

## Reopening Planning (Updated – September 21, 2020)

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### Overview and Purpose

This document outlines the critical components needed for a school district's reopening plan. Mercymount Country Day School, although a private Catholic school, has chosen to use this template to create a plan that **aligns to the guidance document** titled "*Back to School RI: Health-and-Safety Guidance to Reopen Rhode Island's Elementary and Secondary Schools.*" *This document and the guidance document have been used "side-by-side."* In addition, Mercymount Country Day School's plan has been created in consultation with the Catholic School Office of the Providence Diocese, administrators from Mercy Education System of the Americas, school administrators from the Diocese of Providence, our school nurses, teachers, maintenance personnel, and parents. Our task force, comprised of administration, nurses, teachers, and parents, focused on the goal of our students returning to our school building in August, while acknowledging that we may, at some point, be asked to resume remote learning.

### **Message from Sr. Rayleen**

Dear Parents, Teachers, Staff and Visitors,

These past months have been described as "unprecedented," "surreal," and "challenging." I imagine you have heard these and other descriptors for our "unparalleled" Covid-19 experience. As we consider the impact of these past months on the delivery of education in our state and in our country, images of our remote learning experiences come to the forefront. All things considered, our community responded with tenacity and great heart. Governor Gina Raimondo announced that schools would be closed on March 13<sup>th</sup>; and on March 16<sup>th</sup>, our children were learning remotely. Although remote learning is not the first choice of most, students, families and teachers did an outstanding job. As Mercymount's principal, I am indebted to all of you for your hard work, on-going feedback for continued improvement, and persistence through times that were both novel and uncertain.

This "Reopening Plan" was created with the health and safety of our community members, as well as Mercymount's legacy of excellence in private Catholic education, in heart and mind. Our task force used the guiding principles set forth in the *Back to School RI* document: put safety first, promote transparency, be equitable, act collaboratively, provide highest quality educational experiences, be flexible and adaptable, and communicate. In other words, faithful to our Catholic and Mercy educational tradition, Mercymount Country Day School's plan has been guided by the following principals: create and promote a healthy and healing community, foster the principal of *subsidiarity*, affirm that each child is a unique gift of a loving God, encourage and invite the principal of *participation*, ensure the development of strong academic skills, communicate, and remember that we "are born of the Spirit" and can adapt as needed to fulfill God's work.

With great humility, I present this ever-evolving plan to you knowing that Mercymount's success is due to all who are a part of its community. Together, we can ensure that the health, safety and education of our children continue to be our priority. These are "unusual" times, and, as such, require unusual practices. Your patience, support, and continued feedback throughout are deeply appreciated. We will continue to rely on your participation and collaboration as we move closer to reopening.

May God continue to bless each one of you and your families,  
Sr. Rayleen

Timeline	
May 29 <sup>th</sup> , June 1 <sup>st</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup>	Zoom feedback sessions with parents
June 12 <sup>th</sup>	Zoom faculty meeting with feedback session
July 1 <sup>st</sup>	Task Force meeting
July 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>	Task Force work group meetings
July 9 <sup>th</sup>	Task Force meeting
July 10 <sup>th</sup> –19 <sup>th</sup>	On-going consultation with RIDOH, RIDE, administrators and professionals
July 19 <sup>th</sup>	Draft Plan is submitted to the Catholic School Office
July 31 <sup>st</sup>	Letter to the community with a summary of the plan attached
”	Draft Plan is posted on our webpage
August 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 7 <sup>th</sup>	Zoom Sessions to initially discuss plan with the community
August 31 <sup>st</sup>	Scenario/Phase is determined by Governor Raimondo, RIDE and RIDOH
September 2 <sup>nd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup> Day of School, Grades 4-8
September 3 <sup>rd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup> Day of School, Pre-K-3 We are ready for in-person, hybrid, and remote learning!

### What went well in the Spring 2020

- Remote learning was immediate
- Students, teachers and families adapted quickly and well
- Our community stay centered and connected through our daily communal prayer
- Increased use of technology
- Innovation and creativity with regard to instruction and assessment
- Two-way communication was very good
- Teachers and administration were easily accessible
- On-going improvements from parent/student/teacher feedback were implemented
- Learning continued

### “Where do we grow” from Spring 2020

Should remote learning become our reality again, it will be important to...

- Mitigate different expectations from different teachers
- Explore ways to schedule virtual sessions to reduce impact on multiple children households
- Put supports in place to attend to social-emotional health
- Use two main platforms (Google and Seesaw); other platforms will supplement these
- Assign independent work the night before or first thing each morning
- Develop a consistent way to “return” assignments in the lower grades
- Explore more/new ways to assess learning during remote learning
- Create a web page for remote learning

### What we learned during the Spring of 2020

Although face-to-face instruction is optimal, we are ready to provide our students with excellence in both in-person learning and remote learning! We are flexible, adaptable, and willing to learn new methods of instruction for our students.



## Critical Components of an LEA Reopening Plan

The following tables include critical components that should be included in each reopening plan. These components are broken down into **Health and Safety (COVID-19 Control Plan)**, **Instruction, Social-Emotional and Mental Health**, and **Reopening Operations**.

