



## **August 2020 Re-opening Plan**

### **Introduction:**

This communication serves as a framework for the re-opening of Metro-East Lutheran High School (MELHS) for the Fall of 2020. The guidelines and mandates we are using as we prepare for opening come from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), the Madison County Regional Office of Education (MC-ROE), and various Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) ministries with which I have been in contact over the past several months.

Please keep in mind that the guidelines for schools are constantly evolving, so some of the planned procedures may need to be modified along the way. We understand that 100 percent compliance with these guidelines and mandates is not always possible, but we strive to follow these guidelines so our students and staff can be as safe as possible as we open school for the vitally important face-to-face instruction that is allowed during Phase 4 of the Illinois School Re-opening Plan.

We believe that because of our school size and the generous facilities that we have available to us daily, we are uniquely positioned to carry out our school day in a safe and healthy environment.

**If you have any concerns about the re-opening plan presented here, please contact me directly.**

### **2020/2021 School Opening Plan:**

We will open for in-person instruction on Monday, Aug. 10<sup>th</sup> with early release scheduled at 1:10 p.m., which is the same release time as the first-day schedule we introduced last year.

We plan to maintain normal school hours from 8 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. beginning with classes on Tuesday, Aug. 11.

## **Students and Families:**

We are asking parents to check your child(ren) each morning for any potential virus-related symptoms to verify that your child is symptom free and allowed to be at school. This will include a temperature check. The student should remain home if their temperature is above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit. **By sending your child to school each day, you are verifying that they are symptom free.** Symptoms may include cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing; or at least two of the following symptoms: fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell. Please refer to the CDC guidelines – <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

**If a student shows symptoms at school, they will be sent home immediately and will not be allowed to return to school for a period of time outlined below.** This time away from school will not count as an absence and, depending on length of time at home, the student will move to remote learning until they can return to school. **A student will need to be symptom free for a period of 24 hours without medication before returning to school.** **If a student tests positive for Covid-19 (or had close contact with someone who has tested positive), they must quarantine for 14 days before returning to school (at the time of quarantine the student will move to remote learning).** The student must obtain a doctor's approval before returning to school.

We have identified a location on campus where a student will wait until appropriate plans have been made for the child to be picked up.

**\*When in doubt (as it relates to symptoms), please DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL and contact the school office in the morning to report the situation so that the student and faculty member can connect and share information regarding remote learning if necessary.**

Face masks will be required and will be a daily part of our school routine as we begin the school year. We will communicate to students certain exceptions to this during the school day (e.g., eating lunch, music, PE). Masks must be appropriate and not display wording or symbols deemed inappropriate in accordance with our current dress code. The school administration will make the final decision on the appropriateness of a mask, if needed.

We will follow physical distancing guidelines during the day and have put in place some additional practices to maintain this both in and out of the classroom.

We will seek to limit the gathering of students throughout the day by limiting opportunities for downtime and social gathering in the hallways and by the lockers. The passing periods will remain the same, and movement of the students will be monitored closely to limit the gathering of groups in the hallways and maintain compliance with other requirements including the appropriate use of masks.

We will direct students to avoid handshakes, high fives, and other direct contact as much as possible, along with directing them to wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as frequently as possible.

Bus routes from Unity and Litchfield/Hamel will be provided this year, and all riders must wear a mask and socially distance themselves at all times while on the buses. This will also apply to student athletes who ride the buses for athletic competitions. The drivers may also conduct temperature checks upon arrival.

### **Remote Learning:**

In the event of a remote learning **Day**, students will be required to check in at Google classroom for that day's learning event. It may involve meeting online or posting some response to a prompt online. Work for this class should not take more than 20 minutes for a single remote learning day.

In the event of an **extended period of remote learning**, students will be required to check in at Google classroom for a week's worth of work. This may include daily online meetings, online responses, written work done individually, group work done through shared files, etc., with due dates and all directions posted in a PDF. Students will be expected to keep a schedule similar to being on campus.

