



2020 Fall Planning Announcement

July 17, 2020

Dear MCI Families and Students,

I am writing to inform you of our current planning for September. The MCI Leadership Team, along with two Fall Planning Committee teams of faculty and staff, are working diligently to outline plans to resume one of three possible scenarios, to be determined: full on-campus daily instruction; partial on-campus daily instruction with alternating days; full online instruction. As of now, we do not know which direction the state of Maine will determine, but rest assured, we will be prepared for all three.

The health and safety of our students, families, and employees will remain our top priority as we proceed in planning and follow the guidance of DHHS, DOE and CDC. We are watching closely for updates on these guidelines and conferring with MSAD 53 and our peer schools. We have identified concrete processes and procedures to support our goal of providing a healthy on-campus experience, something we are doing currently with our BBT and STEM summer camps, which has students attending classes and living on campus now.

Minimizing Health Risks Framework

Our approach to providing a safe as possible setting and quality experience at MCI will focus on people, places and procedures. We continue to develop specific procedures and plans to support all three of these areas while minimizing health risks. Critical measures will include physical distancing, facial coverings, handwashing, air quality by open windows and doors when possible, sanitation and physical plant cleaning, and providing remote learning opportunities as necessary (see “distance learning,” below).

The MCI Advantage

As a small town academy in Pittsfield with both indoor and outdoor learning spaces, we are confident that we can meet many of the current health and safety guidelines without significantly disrupting the experience of our students. Most of our classrooms provide physical distance for students, and we are identifying opportunities to maximize learning spaces and promote additional physical distancing with classroom extensions into the outdoors and alternative indoor spaces. During this challenging time for schools, we are fortunate to have spacious indoor facilities, many acres of outdoor space, and a team of faculty and staff who are dedicated to meeting the needs of students and families.

Health and Safety at MCI

In addition to physical distancing, we will emphasize frequent and proper handwashing as well as facial coverings by all staff and students. Our philosophy emphasizes care of self, others and the environment, and we will work as a community to implement these procedures and promote a healthy learning environment. Our theme this year is *empathy*, and this means moving away from self and thinking and acting based upon the needs and well-being of others in our world, community, family, and circle of friends. Faculty and staff will be working to identify risk control measures for their classrooms, such as hand washing upon entering the classroom, assigned seating for contact tracing if needed, facial

coverings, and safe activities. These specific details will be shared with you all as we gain further information upon the exact framework of the school opening.

The MCI maintenance and cleaning staff will be providing enhanced sanitation of surfaces and materials. We are working closely with them to ensure that we are addressing these key areas daily. In addition, communal drinking fountains will be limited to water refill of personal bottles only, and our dining times and facility will be adjusting how it serves food in accordance to state health and safety guidelines. Our dining hours may also change as we limit the number of students per table, and we will be allowing all students to leave campus for lunch.

MCI will implement health screening procedures before the start of each day and require anyone not well to stay at home. Details of these screening procedures, a self-check with questions to ask your son/daughter and for them to ask themselves before attending school, will be outlined and sent to you before the first day of school. It is critical to recognize that we must work together as a school community to minimize health risks on our campus. Our ability to keep students, families, and our employees safe while on campus depends on the actions of each community member and their dedication to safety within the community at large.

Distance Learning

In the event that any or all programs must transition to distance learning for a period of time or if individual students or cohorts are required to quarantine, MCI will offer a smooth transition to distance learning. We have a faculty committee working now to identify opportunities to improve our online learning experience and to maximize our ability to remain nimble and flexible in this changing environment. MCI is enhancing its technology to promote more synchronous learning opportunities and promote efficiencies for teachers who may need to manage a hybrid model of on-site and distance learning for their students.

MCI COVID-19 Response Summary

MCI is planning to open in a variety of ways in September 2020. A crisis plan is already in place should we have a case on campus with our day student population and/or within our residential community. Our ability to keep students, families, and employees healthy while on campus depends upon the actions of each community member and their dedication to safety within the community at large.

We understand and empathize with the desire for clear directives in looking toward the Fall. Please know that we are working astutely within our control to identify plans to return and offer your daughter/son quality and healthy education experience. In accordance with state CDC and DOE guidelines, we are implementing safety procedures and hope to be provided with more definitive guidance from government agencies soon in order to solidify our plans. In the meantime, we feel gratitude for the resources that our campus and community naturally holds and look forward to a safe experience with you all on campus in the Fall.

Warm Regards,



Christopher M. McDonald
Head of School