Within each table, there are three types of critical components -

- **Assurances** - actions and items **school leaders must incorporate** into the plan **but do not formally need to be submitted** (though may be requested as additional support at a later time.)
- **Evidence** - actions and items **school leaders must incorporate** into plans and **need to be submitted** through narratives or other artifacts.
- **Guidance** - items that should be considered and incorporated into plans but do not need to be submitted.

Health and Safety (COVID-19 Control Plan)		
Provide Assurance	Submit Evidence	
<b>Face masks and coverings</b>		
X		a. Inform students, staff, and visitors of the requirement to wear facemasks while in our school building.
X		b. Procure and distribute cloth face masks (or surgical masks) to all staff and students who forget one at no cost and have a plan to distribute additional face masks as the need arises (i.e. in the event of loss or damage).
X		c. Inform staff and students of the need to clean their facemask between uses, or to dispose of it between uses (if disposable).
		d. Implement other procedures, as needed.
<b>Social distancing and organizing personnel</b>		
	X	e. Develop policies on general spacing and movement to increase the occurrence of stable groups using consistent space (e.g. distance learning, staggered start times organization of students into "pods" or "stable groups to mitigate cross-class exposure, etc.). Include policies for before and after school programming here.
X		f. Adjust policies for meeting area, dining/cafeteria spaces, and bathrooms to comply with the guidance document and the requirements RIDOH has published on gathering sizes and gathering size restrictions outlined in active executive orders.
X		g. Designate 6' spacings and other social distance policies in high traffic areas (hallways, etc.).
X		h. Distribute social distancing instructions to staff and students and post social distancing instructions/signage for visitors.



x		i. Modify classroom layout to allow for six feet apart between staff and between students. Document where social distancing may not be possible and outline mitigation measures for these circumstances.
		j. Make plans to address carpooling practices or shared vehicles, such as buses or delivery vehicles.
		k. Implement other procedures, as needed.
<b>Responding to a positive case or outbreak</b>		
x		l. Develop a COVID-19 sick policy and communicate it to staff, students, and families.
	x	m. Assign a minimum of one representative to work with RIDOH on testing staff and students, contact tracing, case investigation, isolation and quarantine, and any other follow-up related to outbreak containment. Identify this representative to RIDE.
x		n. Prepare the school community to respond to a positive case or outbreak in a school building or central office. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reviewing safety and response guidelines with personnel and agreeing to call RIDOH in case of an outbreak or positive case</li> <li>- Ensuring sick/attendance policies accommodate any quarantine or other-directed isolation of the individual, “stable group” or “pod” in which a positive case is located.</li> <li>- Closing a portion or entirety of the workspace for a thorough cleaning</li> </ul>
	x	o. Describe your plan for managing staff and students if or when a someone in the building tests positive for COVID-19.
<b>Minimizing access by COVID-19-positive or symptomatic individuals</b>		
x		p. Communicate with staff and students the need to stay home if they test positive for, have been exposed to, or have symptoms of COVID-19.
	x	q. Established screenings that can be conducted verbally, by app, by phone, or by another method including, if necessary, the posting of an informational poster that communicates the screening requirements. Describe your district’s screening process and the communications that have been issued to staff and families instructing them to stay home if they test positive for, have been exposed to, or have symptoms of COVID-19. Align policies to CMT.
		r. Implement other procedures, as needed
<b>Communication with staff and students</b>		
x		s. Share information with staff and students to remind them of the requirement to stay home if they are sick and inform them of updated sick-time and attendance policies.
x		t. Post signs or posters describing the district’s rules for wearing of masks, social distancing of six feet between people, and specifying, at the entrance of facilities, that sick individuals should stay home.
	x	u. Determine the steps you will take to prevent the spread of COVID-19 upon learning of a staff or student who has tested positive for COVID- 19, including how you will work with RIDOH to identify which other staff or students will need to be quarantined and how you will communicate this information to the other community members while respecting health privacy laws.
x		v. Communicate information to staff, students, and families in their preferred language or easiest mode of communication.



x		w. Discuss with or distribute information to staff and students about how the school will address staff, student, or family concerns.
		x. Implement other procedures, as needed.
<b>Cleaning and decontamination</b>		
		y. Instruct staff and students to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day, but especially before they enter and exit a classroom, prior to any mealtimes, and after using the restroom.
x		z. Make hand-washing facilities with soap and running water available to staff, students, and visitors or provide hand-sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol content) that can be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water (sanitizer is an option only if hands are not visibly soiled.)
		aa. Develop procedures for monitoring the supply of soap and/or hand-sanitizer, and replenishing it as needed.
x		bb. Make a plan for or arrange for cleaning of buildings at least once per day. In addition, make a plan to comply with RIDOH regulations and CDC guidelines around the cleaning of bathrooms, etc.
x		cc. Implement new procedures to ensure cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces in restrooms, staff rooms, lunchrooms, meeting rooms, classrooms, shared spaces, and drop-off and pick-up locations in compliance with CDC guidelines.
		dd. Implement other procedures, as needed.
<b>Industry specific guidance and updates</b>		
x		ee. Identify and review guidance specific to education and childcare on <a href="http://www.reopeningri.com/">www.reopeningri.com/</a> .
		ff. Consult <a href="http://www.reopeningri.com/">www.reopeningri.com/</a> , the RIDOH website, and the Governor’s Executive Orders on a weekly basis or whenever notified of the availability of new guidance
		ii. Stay in touch with key community partners regarding education and childcare specific guidance