Remote learning expectations may vary based on the class and faculty-member-expected outcomes.

### **Chapel and Lunch:**

We will continue the practice of having Chapel worship services here at Lutheran High and are exploring a couple of options that fit within the guidelines given to us, which may involve remote transmission of the chapel service into our classrooms. We currently are looking at a combination of student in-person Chapel worship services and simultaneous transmission of in-

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class Chapel worship services to maintain our students' sense of corporate worship as a Christian community.

We will continue to have lunch periods as in the past and will use both the school cafeteria and the Henschen Alumni Hall during lunch to ensure appropriate physical distancing measures are in place.

**Students will need to bring their own lunch to school each day.** Vending machines and microwave ovens will be available for student use. As we begin the school year we will not have lunches brought in from area businesses. We also are exploring having pre-packaged food available for students to purchase during lunch periods.

### **Facilities:**

There is a 50-person maximum limit for people to gather in a single interior space, and MELHS is uniquely positioned with numbers and facilities to meet this requirement every day.

The MELHS buildings are being thoroughly cleaned and sanitized prior to the opening of school and will be ready on Aug. 10 as we return. Daily cleaning will be increased as school begins, and we have hired additional staff to accomplish this.

You will see hand sanitizing stations all over campus and in classrooms to be readily available to students and staff.

We will display appropriate signage around campus to reinforce the importance of the guidelines such as "washing your hands," "watching your distancing," and "wearing your mask."

We will require that students bring their own water bottles to school to use throughout the day.

Students will be asked to enter the school using only one specific door in the morning. Students will exit the school using a designated door as well. Directions to be given during the school day.

Lockers are available for students, and we have worked to assign lockers to best provide physical distancing while students are at their lockers. Backpack use will be allowed on campus this year to reduce or eliminate the need to use lockers.

In the morning as students arrive, they are to use their lockers and then proceed directly to their 1<sup>st</sup> period classroom to avoid gathering in groups prior to the beginning of school.

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If at all possible, have students arrive at school between 7:45 a.m. and 7:55 a.m. to avoid gathering in groups. In addition, and where possible, make arrangements to pick up your son or daughter immediately after school. If students don't need to be around after school, please make arrangements to get them home as soon as possible.

If students need to arrive early or stay longer because of transportation arrangements, there will be a designated location where the student can wait.

The furniture in common areas (e.g., outside of the main gym and school offices) will be removed or reduced to discourage students from gathering in these areas.

There will be a limited number of visitors allowed on campus, and all visitors must wear a mask.

### **Music & Physical Education:**

P.E. classes will continue and will combine athletic involvement and classroom instruction. P.E. uniforms should be kept in your school locker, and when to dress out will be communicated by the faculty member in charge of the class.

Music classes will meet with specific modifications to each class — band, choir, strings, guitar, etc.

We also are incorporating the use of classes outside when possible and appropriate and where appropriate physical distancing can take place.

The MELHS Drama and Theater program will continue to serve both our students and the community as we have in the past. Further information about this will be coming as MELHS administration meets with the current Fine Arts leaders to determine a plan for the 2020/2021 school year.

### **MELHS Athletics:**

The Illinois High School Association (IHSA), the governing body for high school sports in Illinois, has come out with their recommendations for sports for the 20/21 school year. Specific information will be shared with respective MELHS coaches and communicated to student athletes and parents.

**Closing:**

As I have said many times, this is an ever-changing document with many parts to it and many things involved during the decision-making process. As I have in the past, I will share weekly updates with you on Fridays. As things change this school year, MELHS will adjust accordingly, and we ask for your prayers as together we open another school year. I have heard from many of our school families this summer, and there is overwhelming support for getting back to in-person education of our students. I am grateful for your support and look forward to partnering with you in what will no doubt be a unique year.

If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at school or come by and visit with me in my office. There is a lot of information to sift through, and we want you to be informed and prepared as we open school and get back to the business of educating young people with the quality, Christian education for which we are known.

Peace and blessings to you all,

Dr. Jay Krause  
Principal