



MERCERSBURG ACADEMY

Return to Community Engagement: Health and Safety Plan

The guidance provided in the following plan consists of preliminary recommendations and considerations as students return to Community Engagement this fall. It is important to note that resources and details are constantly changing and updating on a regular basis. As more public health information becomes available, the Director of Community Engagement will work to release further guidance which could impact fall, winter, and spring participation.

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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented those hoping to engage in communities across the world with a myriad of challenges. The COVID-19 virus is a highly contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. Research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), among others, has found that while high school age individuals do get infected by COVID-19, relatively few with COVID-19 are hospitalized. However, some severe outcomes have been reported in the younger population, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable. While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps schools and community engagement programs can take to reduce the risks to students, leaders, and their families.

Mercersburg Academy Community Engagement will take necessary precautions and implement recommendations and guidance from the federal, state, and local governments, as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH), the Pennsylvania Department of Education (DOE), and the National Federation of High School Sports (NFHS). Mercersburg Academy Community Engagement recognizes that the knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing as new information and treatments become available. This Return to Community Engagement Health and Safety Plan may be adjusted as new information becomes available in order to decrease the risk of exposure of COVID-19 to our students and faculty leaders.

Mercersburg Academy Department of Community Engagement COVID-19 Planning Team

The Director of Community Engagement and members of the Mercersburg Academy Experiential Programs Team, working in conjunction with the Rutherford Health and Wellness Center medical services, are responsible for the development and implementation of this plan and include:

- Rick Hendrickson, Dean of Experiential Programs, Storm Watch Chair
- Tricia Crocker, Director of Community Engagement
- Laura Nickerson, Director of Health and Wellness Services
- Stephanie Comer-Concordia, CRNP Health and Wellness Center

This planning team meets on an as needed basis to review the implementation of the following plan and to make any necessary adjustments.

Stages/Transition Time of Community Engagement Participation

At this time, Franklin County remains in the Green Phase of operation set forth by the Governor's Plan for Phased Reopening. Official on-campus Community Engagement activities will begin after the initial arrival plan for students and on-campus quarantine periods are completed. Considerations for each stage are based upon the Governor's Plan, PDE Preliminary Guidance for Reopening, and school guidelines. There is a likelihood that Community Engagement will remain in Stage 1 for the duration of the fall term, pending the school's level of mitigation practices.

Stage 1: Return to Campus Activities (Levels 3 and 2)

- On-campus Community Engagement activities may commence with some restrictions.

- No gatherings of more than 50 individuals outdoors, including faculty leaders.
- No gatherings of more than 25 individuals indoors, including faculty leaders.
- Low-risk activities may proceed normally, maintaining physical distancing.
- Moderate- and high-risk activities should be modified to ensure physical distancing is maintained.
- Controlled, non-contact activities only.

Stage 2: Progress to Off-campus Activities (Level 1)

- Physical distancing will be considered and followed when able.
- Low-risk activities can begin off-campus, with appropriate safety measures in place.
- Moderate-risk activities can begin increasing toward normal implementation, including off-campus programming.

Stage 3: Return to Standard Programming (Level 1)

- Moderate-risk activities can resume.
- Higher-risk activities continue to increase participation with consideration for full activities.

Recommendations for All Programming

1. All students at Mercersburg Academy will follow the standard school policy set forth for daily COVID-19 procedures. Included within the school policy, students are required to complete a daily signs and symptoms questionnaire each morning prior to attending school activities. Results of the questionnaire may require further action related to the school policy and procedures for COVID-19. Students will also report any signs or symptoms experienced throughout the day to the Health and Wellness Center.
 - a. Community Engagement attendance should be accurately taken daily by faculty leaders.
 - b. Faculty leaders will complete verbal signs and symptoms checks for all students at the beginning of any activities each day.
 - c. If a student reports signs and symptoms to a faculty leader, they will not be permitted to participate in Community Engagement activities and will be referred to the Health and Wellness Center for evaluation.
2. All faculty leaders and students should wear a face covering at all times while at indoor Community Engagement events.
3. Faculty leaders and students should wear a face covering according to school guidelines for such face coverings, while participating in outdoor Community Engagement activities.
4. All students and faculty leaders should thoroughly wash their hands (20 seconds with soap and water) prior to the beginning of and immediately following program activities. Hand sanitizer will also be accessible for use as resources allow.
5. All students should have and use only their personal water bottle at all times. **Water bottles should not be shared.**
6. Faculty leaders should sanitize any used equipment at the completion of program activities.
7. Students should not engage in close huddles, hand shaking, high fives, etc. during or after program activities.
8. Physical distancing should be encouraged through increased spacing, smaller groups, and limited mixing between groups when feasible.
9. Students and faculty leaders will complete education regarding health and safety protocols.
10. Any person who is sick should report to the Rutherford Health and Wellness Center.