## Health and Safety Plan

### ASSURANCES:

x	Inform students, staff, and visitors of the requirement to wear while in our school building.
x	Procure and distribute cloth face masks (or surgical masks) to all staff and students who forget one at no cost and have a plan to distribute additional face masks as the need arises (i.e. in the event of loss or damage).
x	Inform staff and students of the need to clean their facemask between uses, or to dispose of it between uses (if disposable).



X	<i>Adjust policies for meeting area, dining/cafeteria spaces, and bathrooms to comply with the guidance document and the requirements RIDOH has published on gathering sizes and gathering size restrictions outlined in active executive orders.</i>
X	<i>Designate 6' spacings and other social distance policies in high traffic areas (hallways, etc.).</i>
X	<i>Distribute social distancing instructions to staff and students and post social distancing instructions/signage for visitors.</i>
X	<i>Modify classroom layout to allow for six feet apart between staff and between students. Document where social distancing may not be possible and outline mitigation measures for these circumstances.</i>
X	<i>Develop a COVID-19 sick policy and communicate it to staff, students, and families.</i>
X	<i>Prepare the district to respond to a positive case or outbreak in a school building or central office.</i>
X	<i>Communicate with staff and students the need to stay home if they test positive for, have been exposed to, or have symptoms of COVID-19.</i>
X	<i>Share information with staff and students to remind them of the requirement to stay home if they are sick and inform them of updated sick-time and attendance policies.</i>
X	<i>Post signs or posters describing the district's rules for wearing of masks, social distancing of six feet between parties, and specifying, at the entrance of facilities, that sick individuals should stay home.</i>
X	<i>Communicate information to staff, students, and families in their preferred language or easiest mode of communication.</i>
X	<i>Discuss with or distribute information to staff and students about how the district will address staff, student, or family concerns.</i>
X	<i>Make hand-washing facilities with soap and running water available to staff, students, and visitors or provide hand-sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol content) that can be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water (sanitizer is an option only if hands are not visibly soiled.)</i>
X	<i>Make a plan for or arrange for cleaning of buildings at least once per day. In addition, make a plan to comply with RIDOH regulations and CDC guidelines around the cleaning of bathrooms, etc.</i>
X	<i>Implement new procedures to ensure cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces in restrooms, staff rooms, lunchrooms, meeting rooms, classrooms, shared spaces, and drop-off and pick-up locations in compliance with CDC guidelines.</i>
X	<i>Identify and review guidance specific to education and childcare on <a href="http://www.reopeningri.com/">www.reopeningri.com/</a>.</i>



**EVIDENCE:**

*1. Develop policies on general spacing and movement to increase the occurrence of stable groups using consistent space (e.g. distance learning, staggered start times organization of students into “pods” or “stable groups to mitigate cross-class exposure, etc.). Include policies for before and after school programming here.*

Mercymount Country Day School has identified each grade with their teacher as a “pod”. Special teachers (such as Art, Music, PE and Spanish) will be restricted in their movement in and out of classrooms. Each Special teacher will remain at a safe social distance and wear a mask.

Following the social distancing requirements of RIDE and RIDOH, all classrooms have the space to have at least 18 students with 6 feet in front of the first desk for the teacher. Student desks will be assigned and face the front of the class.

Middle School students will remain in their classrooms with content teachers rotating in. These content teachers will be more vigilant in classes for which they are not the homeroom teacher.

Face masks/coverings are required, even when students are in stable groups and socially distanced (greater than 6 feet apart). Younger students will be supported to grow in tolerance of this practice.

We intend to utilize Mercymount’s outdoor space as much as possible (PE, classes, recess, lunch...).

Communal prayer and celebrations will continue to be facilitated through technology. This worked exceptionally well during our Spring remote learning experience.

Drop-off and pick-up will be coordinated such that students will remain/go outside with supervision, go to larger stable gathering spaces (gym, cafeteria, media center) where they will not exceed the maximum number of individuals allowed in one space, or go directly to classrooms or pick-up areas. Different grade levels will utilize different entry areas and exits. Older children will have the option to be dismissed 10 minutes earlier with different grades using different exits and/or remaining 14 feet between pods.

Our aftercare programming will be relegated to our cafeteria with each pod, 14 feet from the others, having an assigned area. Provisions are being made for individual supplies and daily cleaning protocols.

In the event of a minimum Covid-19 spread, our classroom sizes and the ability to use two rooms for most classes allows us to continue 100% in person operations.

