



MERION MERCY ACADEMY

General FAQ

End of the Year	
<p>Now that Governor Wolf has closed schools statewide through the end of the academic year, what is the plan going forward? Will you extend the school year? What do you project to be the final day of online classes?</p>	<p>Now that we know that Merion will remain closed for the rest of the year, we will continue our academic program as Mobile Merion Mercy. We have no plans to extend the school year and are not required to adjust calendars to meet PA Department of Education requirements. We will make decisions to finalize the calendar in the coming weeks.</p>
<p>What are the plans to handle refunds for things like Prep bus transportation, lunch payments, sports fees, ACT/SAT prep courses, and trip payments?</p>	<p>We are sensitive to the financial implications of this pandemic on our families. The Business Office is in touch with multiple outside vendors and MMA departments to determine where refunds for activities, transportation, and other events are possible. Refunds will be made as either a credit against any tuition and fees still owed or will be refunded via check to those whose balance is currently zero. We will be in touch with the families when refunds are fully calculated. Thank you very much for your patience.</p>
<p>Will students meet all requirements for graduation?</p>	<p>Yes, they will. Establishing and calculating credits for coursework is the responsibility of each school. Schools have developed curriculum and have the discretion to determine whether students have completed sufficient course content for course completion and academic proficiency.</p>
<p>Are there any plans to hold traditional end-of-year events for underclasswomen, such as the student awards assembly, Soph Hop, and prom over the summer?</p>	<p>By necessity, any plans will be guided by the latest information being made available by government and health agencies on the progression of the pandemic. In the weeks</p>

	ahead, we intend to make progress toward a more certain outcome and will communicate that as soon as we're able.
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Mobile Merion Mercy: Online Learning	
Where can I find more information about the remote learning framework and the rationale behind it?	Online teaching and learning look different than traditional learning. We are committed to providing a student-centered online environment that provides different opportunities to engage and support students through this difficult time. Click here for a revised Mobile Merion Mercy FAQ sheet.
Now that we need to complete the school year online, is there any plan to change the format to a more regular school day?	We developed a new schedule that will begin on April 14. Highlights include shortened classes that meet twice a week, time for individual work and teacher meetings, designated time for club meetings, and community time.
How much face-to-face class time is occurring, and how are you monitoring that students are engaged in school work throughout the day? How much homework is being assigned?	<p>Classes are intended to be a mixture of synchronous (online) and asynchronous (off-line) learning experiences. Our goal is to have face-to-face interactions as much as possible to increase engagement and promote community. Each teacher takes attendance when his or her codes meet.</p> <p>Students should expect about 3-4 hours of work per week per class. AP classes may assign additional work. There is no distinction between classwork and homework.</p>
Will classes be converted to pass/fail? How are grades being determined without finals, and will those grades be applied to GPA?	Teachers will continue to grade student work through a variety of assessments. Final grades will be an average of S1 and S2 work (50% of S1 and 50% of S2), and grades will be applied to GPA.
Whom do I contact if I have questions?	You should continue to email your daughter's teachers if you have questions or need support.

<p>Will summer programs be affected?</p>	<p>We are investigating adjustments to our summer programs, including possibly adding additional courses (in math, for example), as this situation develops and we receive more information from government and health officials. No changes have been made yet.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">Seniors</p>	
<p>Will seniors be able to graduate on time?</p>	<p>Assuming they fulfill their academic requirements, they will earn the requisite credits to become graduates on time. Grades will be communicated to their colleges of choice. The acknowledgement and bestowing of diplomas might take place at a later time; we are looking at, but have not yet committed to, a kind of short-term virtual degree conferral now that Governor Wolf has closed schools through the remainder of the academic year. See below for other intentions.</p>
<p>What are plans for senior milestone events now that students will not return for the rest of the year?</p>	<p>We plan to celebrate and recognize our seniors with milestone memory-making opportunities. We have assembled an internal committee to plan for two possible seasonal contingencies: a summer experience and a fall one. Current thinking suggests either one would entail a homecoming weekend to combine elements of the social, spiritual, familial, and ceremonial. This would be a combination of events: a reimagined prom party, a prayerful liturgy, and a bestowing of significant honors (academic, athletic, artistic) that families could attend. We are looking to use our own grounds and facilities with extra creativity and accessory features from outside vendors for entertainment or food.</p>
<p>When will the decision be made about senior year-end activities and traditions?</p>	<p>The work of the committee mentioned above is ongoing. The timing will be informed by the latest information being made available by government and health agencies on the progression of the pandemic. We don't yet have a date that is certain. But in the weeks</p>

