

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic High School
Question & Answer Sheet
Updated 8/3/20

This information is subject to change based on new information received.

How will classrooms be set up?

All desks will face forward and be lined up in rows and spaced as far apart as the physical classroom size will allow. We have limited our class size as much as possible. Unused desks have been removed from the classroom.

Have we considered limiting students' use of lockers to allow for better social distancing in the hallways?

Since most of our classes use e-books, it has greatly reduced the need to use lockers. Extra lockers in the hallways have allowed us to space out locker assignments so we have 1-2 empty lockers between each student.

Will students stay in the same classroom all day?

No. Unlike elementary schools, high school schedules do not allow for the same students to remain in the same classroom all day.

Will we lengthen the day to allow for safer transition between classes to maintain spacing?

We do not have plans to lengthen the school day. Students are required to wear masks at all time, including class changes. Students will have 5 minutes between classes which should discourage gatherings.

How will we clean classrooms during the day?

All desks will be sanitized after each class by a teacher or staff member. We have hired additional personnel to help sanitize the various "high touch" areas of the school multiple times during the school day and then again at night with the night cleaning service.

What will lunchtime look like?

We have arranged for two dining areas (cafeteria and learning commons) with marked seating for students with physical distancing. All locations provide socially distanced spaces for students to safely remove their masks and eat their lunches.

What is the arrival protocol? Will students still be expected to be in class at 7:45a.m.?

The school building will open at 7:00 a.m. At this time, designated morning entrances are as follows:

- Main entrance - freshmen and sophomores
- Chapel entrance – juniors and seniors

All students will have a temperature screening with thermal imaging kiosks or infrared thermometers. Students should arrive a few minutes early in time to complete the check-in protocol and arrive at class on time. Once students are screened, they will be directed to either the cafeteria or gym where they can practice physical distancing.

What is the dismissal protocol? Will there be staggered dismissal? All through the front doors or will it be same entrances as arrival?

We are currently reviewing our dismissal protocol.

What about Campus Ministry events?

Father Desmond Drummer is working with the Campus Ministry team to organize smaller groupings for prayer services and Mass. Please feel free to contact him for more information.

Will students be allowed in atrium? If so, will it be monitored for social distancing?

At this time, the atrium will not be open after school because we cannot guarantee physical distancing. Students are expected to leave campus by 3:00 p.m. or be in an organized activity sponsored by the school.

Are there mobility flow controls/modifications in the halls for the times in between classes?

Students are required to wear masks at all time, including class changes. Students will have 5 minutes between classes which should discourage gatherings. Our school was built for 500 students and we will be at 40% capacity this fall which allows for more spacing in the hallways.

What other steps have you taken to sanitize/disinfect the school?

- We have purchased and will install iWave Air Purifiers for our HVAC system in the entire school.
- There will be additional hand sanitizer stations throughout the school and at all athletic practice/game facilities and fine arts facilities.
- Signage encouraging social distancing and proper hand hygiene will be posted throughout the school. Signage will also indicate the maximum number of people at a time allowed in the restroom.

What is your bus protocol?

In order to ensure social distancing, we will have limited morning bus service. If you plan on utilizing morning bus service, reservations are required. All bus routes are \$200.00 per semester and will be deducted from FACTS accounts. Please email Julie Gagnier at jgagnier@mercy catholic.org with your child's name and bus route as soon as possible. (Partner School route or Holy Trinity route). Masks will be required.

Will we require masks for students, and if so, what type of masks?

Solid color masks are required for all students in the building, not only in common areas but also throughout the school day.

What happens if someone tests positive for COVID-19 at Mercy?

If someone tests positive for COVID-19 at Mercy, we will contact the local health department and the Office of Catholic Schools and take our guidance from them with regards to protocols which will be followed.

There have been many references to GHSA guidelines and standards. Can you provide the best link to access their latest policies and decisions on sports?

Please visit GHSA.net

Is there a link that you can provide to access the latest on Archdiocesan decisions?

There is currently not a Q&A page for the Archdiocese regarding decisions for return to school. The letter from the Superintendent dated July 20 reflects the current decision and position of the Office of Catholic regarding school attendance. Any further updates from the Archdiocese will be sent directly to the schools to then share with all of the parents.

Will there be modifications to the service hour requirements for this coming year?

Because of the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, we understand that certain opportunities for service may be limited or non-existent during the summer months, making it difficult for our students to meet particular criteria for the 2020-2021 school year. As our year progresses, we will re-evaluate appropriate and fair expectations for our students to meet their service requirement.

Will there be an audience/fans for performances/athletic events?

We should be prepared to follow all social distancing guidelines including the possibility of no audience/fans. We await guidance from the Governor, GHSA, and The Office of Catholic Schools.

Will Clubs continue to meet and hold activities?

We will have information about Clubs during the first few weeks of school.

Will there be a specific plan for assisting kids (virtual and in-person) with coping with any possible stress and anxiety related to the many COVID-19 protocols in their daily school routine? Mindfulness training? In-school counseling?

Our counselors (Mrs. Kalbeitzer and Mrs. Athearn) and our chaplain (Father Desmond Drummer) will be available to all students.

Will PE classes be held outdoors?

The PE teacher has the option of holding in-class or outdoor classes, based on the activity and weather conditions.

How will you treat students who present COVID-19 symptoms while at school?

Students will be taken to a designated area and will either leave campus or be picked up by parents within the hour.

What is the protocol if someone in a student's family has COVID-19?

We are following CDC protocol regarding exposure to COVID-19. If a student has been in direct contact with a family member who tests positive, the student will need to self-quarantine for two weeks to ensure that he/she is not infected. The student may attend virtual online classes.