We will continue to review, assess and refine procedures throughout the pandemic.

*2. Assign a minimum of one representative to work with RIDOH on testing staff and assign a minimum of one representative to work with RIDOH on testing staff and students, contact tracing, case investigation, isolation and quarantine, and any other follow-up related to outbreak containment. Identify this representative to RIDE by providing contact information.*

Full Name	Email Address:
Sr. Rayleen Giannotti, RSM (principal)	rgiannotti@mercymount.org; 401-333-5919 & 401-932-9708
Regina Ludovici (nurse)	nurse@mercymount.org
Kellie Bryda (nurse)	nurse@mercymount.org



*3. Describe your plan for managing staff and students if or when a someone in the building tests positive for COVID-19.*

If a student/staff member is exhibiting symptoms of Covid-19, the nurse on duty will respond immediately. In the event that the nurse is actively assisting another individual, the front office is to be called. Student/Staff member will be isolated immediately in an isolation room that is for the sole purpose of isolating individuals exhibiting Covid symptoms; the room has adequate ventilation. The nurse communicates the concern of a possible positive Covid case to the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or administration (if this has not happened already). Simultaneously, the individual will be cared for until she/he can be sent home. RIDOH will be contacted; and in consultation with RIDOH, the school's administration will decide on notification of all in the school, as well as greater school community. If the decision is made to quarantine an entire classroom or a section of the school building, our remote plan will be initiated for those students impacted. In addition, a deep cleaning and sanitizing will be executed. Both of our nurses have developed and will continue to develop protocols re: different scenarios in consultation with other school nurses. In addition, the nurses will follow the RIDOH Playbook.

*4. Established screenings that can be conducted verbally, by app, by phone, or by another method including, if necessary, the posting of an informational poster that communicates the screening requirements. Describe your district's screening process and the communications that have been issued to staff and families instructing them to stay home if they test positive for, have been exposed to, or have symptoms of COVID-19. Align policies to CMT.*

Mercymount Country Day School intends to adapt and utilize the screening tool developed by the Catholic School Office for students. Parents will be informed that a child(ren)'s attendance at school is an attestation on their part that they reviewed the screening tool and their child(ren) is free from Covid-19 symptoms. A similar attestation will be reviewed and signed each day by faculty, staff and visitors. In addition, visitors will be asked to provide a phone number, as well as sign-in and sign-out. A clear communication of this protocol will be provided in writing with a required signature, as well as discussed during virtual Zoom sessions that were held in August.

*5. Determine the steps you will take to prevent the spread of COVID-19 upon learning of a staff or student who has tested positive for COVID-19, including how you will work with RIDOH to identify which other staff or students will need to be quarantined and how you will communicate this information to the other community members while respecting health privacy laws.*

Since our at-school community is smaller than some, contact tracing will be managed through stable pods with assigned seating, schedules and controlled contacts. All visitors will be required to provide a telephone number and will have limited mobility in our building. We can also use our private parent Facebook page, e-mail, and our website to communicate necessary information – the forum choice(s) will depend on whether or not there is a need to be prudent and/or confidential.

Instruction		
Provide Assurance	Submit Evidence	
Instruction (remote and in-person)		
		a. <i>Develop a Covid-19 Workgroup to continually search for and share best practices.</i>
	X	b. <i>Develop a plan for assessing students' learning progress and loss that includes multiple forms of assessment (diagnostics, formative, student work).</i>
	X	c. <i>Identify how to account for learning loss (reteaching, ability grouping, adjust pacing guides, increased focus on core subjects, etc.).</i>
		d. <i>Consider if and when students will still have access to non-core content (electives, etc.)</i>
	X	e. <i>Identify the ways in which distance learning in the fall will be different from and/or similar to the spring.</i>
X		f. <i>Develop guidance on creating online curriculum and content that is appropriate and meets fair use and copyright requirements.</i>
	X	g. <i>Demonstrate comparable levels of rigor between online and in-person instruction.</i>
X		h. <i>Develop methods for assessing student engagement and mastery. Be sure to prioritize vulnerable students for re-engagement.</i>
X		i. <i>Develop a system to continually monitor learning progress and loss.</i>
	X	j. <i>Determine changes to testing, grading, report cards, attendance, and promotion policies.</i>
Remediation and Intervention		
	X	k. <i>Develop a process for identifying students potentially in need of additional supports (academic or social/emotional) and a process to determine when students may no longer need additional services (entrance and exit criteria for interventions).</i>
X		l. <i>Inventory available support services that are available to students when school re-opens. These should include programs for both distance learning and in-person learning.</i>
		m. <i>Identify when during the school day resource support opportunities will occur for students. Consider both schedules for in-person and distance learning.</i>
X		n. <i>Determine the group size and staffing for remediation activities. Keep in mind that staff for struggling students should have content expertise in the area of need, to the extent possible.</i>



