVID-19 requires that all staff and students diligently follow the CDC general control and preventive guidance:

- Wash hands often with anti-bacterial soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating and after blowing nose, coughing or sneezing. When anti-bacterial soap and running water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Follow appropriate respiratory etiquette, which includes covering for coughs and sneezes with elbow or a tissue, then throwing the tissue in the trash immediately.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid physical contact with others, such as hugging and shaking hands.
- Frequently clean and disinfect commonly used surfaces with CDC approved cleaning spray or wipes.

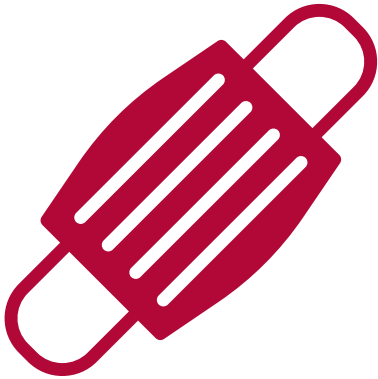
In addition, students and staff must familiarize themselves with the symptoms of COVID-19, which include:

- Cough
- Fever
- Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing
- Early symptoms such as chills, body aches, sore throat, headache, diarrhea, nausea/vomiting, runny nose, loss of smell or taste, etc.

If a staff or student develops these symptoms, she/he **MUST NOT COME TO SCHOOL.**

## MASKS

As the primary route of transmission for COVID-19 is respiratory, masks are among the most critical components of risk reduction. During Phase 4, our requirements for the wearing of face masks is as follows:



- All students, faculty, staff and visitors must wear face masks that cover both the mouth and nose, except when eating meals.
  - Masks must always be worn throughout the entire Campus, including when walking outside to and from the parking lot.
  - Families experiencing financial hardship and unable to afford masks should contact Mercy President, Dr. Cheryl Kreger, [cdkreger@mhsmi.org](mailto:cdkreger@mhsmi.org).
  - Looser fitting face coverings such as a scarf, bandana or other accessories are not allowed.
  - Any student or staff member not able to medically tolerate the wearing of a mask throughout the day due to a pre-existing medical condition, must provide medical documentation.
- Face shields may be an *additional* option for those students or staff with medical concerns or in higher exposure risk categories, however face shields must supplement the wearing of a face mask, unless a mask can not be tolerated due to a pre-existing medical condition.
  - All students and staff will receive information about properly removing and putting on masks.
  - Non-disposable face masks must be washed daily. Daily face masks should be appropriately discarded at the end of the day.
  - Masks are required to be worn by everyone on the bus during transportation.
  - Masks may be removed only for eating during the designated lunch period assuming 6' social distancing is in place.

## GLOVES

Students should not wear gloves throughout the day during school due to cross contamination concerns. Frequent hand-washing or sanitation is encouraged and sanitation stations are conveniently located throughout the building.

Students are encouraged to bring a personal supply of alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

## SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social distancing is another important practice that helps mitigate transmission of the virus. It is important to note that while 6' distancing is emphasized in CDC guidelines (especially when no mask/face covering is worn), there is no precise threshold for safety. At this time while our geographical area remains in a Phase 4 health risk, our requirements for social distancing are as follows:

- 6' of distance between individuals will be implemented whenever feasible, and as possible, markers will be placed throughout the school.
- To the extent possible, classroom desks will be spaced six feet apart and facing the same direction. Students will be assigned consistent classroom seating.
- Use of alternative spaces in the school (Cafeteria, Media Center, Chapel, Lobby, Gym and Auditorium) will be repurposed if needed to increase the amount of available space to accommodate the maximum distancing possible.
- A signed traffic pattern will be established to enact one-way passing throughout the school.
- Measures will be established to enforce social distancing in school common areas (Cafeteria, Media Center, Chapel, Lobby, Gym, Auditorium and Courtyards).
- Students arriving early to school will be asked to go directly to their 1st hour classroom.
- Additional safety precautions are required for the school Attendance Officer, or any staff supporting students in close proximity, when distance is not possible. These precautions must include eye protection (e.g., face shield or goggles), protective barriers, and a mask. Precautions may also include gloves and disposable gowns, especially if the individual may come into close contact with bodily fluids.