Classification of Activities

High Risk:

Activities that involve close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants.

- At Mercersburg Academy, this includes: on-site, physically active engagement activities with children and staff attending community after-school programs.

Moderate Risk:

Activities that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants or intermittent close contact or group activities that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants.

- At Mercersburg Academy, this includes: on-site, table-top engagement activities with children and staff attending community after school programs.

Low Risk:

Activities that can be done with physical distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between uses.

- At Mercersburg Academy, this includes: campus-based or online-engagement activities.

* High-/moderate-risk activities may move to a low-risk category with non-contact modifications.

Additional Recommendations

1. Mercersburg Academy facility staff will create and maintain adequate cleaning schedules for all Community Engagement spaces (e.g., Sheridan Gallery) to mitigate any communicable diseases, including COVID-19.
2. Community Engagement spaces should be cleaned prior to and following program gatherings.
3. High touch areas should be cleaned more frequently.
4. Face coverings are required within Community Engagement meeting space (e.g., Sheridan Gallery).
5. Occupancy limits will be established and maintained in Community Engagement meeting spaces.
6. Transportation
 - a. Reduce the number of students and faculty leaders in a school vehicle.
 - b. Wash hands and/or use hand sanitizer before entering a school vehicle.
7. Reduction in contact
 - a. Program meetings should be conducted virtually or in open areas where physical distancing may be maintained.
 - b. Fall health and safety meetings will be conducted virtually.
 - c. The all-school concussion meeting should be completed virtually or pre-recorded for students to watch during advisee sessions.

COVID-19 Education

Students, faculty leaders, parents, and staff will be educated through seasonal meetings, posters, flyers, the Mercersburg Academy website, and emails on the following:

1. The content of the Mercersburg Academy Return to Community Engagement Health and Safety Plan.
2. COVID-19 signs and symptoms.
3. Proper ways to limit exposure to COVID-19 (hand washing, cough into your elbow, disinfecting touched surfaces, physical distancing, avoid touching eyes, nose, face, mouth, no spitting, gum chewing, etc.).
4. No handshakes/celebrations (high fives, elbow/fist bumps, chest bumps, hugging, etc.)
5. Any pertinent COVID-19 information released by state/local governments, NFHS, etc.
6. Faculty leaders will be required to complete the “COVID-19 for Coaches and Administrators” course, provided by [NFHS](#).

Positive Case Plan (Student and/or Faculty Leader)

What are the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Symptoms may range from mild to severe. Symptoms may include:

- Fever or chills (100.4° F. or higher)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

What to do if you are sick?

- If you are sick, stay home or report the Health and Wellness Center immediately. It is essential that all steps are taken to prevent the disease from spreading to others.
- Notify the school immediately.
- It will be determined if others who may have been exposed need to be notified, isolated, and/or monitored for signs and symptoms.

What to do if a student or faculty leader becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms during a program event or during transportation to or from an event?

- Every effort will be made to isolate the ill individual from others until the student or faculty leader can leave the activity.
- The student or faculty leader will be referred to the Health and Wellness Center immediately to be assessed and monitored.

What is the return of student or faculty leader to Community Engagement following COVID-19 diagnosis?

- Student or faculty leader should have a medical clearance from a physician or healthcare professional.
- The Health and Wellness Center physician and/or staff must also provide clearance.
- Individuals must be determined to be non-contagious.
- Individuals must be fever-free without fever-reducing medications.
- Individuals must demonstrate Improvement of respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath).
- Individuals must not be experiencing vomiting or diarrhea.

Resources and References

The following resources/references assisted the Mercersburg Academy Community Engagement COVID-19 leadership team in the development of the Mercersburg Academy Return to Community Engagement Health and Safety Plan.

- NFHS: [Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [Pennsylvania Guidance for All Sports](#)
- Pennsylvania Department of Health
 - [Department of Health](#)
 - “Coronavirus Symptoms”
 - “Phased Reopening Plan by Governor Wolf”