Special Education Services		
	X	<i>o. Develop a plan to revisit students Individualized Education Plans in partnership with teachers and parents to reflect evolving needs.</i>
X		<i>p. Identify Mercymount’s approach to providing co-teaching services, push-in service, pull out services, and related services (in both remote and in-person settings)</i>
X		<i>q. Identify what support services were not possible during the spring semester. Determine how those services will be provided or adjusted in partnership with families.</i>
Staff Supports		
	X	<i>r. Assess professional learning needs for administrators, educators, support staff, nurses, and non-certified staff members.</i>
X		<i>s. Develop professional development plan on curriculum implementation and instruction that considers developmental appropriateness.</i>
	X	<i>t. Provide training for restorative supports and professional learning offerings for teachers around trauma, social emotional learning, restorative practices, and culturally responsive education.</i>
X		<i>u. Plan to provide training to staff, students, and (if applicable) parents on how to access and use online services and resources.</i>
X		<i>v. Map what technical assistance and support will be offered during all reopening scenarios.</i>
X		<i>w. Assess well-being status and needs of staff (teachers, admin, specialists, non-certified) and determine how those needs will be met. Develop a plan for ongoing evaluation of staff needs (wellbeing and instructional).</i>
Family and Community Engagement (communication and partnerships)		
	X	<i>x. Gather feedback from families, students, and teachers on experience with distance learning. Incorporate any feedback into a revised distance learning plan.</i>
X		<i>y. Once state policies are released, engage in conversation with other Catholic school principals and the Catholic School Office to develop an attendance policy.</i>
	X	<i>z. Develop a parent communication strategy to keep parents informed on (1) student progress (2) changes in health and safety guidelines (3) distance learning, as applicable.</i>
	X	<i>aa. Develop plans to reestablish student and classroom culture through emphasizing relationships with students and parents.</i>



## Instructional Plan

### ASSURANCES:

X	<i>Provide guidance on creating online curriculum and content that is appropriate and meets fair use and copyright requirements. Emphasize the need to triage curriculum, so teachers are providing in-person instruction of lessons that do not easily translate in an on-line forum.</i>
X	<i>Develop methods for assessing student engagement and mastery. Be sure to prioritize vulnerable students for re-engagement.</i>
X	<i>Develop a system to continually monitor learning progress and loss.</i>
X	<i>Inventory intervention services that are available to students when school re-opens. Provide on-going assessment to ensure safe provision.</i>
X	<i>Determine the group size and staffing for support services.</i>
X	<i>Identify a strategic approach to providing co-teaching services, push-in service, pull out services, and related services (in both remote and in-person settings).</i>
X	<i>Identify what support services were not possible during the spring semester. Determine how those services will be provided or adjusted in partnership with families.</i>
X	<i>Develop professional development plan on curriculum implementation and instruction that considers developmental appropriateness.</i>
X	<i>Plan to provide training to staff, students, and (if applicable) parents on how to access and use online services and resources.</i>
X	<i>Provide opportunities for the technical assistance and support that will be needed.</i>
X	<i>Assess well-being status and needs of staff and determine how those needs will be met. Develop a plan for ongoing evaluation of staff needs (wellbeing and instructional).</i>
X	<i>Once state policies are released, engage in conversation with other Catholic school principals and the Catholic School Office to develop an attendance policy.</i>



## EVIDENCE:

### *1. Develop a plan for assessing students' learning progress and loss that includes multiple forms of assessment (diagnostics, formative, student work).*

Mercymount's teachers, in consultation with each other, developed summer work packets that reflected curriculum covered. In addition to practice and reinforcement of material, teachers will use this summer work to assess student clarity and comprehension. STAR testing and resources will also serve. Early in the school year, STAR will be administered. Teachers will use the results of STAR testing and compare results of earlier testing to determine achievement gaps. Results will also be compared to normative standards and a plan developed to ensure that students are achieving the necessary benchmarks, and learning the foundational prerequisite material for future learning. Teachers will conduct additional informal and formal assessments for students.

### *2. Identify how to account for learning loss (reteaching, ability grouping, adjust pacing guides, increased focus on core subjects, etc.).*

Mercymount's educators have already begun to identify the most important skills and topics that students need to learn, especially those that are foundational for future learning. Summer packets were designed with these building blocks in mind. Regular Zoom level meetings will continue with time in those meetings to focus on students who may need extra support. Project Based Learning will serve in providing cross curricular learning activities, as well as facilitate a greater breadth and depth to subject content in order to capture unlearned skills and content. Administration needs to explore additional resources before and after school; this additional support may be provided remotely and/or in-person.

### *3. Identify the ways in which remote learning in the fall will be different from and/or similar to the spring.*

- Expectations re: attendance, classwork, will be clearly delineated, recognizing that different grade levels must have different expectations.
- Our community will continue to gather via Zoom for morning prayer and significant celebrations.
- Virtual sessions will be scheduled to reduce impact on multiple children households.
- Supports to attend to social-emotional health will be in place.
- Mercymount will use two main platforms (Google and Seesaw); other platforms will supplement these.
- Independent work will be assigned the night before or first thing each morning.
- There will be a consistent way to "return" assignments in the lower grades (both platforms facilitate this).
- There will be additional ways to assess learning during remote learning.
- We will have a web page for remote learning.
- There will be forums for regular feedback from students, parents, and teachers.

