



Office of the President

March 10, 2020

Dear parents and guardians,

We continue to closely monitor the emerging, rapidly evolving situation surrounding COVID-19 (Coronavirus). The information we are providing the Mercy community is informed by the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Maryland Department of Health, the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Association of Independent Maryland and DC Schools, and the National Association of Independent Schools. Today's update includes important information about:

- Facilities
- Academics
- Visitors to campus
- Travel history
- Student activities and athletics
- Helpful everyday reminders

Facilities

We are working proactively to combat the spread of germs. Each classroom has been equipped with desk cleaner, paper towels, and additional tissues. Additionally, our facilities team has increased the frequency of wiping down dining hall tables, doorknobs, light switches, and bathrooms, and some interior doors are open to limit the need to come in contact with door handles.

Academics

We are well prepared for online learning at Mercy High School. Our faculty has access to additional online training videos for Teams and Google Classroom and are preparing for online learning, should schools close. There is one snow day we have not yet used this year. If Mercy's campus closes, we will use that first day for a teacher meeting, and we would begin our online learning plan on day two.

Visitors to Campus

As you heard in the information about Career Day in [Update #2](#), we are limiting the number of visitors to Mercy's campus. We are screening visitors who have visits planned to Mercy for a meeting or other purpose in advance of their arrival. Please note that as an additional precaution, beginning this week, all visitors to Mercy's campus will be asked a few brief questions at reception about their health and any recent travel.

Travel History

We have established a new email, taskforce@mercyhighschool.com, specifically to receive questions and information from families surrounding COVID-19. **Please help us keep our community healthy by informing the task force of your planned travel, either domestic or international, between now and the end of the school year via this special email account.**

Student Activities and Athletics

We are using assemblies and advisee time to promulgate accurate, useful information to the students. We know that some students are anxious around this issue, and so we are planning a mindfulness activity for the advisee meeting on Thursday. We are moving forward with our musical production of *Little Women* opening on March 19. However, we encourage elderly individuals and other vulnerable groups to reconsider attending. Our athletic director, Nick Gill, attended a meeting of all of the athletic directors within the Interscholastic Athletic Association of Maryland (IAAM) today. Every school is continuing to evaluate and plan accordingly, and no changes to the spring sport schedules have been made as of yet. We will continue to assess events scheduled later this spring and keep you informed of any changes or cancellations.

Helpful Everyday Reminders

Remember, we must all do our part in this effort to stay healthy. The following every day actions can help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Our teachers are working hard to maintain classroom routine, as normalcy can be a great source of reassurance. We will continue to communicate the most up-to-date information to our community and update the resources on our special [COVID-19](#) web page. Please be assured that we are doing all we can to maintain the continuity of learning and keep all members of our Mercy family healthy.

Best regards,

Mary Beth Lennon '85
President

Mary Ella Franz Marion '76
Dean of Students
Chair, COVID-19 Task Force