



The Academy of the
**HOLY
CROSS**

**DRAFT
FALL 2020
REOPENING PLAN**



EMPOWERED
girls
HOLY CROSS

OVERVIEW

While The Academy of the Holy Cross was in the midst of finishing an unprecedented spring 2020 semester of virtual learning, our COVID-19 Reopening Task Force began meeting to investigate and formulate the best options for returning to school for the 2020-2021 school year. The Task Force has met weekly since the middle of May. Its subcommittees, which include additional authorities, met regularly as well. The Task Force believes the plan balances the health and safety of our school community with the best educational outcomes.

In all aspects of our planning, the safety of our students, faculty/staff, and families continue to be our highest priority. We remain committed to following the advice of medical, public health, risk management, educational, and legal experts throughout this process. None of the guidelines we are working with are self-generated. The feedback from our parents/guardians and faculty/staff surveys have helped our Task Force formulate the best practical applications of guidelines for our campus.

We recognize the decision to return to campus as a community cannot be finalized at this time. We present our Return to Campus hybrid in-person + virtual plan now so that our community can become familiar with the new procedures. We will continue to monitor the evolving situation in our county and state as we determine the safest learning environment scenario for the Holy Cross community. We are prepared to change course as needed and pivot to an entirely virtual return to school plan.

This plan is a draft.

*“Through prayer, faith is revived, hope is nourished,
and love is rekindled.”*

—Blessed Basil Moreau

COVID-19 Reopening Task Force

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PREPARATIONS AND PRECAUTIONS

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Holy Cross administration relies on our partnership with our families to develop a culture of safety, health and shared responsibility within our community. Multiple preventive measures have been put in place with the guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Maryland Department of Health, and the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services along with our own medical and legal consultants.

As an additional preventive measure, we ask all families to avoid travel to high-risk areas 14 days prior to the start of orientation.

DAILY HEALTH SCREENINGS

All families must complete a daily COVID-19 home health screening prior to the student's arrival on campus or prior to the start of virtual learning at home. Our school nurse will provide instructions on how to use the screening tool selected by the school. All faculty/staff will also be required to use the home health screening tool prior to arrival on campus.

In school, teachers and students can prevent the spread of COVID-19 by washing their hands, maximizing physical distancing and wearing masks. These recommendations work together to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19. Holy Cross' return to school plan strongly emphasizes these precautions.

- Masks are required to be worn while in the school building or on school grounds except while eating. All students and faculty/staff will be provided five washable masks, so that a clean mask can be worn each weekday on campus. Students and faculty/staff may also use their own masks.
- All are expected to maintain a physical distance of at least 6 feet whenever possible for as long as possible.
- All will be reminded to wash hands frequently and use hand sanitizer throughout the day. Additional hand sanitizer dispensers have been added throughout the building and are available in all classrooms along with sanitizing wipe dispensers.
- Most hallways and stairwells are now designated with one-way directional arrows marking the flow of traffic to maintain physical distance.
- Classrooms will be assigned bathrooms with capacities limited to one or two people at a time.
- Windows will be open throughout the building.
- Teachers will be encouraged to move classes outdoors, if possible, and weather permitting.

ENHANCED CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

The Academy of the Holy Cross will follow all best practices when cleaning and disinfecting classrooms, restrooms, campus common areas, and high touch areas to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We have procured two Victory electrostatic disinfectant machines to assist our facilities team and cleaning contractor in rapidly disinfecting frequently used spaces. All classrooms will be provided sanitizing wipes or sanitizing spray to allow students to ensure that their desk space is clean after every class period. Additionally, our facilities team will disinfect all classrooms during the lunch break. Our contractor will deep clean all classrooms in the evening. Bathrooms and common areas will be cleaned and disinfected during all four class periods, and will be deep cleaned in the evening by our cleaning contractor. Additional hand sanitizing dispensers will be positioned in common areas around the school to encourage proper hand hygiene.

UPDATES TO CAMPUS INFRASTRUCTURE AND EQUIPMENT

Classroom layouts are being individually modified to maximize physical distancing based on the room size. Additional outdoor seating has been purchased to maximize the use of exterior spaces. All common area furniture has either been reconfigured or removed to encourage physical distancing.

Following the CDC's emphasis on ensuring good air circulation within the buildings, the HVAC systems will be run at all times while the buildings are occupied. All exterior windows will be opened for increased circulation of outdoor air while spaces are occupied.

Plexiglass shields will be installed in selected areas for protection where physical distancing is limited (e.g. reception desks, Principal's Office, Nurse's Office, etc.).

All water fountains have been replaced with water bottle filling stations.

All toilets will be fitted with touchless flush valves.

RESPONDING TO ILLNESS IN THE COMMUNITY

Anyone with symptoms of illness will be expected to stay home. Strict procedures have been developed for anyone who becomes ill while on campus. The school has established an Isolation Room to isolate any student or adult who becomes ill while on campus. Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms should notify our school nurse (symptoms may include: fever or chills, 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). The school will follow the instructions from the local health department for all matters regarding quarantine, exclusion and return to school for persons with a positive test for COVID-19 and those who had close contact with a person with COVID-like illness.

VISITORS TO CAMPUS

In accordance with recommendations from both the CDC and American Academy of Pediatrics, parents/guardians, and non-essential visitors will not be allowed in the school building unless there is an emergency. Pre-arranged meetings will be scheduled virtually.