### *4. Demonstrate comparable levels of rigor between online and in-person instruction.*

Mercymount's teachers have already begun to review the Hartford standards to assess which ones are most critical for benchmarks and foundational prerequisites for future learning. The goal is to cover those standards that would be more challenging ones to remote learning via in-person learning and then build on those while engaged in remote learning. In the event of another full remote learning scenario, those standards have been identified and teachers have begun to develop skills for delivery and assessment of instruction in remote learning platforms (especially Seesaw and Google).

### *5. Determine changes to testing, grading, report cards, attendance, and promotion policies.*

Mercymount will continue to utilize assessments and on-going verbal/written feedback to keep students engaged in in-person and remote learning settings. Teachers will work across grade level teams during Zoom level meetings to develop consistent assessments across the curriculum. Assessment of learning will continue throughout both in-person

and remote learning. Exploration of online assessment tools where students can demonstrate mastery of content is on-going.

A consistent attendance policy for remote learning will be articulated. Attendance will be taken when students check-in and participate in online lessons with classroom teacher/s. In the full remote learning scenario, attendance will be taken and monitored for each student through Seesaw, Google classroom and/or virtual sessions (specified clearly by teachers beforehand).

Grading will be consistent with our present grading policies. In the event we are in full remote learning for a prolonged period of time, report card language for the lower grades (PreK through 2) will be revisited. Grading will be provided verbally, as well as in Google Classroom and the student portal (Rediker).

*6. Develop a process for identifying students potentially in need of additional supports (academic or social/emotional) and a process to determine when students may no longer need additional services (entrance and exit criteria for interventions).*

Students will be identified during Zoom level meetings as a result of formal and informal assessment. In consultation with teachers, resource support, and parents, appropriate interventions will be put in place. Mercymount's nurses and Campus Minister will be included as appropriate. On-going evaluation of the student's progress will determine level of support provided and when support can be terminated.

*7. Develop a plan to revisit students Individualized Education Plans in partnership with teachers and parents to reflect evolving needs.*

Our Academic Support teacher reviews our Individualized Education Plans regularly, and intentionally before each school year. Each plan is then reviewed by our students' teachers. Evolving needs and/or potential changes to plans are identified in Zoom level meetings.

*8. Assess professional learning needs for administrators, educators, support staff, nurses, and non-certified staff members.*

Professional learning needs are assessed on a yearly basis. Teachers identified gaps in remote teaching and assessment; they are being provided additional resources through webinars, an in-person professional development day, on-line training, faculty meetings, etc.

*9. Provide training for restorative supports and professional learning offerings for teachers around trauma, social emotional learning, restorative practices, and culturally responsive education.*

All staff and faculty will attend professional development offered by the "Learning and the Brain Institute" at the beginning of the school year. Further professional development with regard to social-emotional needs and emotional intelligence is being explored at this time.

*10. Gather feedback from families, students, and teachers on experience with distance learning (if this becomes a reality). Incorporate any feedback into a revised distance learning plan and incorporate into hybrid learning model.*

Student feedback will be sought in multiple ways: verbally, through reflections processes, and journaling.

In addition to on-going feedback through e-mail communications, Zoom feedback sessions were held for parents/guardians on May 29<sup>th</sup>, June 1<sup>st</sup> and June 4<sup>th</sup>. The feedback from those sessions has been integrated into this



plan. Parents/Guardians were surveyed during the week of July 20<sup>th</sup> and parent Zoom sessions were scheduled for the week of August 3<sup>rd</sup>. As with the Spring, parent feedback has been incorporated into in-person and remote learning.

Teachers' feedback will be part of every Zoom level meeting.

*11. Develop a parent communication strategy to keep parents informed on (1) student progress (2) changes in health and safety guidelines (3) distance learning, as applicable.*

Administration and/or teachers will provide weekly updates regarding changes in health and safety. Teachers in the lower grades provide regular and often weekly communication regarding students' progress. For older children, the Rediker portal will continue to be utilized.

*12. Develop plans to reestablish student and classroom culture through emphasizing relationships with students and parents.*

August Zoom sessions for parents will be a beginning to re-establishing an in-school culture.

Early childhood teachers plan to meet with their classes via Zoom prior to the start of the school year, as well as allow students to come in to see their new classroom set-up.

Some older students created a "teaching video" for the younger children.

The first day of school will be a re-orientation day for elementary and middle school students.

Given the complexity of culture, the administration intends to be extremely sensitive and vigilant about gently re-establishing a safe, engaging, Christian value-based learning environment. Normal daily activities, such as morning prayer with the pledge of allegiance, wearing of uniforms, sitting at desks, and following a regular schedule will be more important than ever.