## FLU VACCINE

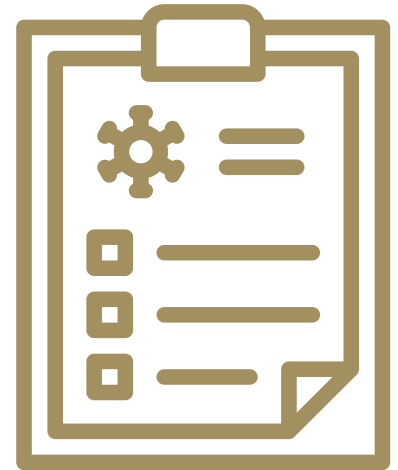
Flu season is another critical factor that could pose significant challenges for our return to school in the fall. Not only do flu symptoms closely mirror COVID-19 symptoms, but managing both a bad flu season and ongoing presence of COVID-19 could be highly disruptive for our community. Therefore, we strongly encourage all students, teachers, and staff to receive the seasonal flu vaccine.

Mercy HS hosts an annual on-site flu clinic each fall, and more information will be forthcoming.

## SCREENING PROTOCOL

It is critical that parents check for student symptoms each morning as this will serve as the primary screening mechanism for COVID-19 symptoms. At this time, our requirements for screening upon building entry are as follows:

- Families should not send their children to school if they are ill and/or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms. We will provide a checklist of symptoms and other guides to help families and students with this process.
- Daily in-school student temperature checks screening of students will not be conducted due to the high likelihood of potential false positive and false negative results. Any student who presents throughout the day with COVID-19 related symptoms will be immediately referred to the school healthcare point of contact and sent home.
- All staff will complete a daily digital COVID-19 symptom self-assessment tracker each morning prior to entering the building. Staff should not enter the school if they are ill and/or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms.
- Visitor entry to the building will be discouraged and restricted. Granted visitor access will only be as necessary, and will be scheduled for after school hours whenever possible.
- All visitors will complete a COVID-19 symptom assessment that will be digitally maintained. All visitors will comply with face covering and hygienic regulations, as well as allow for a temperature check.
- Any visitor who is non-compliant to entry protocol or who is ill and/or exhibits COVID-19 symptoms or answers positively to high risk questions will be denied entry to the building.



## STUDENT COVID-19 RELATED SYMPTOMS/DIAGNOSIS

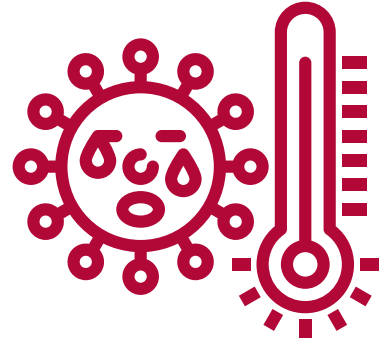
In order to minimize transmission of COVID-19, Mercy has identified an isolated space available for students displaying COVID-19 symptoms.

At this time, our protocol for COVID-19 related symptoms and diagnosis are as follows:

- All parents are asked to assess that their student is not symptomatic and/or has not been in close contact with a person with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis before coming to school. Students not meeting this criteria should **STAY HOME**.
- A student who shows COVID-19 symptoms during the school day will be moved to the specific room pre-designated for COVID-19 isolation until she can be picked up by a family member. Symptomatic students will not be allowed to use group transportation. More information about steps to safely discharge students will be provided in future guidance.
- Mercy Administration will follow-up with the parents/guardian of any symptomatic student sent home.
- Any student demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19 will be strongly encouraged to follow-up with their healthcare provider and/or get tested for COVID-19. If the student tests negative, the student will be allowed to return to school.

Otherwise, the student will not be allowed to return to school until ten (10) days have passed since their symptoms first appeared and three (3) days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).

- A student who may have been exposed to COVID-19, but is asymptomatic may be asked to quarantine and/or get tested to determine whether they are COVID-19 positive. The specific circumstances involved will dictate the applicable quarantine time period.
- If a student tests positive for COVID-19, Mercy will:
  - Notify and work with the local health department within 24 hours to:
    - Determine any need for school closure.
    - Notify any staff members, students (and their parents/guardians) who may have come into contact with the student with a confirmed case of COVID-19.
    - Collect contact information for any close contacts of the affected individual from two days before she showed symptoms to the time when she was last present at school.
  - Due to FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts) and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requirements, the identity of a COVID-19 positive student cannot be revealed. Even if a student or her family acknowledges and publicly discloses a positive test, school staff and officials may not participate in discussions or acknowledge a positive test.
- **During this time of isolation, students should participate in online learning as they are able.**



## EMPLOYEE COVID-19 RELATED SYMPTOMS/DIAGNOSIS

In order to minimize transmission of COVID-19, Mercy has identified an isolated space available for staff displaying COVID-19 symptoms.