ACADEMICS

The Academic subcommittee of the COVID-19 Reopening Task Force continues to work to improve the virtual model and hybrid reopening models, all with consideration of the necessary health and safety modifications. Each model took into consideration the input from the June 2020 parent/guardian survey and the possible requirement of transitioning between each model in a fluid and flexible manner.

Our Hybrid In-Person + Virtual Model operates on a six-day rotation in which students are on campus two out of every six academic days. The student body is divided into three groups, according to advisories per grade, so that a subgroup of each grade will be in the building each day. With similar alphabetical sortings each day, families with siblings will attend school on the same day.

A SAMPLE OF THE PROPOSED ROTATION:

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Monday	A	C	C	B
Tuesday	A	A	C	C
Wednesday	B	A	A	C
Thursday	B	B	A	A
Friday	C	B	B	A

With this model, there are approximately 124-128 students maximum in the building on any day within the cycle. The lowered capacity enables appropriate six feet distancing between desks in all classrooms. New webcams have been installed in all classrooms to facilitate synchronous and collaborative learning between those students in the building and at home.

Our existing block schedule of four classes on each Purple/White Day will resume for the duration of the proposed hybrid schedule. Classes begin at 8:00 am and conclude at 2:35 pm, each class will be 75 minutes in duration with a structured 15-minute transition time, with release times dependent on location within the building. Students may have a staggered arrival and departure depending on their schedule.

The school building will be open from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm. Students will be gathered, maintaining physical distance, in a single location before 7:45 am and after 3:30 pm. Teachers will have office hours availability, both virtually or in-person, listed on their syllabi.

The goal of each model has and will continue to be health and safety. Should local conditions require it, Holy Cross is prepared to continue instruction in a virtual environment. Teachers and students will systematically progress through the curriculum as if they were in the building through a synchronous schedule. Additional details will be provided should this plan be implemented.

Holy Cross has invested in enhanced technology to support instruction. Students enrolled in technology class will receive a school-issued laptop, for use in school and at home, to ensure that they have access to the appropriate software and prevent the unnecessary sharing of devices. Each classroom has been outfitted with a webcam for live-streaming and the support of synchronous learning. Additional WiFi access points and AppleTVs have been installed throughout the academic building. Software and applicable professional development will be provided to enhance and support instruction.

Teachers have participated in ongoing professional development throughout the summer. In addition to mandatory seminars, the administration identified and created pathways in which teachers can further develop their instructional practices in a virtual or hybrid environment.

STUDENT LIFE

LUNCH

Students can either bring lunch or pre-order a packaged meal from our catering service Off the Hook. Students are required to bring their own, clearly labeled, water bottle for refilling on campus. All water fountains have been replaced with water bottle filling stations. Microwaves and vending machines will no longer be available. Students will have the option to eat lunch in several outdoor locations or in the cafeteria/dining area.

COUNSELING SERVICES

The Academy of the Holy Cross is committed to the continued availability of all counseling services. The school believes that counseling and support services are essential to students with the COVID-19 pandemic. Faculty and staff will receive training to assist in the identification of student distress. The School Counselors will continue to be available for individual and group counseling. Counseling programs will be designed so that they may be presented virtually or in-person.

The College Counseling department has been working alongside rising seniors and their families as they begin the college application process. Regularly scheduled individual meetings will occur

via video conferencing if not in person, but routine group updates will be provided through email and Naviance. The College Counseling department is currently working through the scheduling of meetings with college and university representatives and will communicate the date and format of those meetings by the start of the school year. Regardless of the reopening plan that Holy Cross will follow, each senior will have the opportunity to meet 1:1 with their college counselor (virtually or in-person) this fall to discuss their college list, application essays, and answer any questions they have.

The Saint Mary's Resource Program will continue to be innovative and collaborative when supporting students with documented learning differences, especially as the school continues to be flexible with the method of curriculum delivery. Students will continue to meet in their regularly scheduled SMRP Study Halls. Professional development continues to focus on learning differences and accommodations in a virtual environment, to assist in the planning of instructional units and the implementation of learning accommodations.

CAMPUS MINISTRY

The spiritual life of our community is a hallmark of our mission. Campus Ministry continues to organize opportunities for our students to celebrate their faith. All-School liturgies will be livestreamed. Daily chapel activities will take place outside (weather permitting) and virtually.

ARTS

Holy Cross has a long-standing strong reputation for our performing arts program. The Performing Arts department will produce a fall production that will either be digital or virtual, with a smaller cast and rehearsal schedule to limit the number of students needed in the Theatre at one time. All students involved in after-school performing arts activities will be expected to follow all safety protocols.

ATHLETICS

Our athletics staff is working with the Washington Catholic Athletic Conference (WCAC) to determine what the athletic season will entail. Summer workouts for several teams began in June and will continue throughout the summer. These on-campus workouts include new COVID-19 policies and procedures. Information will be provided as details about the fall sports season are available.

CO-CURRICULAR

Holy Cross values the importance of gathering as a community regularly. In our Hybrid In-Person + Virtual plan, we will utilize our digital technology in order to meet together. Weekly all-school assemblies will be livestreamed for our community. Club meetings, class meetings, and other co-curricular activities will continue to take place virtually until larger group gatherings can safely take place.