

March 10, 2020

Dear Mercy Families,

The Archdiocese of San Francisco has closed all Archdiocesan schools for two weeks until March 26th. As a Mercy sponsored school we are able to determine what is best for our community. We of course support the Archdiocese of San Francisco and look to them for guidance; it is also important that we look at why the decision was made, what is happening in our county, and what is best for our students both healthwise and academically.

Why Did the Archdiocese Make this Decision? The Archdiocese of San Francisco covers three counties: San Francisco, San Mateo, and Marin. A San Francisco student tested positive for COVID-19 and at another San Francisco school, a janitor tested positive. There have been cases at various schools of relatives of students testing positive. The majority of these cases are in San Francisco. In San Francisco there have been 14 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases.

What Is Happening in Our County? On Monday San Mateo County reported nine COVID-19 cases, four of which have been confirmed by the CDC. The other five are presumptive positive. At this time the County has not mandated any county-wide closures. Only the public schools that have been directly affected have had temporary closures.

San Mateo County has scheduled a meeting tomorrow afternoon for all San Mateo school leaders to provide direction on San Mateo County's response to COVID-19 and the county-wide recommendation for schools. We feel it is necessary to hear what our specific county's recommendation is before making a final decision on school closure. We will share an update with families tomorrow should there be any new recommendations.

What Is Best for Our Students? There is no doubt that we have yet to fully understand COVID-19 and we will be closing our school. The question is for how long will we be closing school. Should school closure be indefinite, it is important that our students have the opportunity of a class period with each teacher and to have a presentation with the administration to fully understand the Distance Learning expectations. We want to ensure that this piece is not rushed and it is done with enough care that our students feel prepared to be successful during their distance learning days. Regardless of the length of school closure, students will be held accountable for all Distance Learning expectations and their work during these days can heavily influence their semester grades. We want to slow down and take time to ensure our students can speak to teachers in person and to hear the expectations from administration in person.

What is Mercy's Plan? We will continue sending weekly updates outlining if students will be coming to school for classes or staying home to take part in their courses. These updates will include information on weekly extracurricular activities including athletics. All overnight trips will be discussed as the date approaches.

This Week and Next Week- We will have school tomorrow (Wednesday) and Thursday. These days will give students time to meet with teachers and to finish the scheduled plan for the week. We will adjust tomorrow's schedule to have a collaboration at the end of the day so we can talk to the students about our Distance Learning guidelines. Classes will be 75 minutes tomorrow (schedule is below). Thursday's collaboration was a planned early dismissal and will remain so with an optional academic collaboration so students have extra time to meet with teachers if they have questions regarding their curriculum and/or Distance Learning.

We will close on Friday, March 13th and students will have a catch-up day. This will be a day that students can spend submitting any outstanding assignments, preparing upcoming assignments or projects, and/or studying for upcoming exams. All faculty and staff will be on campus for a professional development day from 9AM-2PM. The focus of this professional development will be best practices for distance learning and digital resources. We have been planning this day for a week and are happy that we are able to share additional resources between our colleagues that will benefit your daughters during distance learning.

Next Week (March 16-20) Mercy High School will have Distance Learning Days. Students will be expected to take part in classes as usual from 7:55AM-2:30PM next week. Tomorrow a more detailed email will be sent to families so you are aware of the expectations of distance learning. We will offer optional Zoom Parent meetings to answer any questions regarding Distance Learning. We invite you to join a session and hope you will do so! The more clear you are in our Distance Learning expectations the more you will be able to support your daughter. We welcome any questions that help you feel more prepared to do this.

We will make weekly decisions based on the information we receive from the County of San Mateo and the Archdiocese of San Francisco.

I know that there are many unknowns at this time, and I appreciate your support and patience as we ensure we receive all necessary information before making decisions.

We understand that each family has individual circumstances and personal health concerns. If you or your child is immunocompromised please remember that we will respect any decision you make as a family to keep your child home. Please make sure your daughter stays on top of her studies through Schoology and emailing her teachers directly. If you do not feel comfortable with your daughter attending school, please call the Main Office in the morning.

We are grateful that we piloted Distance Learning Days in November as the feedback we received from students and teachers has truly guided our preparation for next week's Distance Learning. Over the past week and a half we have been busy planning for a closure of this length, and we are confident that our time this week together will allow your daughters to be successful during Distance Learning Days.

Thank you for your partnership in the unknowns these times bring. Let us continue to keep all those affected by COVID-19 in our thoughts and prayers.

Thanks,



Natalie Cirigliano Brosnan '02
Head of School

- **Wednesday, March 11- A1234C Day**

- **Period 1: 7:55- 9:10**
- **Passing Time- 9:10- 9:15**
- **Period 2: 9:15- 10:30**
- **Passing Time- 10:30-10:35**
- **Period 3A: 10:35- 11:50**
- **Lunch A-11:50- 12:20**
- **Period 3B: 11:05-12:20**
- **Lunch B: 10:35- 11:05**
- **Passing: 12:20-12:25**

- **Period 4 12:25- 1:25**
- **Collaboration 1:30-2:30**
 - **1:30- 2PM**
 - Frosh/ Soph: Meet in the Great Hall
 - Junior/ Senior: Advisory
 - **2- 2:30PM**
 - Junior/ Senior: Bring bags to Great Hall so they can leave from there
 - Frosh/ Soph: Advisory
- **Thursday, March 12- B567C Day**
 - 1:45-3:15: Optional Meeting Time for Students
- **Friday, March 13- No School**
 - Student Catch Up Day
 - 9AM-2PM Faculty/ Staff Meeting on Campus
- **Monday, March 16- Friday, March 20: Distance Learning Days**