At this time, our protocol for COVID-19 related symptoms and diagnosis are as follows:

- All employees will be asked a set of daily screening questions to ensure that they are not showing symptoms of COVID-19 or have had recent possible exposure to COVID-19 before entering the premises.
- Symptomatic employees who may have come into contact with a person with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis will not be allowed to come to school.
- Any employee showing symptoms of COVID-19 or who has had recent possible exposure to COVID-19 will be sent home. Mercy administration will follow-up with any symptomatic employee sent home.
- Any employee who is demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19 will be strongly encouraged to follow-up with their healthcare provider and/or get tested for COVID-19. If an employee tests negative, the employee will be allowed to return to work.

Otherwise, the employee will not be allowed to return to work until ten (10) days have passed since their symptoms first appeared and three (3) days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).

- Employees who may have been exposed to COVID-19 but are asymptomatic may be asked to quarantine and/or get tested to determine whether they are COVID-19 positive. The specific circumstances involved will dictate the applicable quarantine time period.
- If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, Mercy will:
  - Notify and work with the local health department within 24 hours to:
    - Determine any need for school closure.
    - Notify any staff members, students (and their parents/guardians) who may have come into contact with the employee with a confirmed case of COVID-19.
    - Collect contact information for any close contacts of the affected individual from two days before he/she showed symptoms to the time when he/she was last present at school.
  - Due to HIPPA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requirements, the identity of a COVID-19 positive employee cannot be revealed.
- **During this time of isolation, any quarantined teacher will instruct remotely as they are able.**

# STUDENT LIFE

## MENTAL, SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL HEALTH

The Mercy Counseling Department will continue to routinely assess student mental, social and emotional needs. Remote counseling meetings will be used as necessary to accommodate individual student needs. The Counseling Team is prepared to follow health and safety protocol to provide in-person student support while accommodating for accurate contact-tracing if necessary.

All Mercy staff members who interact with students will complete a course prior to the start of school on supporting students during times of trauma. Counseling Team members have engaged in summer courses directly related to trauma support and are prepared for our back to school transition.

Counseling Department Chair Mrs. Trish Brown will continue with publication of Good News, a monthly newsletter sharing motivational and support tips and strategies. Resources (short videos, readings, etc.) regarding student mental health, well being, social connection, necessary information, and inspiration for success will be provided weekly via Schoology. The Counseling Team will continue to support students for college preparation. All college rep visits will be provided virtually to prioritize student health and safety, while continuing to support individualized college planning needs.

All regularly scheduled support within the Counseling Department Curriculum (9th grade and Transfer Student individual interviews, Senior Individual Post-Secondary Planning Interviews, etc.) will be scheduled utilizing both in-person and virtual modalities, prioritizing student preference.

## NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

All Orientation programming will still be provided via high quality virtual offerings (Freshwoman Welcome Day, Transfer Student Orientation, Counseling Department Student Services Orientation). If necessary, Link Crew will provide 9th graders with online social events in lieu of physical social events to ensure welcoming experiences and personal connections for all incoming students.



## SPIRITUALITY

We are committed to providing experiences for students to develop their spiritual formation. We are exploring options for safely celebrating Mass, prayer services, retreat experiences and service opportunities. Our Campus Ministry continues to work on opportunities for students to meaningfully practice and grow their faith.

## CLUBS & EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Offering Clubs and Extracurricular activities promotes development of the whole young woman. Our robust offerings allow students to explore diverse interests. We will support each group and club moderator as they submit plans that best fit their unique needs.

## TRANSPORTATION

All families who registered for transportation have been sent required safety guidelines. Students who become ill throughout the day with COVID-19 symptoms will not be allowed to use group transportation to return home.

Currently no ten-ride punch cards or one-ride passes are available.