### 3. Social-Emotional and Mental Health Support

Provide Assurance	Submit Evidence	
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#### Social-Emotional and Mental Health Support

		a. Establish a plan and crisis response focused on student and staff mental health and wellness.
	X	b. Designate a health liaison who will work with the diocesan office, RI Department of Health, and community partners.
X		c. Assess mental health resources - develop a plan to access additional, external supports to address staff and students' mental health and wellbeing.
X		d. Screen or evaluate students for mental health needs.
		e. Establish ongoing reporting protocols for staff to evaluate physical and mental health status of students and report concerns.



x		<i>f. Evaluate staff mental health to assess their readiness to return. Implement system to continually monitor student needs.</i>
		<i>g. Establish ongoing reporting protocols for staff to evaluate their own physical and mental health status and report concerns.</i>
	x	<i>h. Provide resources for staff self-care, including resiliency strategies and RIDE's menu of mental health resources.</i>

## Social-Emotional and Mental Health Support Plan

### ASSURANCES:

x	<i>Assess mental health resources - develop a plan to access additional, external supports to address staff and students' mental health and wellbeing.</i>
x	<i>Screen or evaluate students for mental health needs.</i>
x	<i>Evaluate staff mental health to assess their readiness to return. Implement system to continually monitor student needs.</i>

### EVIDENCE:

1. *Designate a health liaison who will work with the diocesan office, RI Department of Health, and community partners.*

Mercymount's nurses, campus minister and principal are the frontline staff who serve and support staff and students in their mental health wellness. When additional supports are needed, these individuals serve to connect staff and students to community resources. In the event the diocesan office can serve as a resource or is needed for consultation, the principal serves as this liaison.

2. *Provide resources for staff self-care, including resiliency strategies and RIDE's menu of mental health resources.*

Resources for supporting mental health will be provided through a variety of forums: faculty and level meetings; a list of self-care and mental health resources for families and staff; opportunities to gather for meditation and reflection; development of mindfulness practices; and opportunities to celebrate, as well as express concerns (this list is not all inclusive).

Reopening Operations		
Provide Assurance	Submit Evidence	
Facilities and Maintenance		
x		<i>a. Audit necessary materials and supply chain for cleaning, disinfecting, and preventing spread of disease. For example, hand soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, etc. Determine the need for cleaning materials and who will be responsible for the ongoing procurement and distribution of these materials.</i>



X		b. Meet with school-based staff (including custodial staff) to review cleaning and disinfection policies.
X		c. Determine if additional staff is needed to meet cleaning requirements and the cost of that additional staff.
X		d. Establish procedures for entering the school building for teachers, students, visitors, vendors.
X		e. Determine how and when fire evacuation, and lockdown drills will be conducted while being mindful of social distancing requirements.
<b>Operations (Budget, Staffing, Scheduling, Food Services)</b>		
X		f. Develop a high-level picture of the school budget for this upcoming school year. Consider: change in revenues, change in expenditures, Spring budget holdovers, COVID specific funding (CARES, ESSER Funds, emergency funding, etc.)
	X	g. Identify staffing changes for the upcoming school year and develop plan for filling additional positions or repositioning staff, as needed. Develop plan for use of substitutes.
	X	h. Create sample schedules with the plan of how to approach all reopening scenarios. Sample schedules should be for all different age groups and settings. Scheduling should consider policies around drop off, pick up, meals, passing times (such as between classes) that adhere to social distancing guidelines and other health and safety guidelines provided by RIDOH and RIDE.
X		i. Determine foods service needs, being mindful of social distancing and infection prevention guidelines (location of meals, food service structure, facilities/ equipment adjustments, staffing needs, staff training, etc.)
<b>Transportation</b>		
X		j. Assess student arrival protocol (school bus drop-off, parent drop off, etc.)
X		k. Conduct an inventory of students that utilize school bus transportation (including special transportation)
	X	l. Consider the availability and feasibility of alternative transportation options (volunteer drivers, family members, carpools, etc.).
X		m. Develop drop-off and pick-up procedures for bus students based on guidance from RIDE and RIDOH.
		n. Update bus student list as needed.
		o. Track additional contacts for changes in transportation (carpooling, etc.)
<b>Technology</b>		
		p. Designate a lead technology point of contact
		q. Develop a return to school technology plan
X		r. Assess software, hardware, and connectivity needs for fall learning (for staff and students) and compare with existing resources to identify gap in technology needs. Calculate expected cost for technology needs.
		s. Survey families to determine technology needs
X		t. Develop process for inventory of technology, inclusive of student need

Family and Community Engagement (communication and partnerships)		
	X	u. <i>Assess staff and student perceptions of return to school. Are families hesitant about having their child return to school? Are there high-risk teachers unable to return to the school building?</i>
X		v. <i>Identify the key stakeholder groups to be included in ongoing communication. Consider: the Board of Trustees, students, families, teachers, staff, community members, Catholic School Office, etc.)</i>
X		w. <i>Develop an ongoing communications plan that is thoughtful about the timing, frequency, stakeholder group, and content of communication.</i>
X		x. <i>Identify a process and mode to receive feedback and concerns on reopening plans from stakeholders.</i>
		y. <i>Anticipate pushback or concerns from stakeholder groups and develop communications materials to support communication.</i>

