March 16, 2020

Dear Mount Mercy Academy Parents and Guardians,

In response to the recommendations of health experts on how we can help lessen the spread of Covid-19, there will be no classes or activities in the school building for students from Monday, March 16th through Sunday, April 19th, at which time we will reevaluate the situation and notify you as to whether the Mount Mercy building will continue to remain on distance learning or re-open for in-house classes. Please watch for continued updates through the Mount Mercy Parent Portal and your email accounts.

To be clear, no one at Mount Mercy has been reported to have tested positive for the virus at this time. However, in the essence of caution, we feel this is the best course of action for everyone. The Mount Mercy Academy Faculty is prepared to implement distance learning and our students have been using many of the online platforms already throughout the year which will support this venture. We do expect there to be some challenges along the way, which we will handle with grace and courtesy.

Here are the details of our plan:

◆ Monday, March 16th through Sunday, April 19th
  o No school for students
  o No meeting of clubs, sports, or practices
  o School building will be closed to everyone other than essential personnel
  o Official remote instruction distance learning will begin
  o Attendance will be taken by each teacher as per his/her instructions to the student
  o Students are expected to actively participate and complete all assignments from all teachers
  o Google Classroom is the primary tool students and teachers will be using, however other platforms or supplemental online tools that students are familiar with may be used for videos
  o Mount Mercy Academy school building officially closed until March 29th, at which time we will re-evaluate the situation. An extension of the building closure may be possible.
  o With the building closure, all co-curriculars cease until the school re-opens. No field trips, sports practices, clubs, or activities
  o Trivia Night event scheduled for Saturday, March 21st is postponed
  o National Honor Society Practice and Induction Ceremony postponed until further notice
Mount Mercy Gala Postponed to June 6th

Our decision affirms our response to best insure the health and safety of our school community while acknowledging our communal responsibility to slow the spread of the virus. Our Mercy values compel us to act to protect the most vulnerable among us by taking preventative measures through social distancing.

Attached to this message is a list of additional resources our families may wish to access if necessary. These are stressful times, and this is a very unusual situation for our school community. It is important for everyone to model kindness and understanding, especially to our students. Their well-being continues to be our top priority. We thank our parents, our students and our very dedicated faculty for working together to make the best of a difficult situation. Let us hold each other in prayer and look forward to a return to our beloved Mount Mercy Academy very soon.

May God Bless You and Keep You in Good Health.

In Mercy,

Margaret Staszak  Margaret M. Cronin  Kathleen Linhardt
Principal  President  Chair, Mount Mercy Academy Board of Trustees

- World Health Organization
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Governor Cuomo's Pressroom
- Erie County Department of Health
- New York State Department of Health
- NYS Education Department Guidance
- Breakfast and Lunch Program:
  http://www.cn.nysed.gov/content/operating-cnp-when-schools-are-closed-due-covid-19