## ATHLETICS

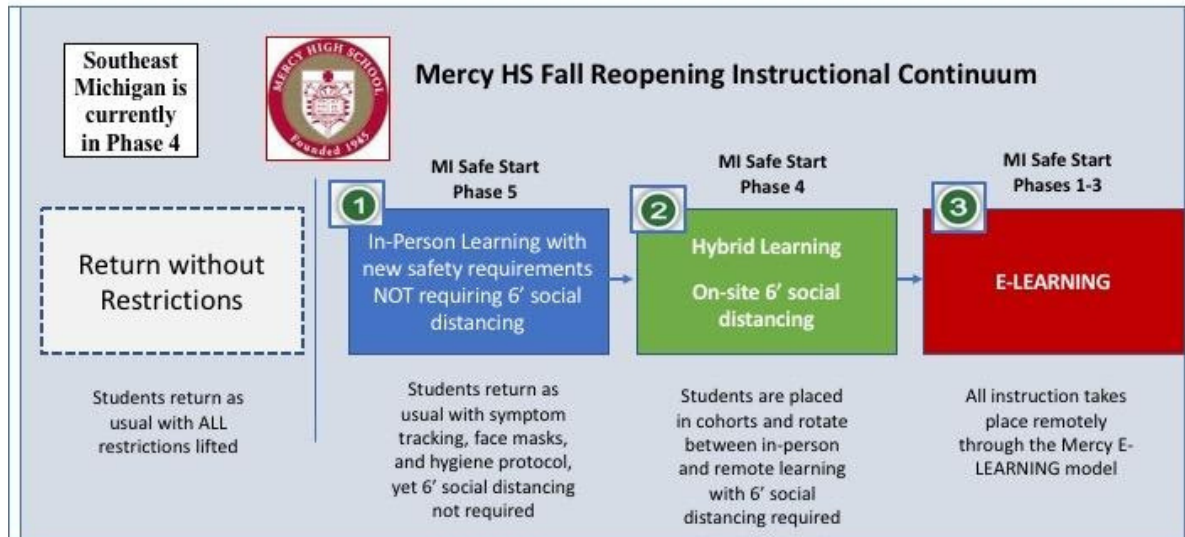
Mercy HS will follow all MHSAA guidelines. Mercy coaches support our Phase 4 Hybrid Model, and will creatively work to ensure all student athletes are supported and continue to develop individually and as a team.

Coaches will communicate relevant safety protocols to parents and athletes under the guidance of our Athletic Director.



# TRANSITIONING TO OTHER POSSIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS

Mercy HS is prepared to rapidly transition to the various instructional scenarios that may be required due to fluctuating COVID-19 numbers. We are confident in continuing academic excellence with each of these models.



- 1. In-person learning with new safety requirements NOT requiring 6' social distancing:** This model will be in place during **MI Safe Start Phase 5**. All students simultaneously return to in-person instruction and follow health and safety requirements (symptom tracking, masks, hygiene protocol) and recommendations that do not include 6' social distancing. This model allows for the resumption of the original daily school schedule and most closely reflects normalcy for our staff and students.
- 2. Hybrid learning:** This model will be in place during **MI Safe Start Phase 4** which requires or highly recommends 6' social distancing practices. The hybrid model assigns students to A/B cohorts that alternate between in-person and distance learning. Students switch between on-campus attendance and participating in live streaming lessons from home on alternating days of the week, with Wednesday being a day of total online learning. Mercy has purchased a technical solution that allows students to more fully interact in real-time with class activities during assigned remote days.
- 3. E-LEARNING:** This model will be in place during **MI Safe Start Phases 1-3** which mandate school closures and a return to online learning, or when the school is required to be temporarily closed due to COVID-19 exposure risk.

Mercy developed a robust online learning plan that was enacted in March 2020 due to required COVID-19 school closures. Over the summer, stakeholder feedback, as well as individual staff and department analysis was used to enhance academic support tools, policies and procedures to further enhance the Mercy E-LEARNING program.

The E-LEARNING model allows for synchronous learning to maximize student academic progression and engagement when a mandated school closure remains in effect. The Mercy E-LEARNING web page may be found at [mhsmi.org/elearning](https://mhsmi.org/elearning).

*Because COVID-19 is a novel disease, our knowledge and best practices are ever evolving. What is consistent is our priority to the health and safety of our students and staff, while committing to academic excellence for all students.*



**Web Site**

[mhsmi.org](http://mhsmi.org)

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