## Re-opening Operation Plan

### ASSURANCES:

X	<i>Audit necessary materials and supply chain for cleaning, disinfecting, and preventing spread of disease. Determine the need for cleaning materials and who will be responsible for the ongoing procurement and distribution of these materials.</i>
X	<i>Meet with school-based staff (including custodial staff) to review cleaning and disinfection policies.</i>
X	<i>Determine if additional staff is needed to meet cleaning requirements and the cost of that additional staff.</i>
X	<i>Establish procedures for entering the school building for teachers, students, visitors, vendors.</i>
X	<i>Determine how and when fire evacuation, and lockdown drills will be conducted while being mindful of social distancing requirements.</i>
X	<i>Develop a high-level picture of the school's budget for this upcoming school year. Consider: change in revenues, change in expenditures, Spring budget holdovers, COVID specific funding (CARES, ESSER Funds, emergency funding, etc.)</i>
X	<i>Determine food service needs, being mindful of social distancing and infection prevention guidelines (location of meals, food service structure, facilities/ equipment adjustments, staffing needs, staff training, etc.)</i>

X	Assess student arrival protocol (school bus drop off, parent drop off, etc.)
X	Update bus student list as needed.
X	Track additional contacts for changes in transportation (carpooling, etc.)
X	Assess software, hardware, and connectivity needs for fall learning (for staff and students) and compare with exciting resources to identify gap in technology needs. Calculate expected cost for technology needs.
X	Develop process for inventory of technology.
X	Identify the key stakeholder groups to be included in ongoing communication. Consider: the Board of Trustees, students, families, teachers, staff, community members, Catholic School Office, etc.)
X	Develop an ongoing communications plan that is thoughtful about the timing, frequency, stakeholder group, and content of communication.
X	Identify a process and mode to receive feedback and concerns on reopening plans from stakeholders.

**EVIDENCE:**

*1. Identify staffing changes for the upcoming school year and develop plan for filling additional positions or repositioning staff, as needed. Develop plan for use of substitutes.*

Mercymount’s administration is currently assessing staffing changes and needs in response to a positive trend in enrollment and the utilization of more space. Staff repositioning has been identified, a professional cleaning company hired, and a change made in technology support. Mercymount is blessed to have two Brothers of the Sacred Heart assigned to our school. Both will serve as aides and substitutes (one in Grade 5 and one with the younger children). A list of substitutes is being generated and parent volunteers will provide pods with additional support (parents will be assigned to pods).

*2. Create sample schedules with the plan of how to approach all reopening scenarios. Sample schedules should be for all different age groups and settings. Scheduling should consider policies around drop off, pick up, meals, passing times (such as between classes) that adhere to social distancing guidelines and other health and safety guidelines provided by RIDOH and RIDE.*

Although our class schedules are still in process, much planning has gone into maintaining individual pods. In order to keep pods distanced 14 feet from other pods, thought has been put into drop-off, pick-up, lunch and our after-care programming. Grades will be assigned to certain entrances and exits, as well as bathrooms. Teachers will



rotate into classrooms rather than students passing in hallways and utilizing several classrooms. To facilitate students using hallways and sharing of outdoor space, Mercymount has invested in walkie-talkies for all teachers and appropriate staff.

Our most recent parent survey asked questions that will produce an estimate of the number of students who will participate in varied programming; this number will facilitate more precise planning.

*3. Consider the availability and feasibility of alternative transportation options (volunteer drivers, family members, carpools, etc.).*

Mercymount's last parent survey included questions regarding the availability and willingness to carpool. This information will be gathered and shared within geographic cohorts. Further exploration elucidated that public busing will not be available before September 14<sup>th</sup>.

*4. Assess staff and student perceptions of return to school. Are families hesitant about having their child return to school? Are there high-risk teachers unable to return to the school building?*

Our latest parent and teacher surveys asked questions with regard to individual concerns and how (if at all) the school's administration could mitigate those concerns.

#### **Mercymount Country Day School's Covid-19 Re-Opening Task Force**

- Sr. Rayleen Giannotti, RSM, Principal
- Mrs. Teri Bement, Assistant Principal
- Mrs. Heather Alves, Parent and Nurse
- Mrs. Melissa Antone, Middle School Teacher
- Br Alan Aubin, Campus Minister and Educational Support
- Mrs. Kellie Bryda, School Nurse
- Mrs. Christine Corio, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher
- Ms. Brenda Dias, Pre-K Teacher
- Ms. Kathy Gallagher, Pre-K Teacher Assistant
- Miss Julie Lena, Kindergarten Teacher
- Mrs. Regina Ludovici, School Nurse
- Mrs. Barbara Paquette, Middle School Teacher and After Care Lead
- Mrs. Lisa Pare, Director of Admissions, Music Teacher, and Parent
- Mrs. Cathy Pereira, Computer and Middle School Math Teacher; Resource Support
- Mrs. Kristin Roberto, 5th Grade Teacher
- Mr. George Stansfield, President of the Parent Association
- Miss Nicole Werderman, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher and Academic Support
- Consultation with Maintenance and Custodial Services