Mount Mercy Academy

ReOpening Plan
September 2020-2021
Plan Development

**In Person Learning:**

School Resumes full time in person with the implementation of guidelines from NYSED, the New York State Department of Health, the Center for Disease Control, and the Erie County Health Department, New York State and Erie County.

**Hybrid:**

This is a blended learning model of both in-class and distance learning.

**Distance Learning:**

Instruction will be completely online and will follow a modified version of our daily in-school schedule. Learning will be both synchronous and asynchronous and will include direct instruction, teacher-student collaboration, and independent work.
Focus Groups

- Health and Safety
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Facilities
- Social/Emotional Wellness
Mount Mercy Academy chose an In-Person Learning Model based on small class sizes and ability to return at full capacity with social distancing practices in place.

We are able to accommodate the needs of our students both academically and socially/emotionally.

We are proud to say that Mount Mercy is equipped with the best accommodations to meet the required guidelines and able to return at 100% capacity, 5 days per week.
What safety precautions will we be using?

**Masks**

- All students and personnel will be expected to wear a face mask at all times except when seated in the dining hall and during designated face mask breaks.
- Students are asked to wear their own masks to school and on the bus to and from school.
- Masks will be provided for students when necessary.
- Education regarding the proper way to wear face masks, discarding of disposable face masks, and routine cleaning of reusable face masks will be provided.

**Handwashing and Hand Sanitizing**

- Appropriate signage instructing staff and students in correct hand and respiratory hygiene will be on display and posted in highly visible areas.
- Sanitizing stations are located at the entrance/exit doors and in all hallways.
- Hand sanitizer will be available in all classrooms, as well.
Health and Safety con’t

Social Distancing

- Within all classrooms a distance of 6-feet shall be maintained between students. Classroom enrollment will be limited to allow for six feet between desks. If necessary, an overflow room will be utilized.
- Hallways will flow in both directions, with signage indicating the proper direction.
- Student lockers will be assigned every third locker to allow six feet of distance.
- Lunches will have a limited number of students per table to maintain six feet distancing.

Non-School Personnel in School

- Due to the current health situation, no parents or outside visitors will be allowed inside the school building at this time.
- No students will be permitted in the building prior to 7:00am and will need to report directly to the cafeteria. Students are asked to leave no later than 3:00pm for sanitation and disinfecting areas. A designated space will be available for students waiting for buses.
Health and Safety con't

Health Office Practices

- Students will have their temperature checked daily upon arrival in the school.
- The Health office will monitor student health with a parent assessment and health check to be completed before a student leaves the home.
- The Health office will be available for students who require chronic disease care, medication administration, basic first aid, and supplies. Tape will mark flooring outside of the health office to indicate 6-feet distance for students waiting to be seen for non-COVID concerns.
- A designated isolation room will be available for students experiencing COVID-like symptoms. Students in the isolation room will be supervised until dismissed to parent/guardian.
- All students who are exhibiting COVID symptoms will be advised to contact their primary physician and communicate any positive COVID-19 cases to a designated COVID coordinator in addition to the Erie County Department of Health.
Health and Safety con’t

School Cleaning

- Approved disinfectant sprays, wipes, and disposable towels for wiping down all surfaces and disposable gloves will be utilized in each classroom.
- Disinfectant products to be used in bathroom cleaning, twice daily.
- Classrooms, hallways, and other designated areas are equipped with hand sanitizer.
- Desks, tables and chairs will be sanitized between each class, as well as nightly.
- Due to the fact that water fountains will be closed, students will be allowed to have personal water bottles. The Hydration Station in the Dining Hall will be open for students to fill their bottles.
- In preparation for the school year, all student technological devices are disinfected and placed in plastic bags for distribution to students upon arrival.
- Each student will receive their own microfiber cloth and instructions on how to properly clean their own device.
- Windows will be open for ventilation whenever possible.
Mount Mercy Academy has a comprehensive continuity of learning plan for the 2020-2021 academic year that includes three models of learning. It is our intention to reopen with full in-school learning in September 2020, following all required government guidelines. Our priority is the health, safety, and well-being of our students and our entire Mercy community. We are fully prepared to transition to a full Distance Learning model if required by local, state or federal governments.
In-School Resumes with Guidelines