	<p>ahead, we intend to make good progress toward a more certain outcome and will communicate that as soon as we're able.</p>
<p>Is there anything that families should be doing specifically regarding college?</p>	<p>We encourage your daughters to continue to put forth their best efforts, as classes continue to be graded and transcripts will be sent to the college of their choice.</p> <p>Many colleges and universities have virtual tours and other options available to families still in the decision-making process, and our college counselors have pulled together a list of college-age alumnae and their parents, all of whom are happy to serve as resources for both you and your daughters should you like personal insights into the college(s) your daughter is considering.</p> <p>Once you place a deposit with a college to hold your daughter's place in the class of 2024, please refer to their communications regarding plans for the fall semester.</p> <p>If you have any specific questions that we can help with, please email our college counselors.</p>

<p>Juniors</p>	
<p>How will the lack of college visits, the postponement of SATs, and the loss of the spring sports season affect juniors?</p>	<p>Our college counselors have communicated directly with juniors, encouraging them to take advantage of all virtual tours and personal resources available. Please click here to read their letter. Information on the SAT and AP tests will be posted on the College Board website here. Should we receive information going forward on the athletic recruitment process for juniors, we will be sure to share that information.</p>
<p>Will our daughters be prepared for senior year?</p>	<p>Yes, our teachers are striving to maintain high academic standards and to cover curriculum that is essential for senior year classes.</p>

Community	
<p>What community/county/district/government resources serve as MMA's sources for staying up to date on how best to respond to what's happening now?</p>	<p>For information on the pandemic, we refer to Montgomery County directives and statewide policies.</p> <p>Here are some helpful links to resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Centers for Disease Control ● World Health Organization ● PA Dept. of Health <p>We are tapping into several different resources to stay current with best practices for remote learning. Other important learning networks include: the National Association of Independent Schools, the Association of Delaware Valley Independent Schools, and the National Coalition of Girls' Schools.</p>
<p>Are the Philadelphia-area Catholic Academy high schools staying in touch and coordinating?</p>	<p>Yes, Laura Farrell meets weekly with other Mercy schools to coordinate and share resources. She also meets with the Heads of other independent schools in the region.</p>
<p>What is the biggest struggle/problem that the staff is finding? How can we help?</p>	<p>Actually, we really miss each other and our students. Like all of you, we are also trying to juggle our family and work responsibilities. We really appreciate your support.</p>

Mental Health and Wellness	
<p>How can mental health and well-being concerns be handled with students being out of school for so long? How are socialization issues addressed?</p>	<p>We as a school community recognize that academics are just one part of the school experience for our students. We are committed to providing a well-rounded experience during this time of digital learning, and we are employing several methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Student Support Team is meeting regularly to discuss concerns about students and to develop individual plans that best serve their needs. ● The new schedule includes weekly community and club time to provide our students with an opportunity to

	<p>interact with each other outside of class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are encouraging students to be proactive as well: We have deliberately named lunchtime as “Lunch and Community Time” to encourage students to reach out to each other during their school day. • Mrs. Farrell continues to hold Friday “slunches” via Zoom for seniors who had not had the opportunity to attend one before campus was closed. • We will also have a new student life section on our website with ways for students to connect.
<p>Can parents and students set up Zoom or conference calls with counselors?</p>	<p>Absolutely! Please email your daughter's counselor to schedule a meeting.</p>
<p>How can we as parents help to keep our daughters engaged now that we know for certain that they will complete this academic year in Mobile Merion Mercy?</p>	<p>There are a number of resources available for parents and students in the Health and Wellness section of our Mobile Merion Mercy webpage here. This resource from the Child Mind Institute, found here, is particularly applicable. Dinner conversations on the day's lessons can also engage the entire family!</p>
<p>Parents are worried because depression has kicked in for many of our daughters. How can we support them?</p>	<p>We recognize that our students are experiencing the loss of their school year and are exhibiting an “adjustment reaction.”</p> <p>Our counselors are providing the same services they did during traditional school. If you have concerns about your daughter, particularly if you are concerned that she is showing signs of depression, please contact your daughter's counselor, who can help assess the situation.</p>

Please note: Our faculty and staff remain available to parents and students for ongoing questions and support. You can contact your child's teachers anytime by email.

- For any issues about courses and general questions, please reach out to Ms. Valerie Prucnal, Interim Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs, at vprucnal@merion-mercy.com.

- For technical issues, please reach out to Ms. Anne Foley, Director of Instructional Technology, at afoley@merion-mercy.com.
- For social or emotional support, please contact your daughter's School Counselor at Sister Kathleen Sabatino, IHM, at ksabatino@merion-mercy.com or Ms. Maria Carini at mcarini@merion-mercy.com.
- For pastoral care and support, please contact Sister Anna Saltzman, RSM, at asaltzman@merion-mercy.com.