- We will extend our homeroom period 30 minutes every day, in order to support the social and emotional well-being and resiliency of students as we phase in academic content.
- This will allow for enhanced student engagement and various opportunities for teacher-student and student-student interaction.
- This will also focus upon building resilience in students to help prepare them for the possibility of transitions between in-person and remote learning.
- Emphasis will be placed upon creating a climate of safety, comfort, and routine as we allow students time to re-adjust to the in-school setting.
Curriculum and Instruction con’t

- We understand that in-school learning may not be possible for some of our students due to medical concerns that may put the student or a family member at risk of serious illness.
- Distance learning will be provided for any student who is unable to attend in-school sessions. If a student begins the school year with this model of learning, we require the student and her parents/guardian to commit to continuing with this model for at least the First Quarter of the school year.
- Students learning from home will participate in daily synchronous and/or asynchronous learning as they receive instruction and submit classwork work through Google Classroom.
Curriculum and Instruction con't...

**Full-Time Distance Learning**

- We are fully prepared to transition from in-person learning to distance learning as federal, state and local guidelines require.
- Instruction will be completely online and will follow a modified version of our daily schedule to be issued at the time if and when we transition to distance learning. Students will be expected to participate in all classes following this modified school day schedule.
- Learning will be both synchronous and asynchronous and will include direct instruction, project-based learning, teacher-student collaboration, student-student collaboration, and independent work.
Curriculum and Instruction con't

- Our academic reopening plans share a return to Mount Mercy rituals and routines that are familiar, consistent, and welcoming.
- We value connectedness—meaningful and frequent interactions and connections between students, parents, teachers, and administrators.
- We are committed to facilitating clear and consistent communication between administration, faculty, students, and parents through our website, social media, Parent Portal, Google Classroom, email, and phone calls.
- Our commitment to academic excellence is reflected in our college preparatory curriculum and standards-based instruction.
- We will focus upon social emotional learning in order to support the well-being of our students and create the mental, social, and emotional space for academic learning to occur.
Emphasis will be placed on social emotional well-being in support of school transitions in order to create equitable and an inclusive academic learning experience. Our social emotional wellness strategies include:

- Incorporating a Stress Resilience Program for students.
- Wellness Wednesdays once a month will focus on mindfulness.
- Daily morning Check-In with Teacher using our 30 Minute Early Schedule.
- Professional Development for teachers regarding Social/Emotional Learning will be provided.
Social Emotional Learning con’t....

- Creation of safe, supportive, engaging learning environments that nurture social/emotional learning.

- Integration of SEL skill instruction and practices within the context of academic curriculum.

- Teaching practices that create classroom and schoolwide conditions in support of social emotional development.
Frequently Asked Questions...

Will there be field trips and large in-school gatherings?

- With the current health concerns, all field trips will be scheduled virtually until further notice.
- In-school events will be adjusted as needed.
- School gatherings that require attendance of the entire student body, such as assemblies and Masses, will be adjusted accordingly.

What about transportation?

- As per NYSED guidelines, all School Districts will continue to provide transportation to religious and independent schools.
What about physical education and interscholastic athletics?

- The Mount Mercy physical education classes will be held outside whenever possible. Masks will be worn if social distancing is not possible.
- The emphasis will be on individual activities with a minimal amount of equipment being used.
- All the guidelines of the NYS Association of Health Physical Education Recreation and Dance will be followed.
- The New York State Catholic High School Athletic Association will pause its fall sports schedule until Sept. 21, and will not have regional or state championships for fall sports.
What are teachers are saying....

- “I'm excited to truly feel a strong sense of community again!”

- “I am looking forward to seeing the students and their excitement when they get to be around one another.”

- “Like everyone else, I am excited to actually see my students (and colleagues) in person. I didn’t realize how big a part of teaching the in-person interaction is.”
What our students are saying...

Student Message:
Questions, Comments, Concerns...