



## Return to School Plan

2020-2021

### **Mission Statement:**

At MLC, we desire to see God glorified by passionate disciples of Jesus Christ, driven by a desire to grow in wisdom and understanding; able to take the Truth revealed in God's Word and His creation into any discipline, confidently engaging others with love and discernment.

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## Introduction

MLC Family,

We trust you and your family have been rooted in Christ during our summer break. As we look back on the last 6 months, we are reminded of God's goodness and grace even during uncertain and challenging times. Scripture confirms for us that our God is sovereign and has all things in His hands!

We look forward to welcoming your student(s) back to school for in-person education on September 1st.

Our prayer is that all of us navigate these challenges in ways that demonstrate our faith in Jesus Christ. In the midst of many different thoughts and opinions about current circumstances, we have an opportunity to demonstrate unity in our faith that transcends earthly trials.

Our Return to School Plan was developed after carefully considering the issues surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic while still prioritizing our mission statement to deliver quality Christian education. We intend to keep your students coming to our campus for the full 20-21 school year. Our strong intention comes with a commitment to stay in contact with local medical officials to be fully informed about local health information. The plan outlined below has been designed with the guidance of elected school board members, educators, local medical professionals, state and national health guidance, and other Christian schools, with the intent to provide a basic path for us to follow as we begin our school year.

There are unavoidable risks in gathering many students into a school building. MLC intends to take measures to lower the risks involved with COVID19, but we acknowledge that we will not be able to eliminate them. Current data is telling us that children are largely unaffected by COVID-19. We are also praying for clearer data on children's ability to transmit the virus. In addition, we want to be mindful of our faculty and staff in the building each day, as well as at-risk family members that may be close to our students. Please be gracious and patient with us as we attempt to make decisions that take all these things into consideration.

Our final emphasis is on the importance of *parent commitment* to monitoring the health and symptoms of your child(ren) on a daily basis. Our school needs all parents to commit to the inconvenience of keeping your child home when sick. In the following plan, you will find our request for parents to commit to identifying symptoms, and to keep children home in situations where a student's health is uncertain.

You'll find the details of our plan below. We will closely monitor the lifting of the Governor's guidelines. We welcome your questions, concerns or input as we continue to plan for the school year ahead; a year that our God already has in His hands.

MLC Board of Directors  
Jonathan Belgarde - Head of School

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## Education Plans

### **On-Campus, In Person Learning: Implemented on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020**

Full on-campus learning will take place as regularly scheduled and planned. Students, faculty and staff will renew an emphasis on healthy hygiene throughout the day. Every classroom is being provided with spray disinfectant which can be used to clean highly touched surfaces on a regular basis. To limit sharing of classroom items, each student will bring their own set of supplies. Water fountains will be cleaned regularly. Students will be strongly encouraged to bring water bottles from home. Every effort will be made to maintain social distancing whenever possible. This applies to cohorts (classes/combo classes) in classrooms, lunchroom and at lockers. Homerooms will be assigned to each staff member to encourage social distancing.

### **Distance Learning:**

**Used only if overwhelming evidence of a school or local outbreak, along with communication with local hospitals, demonstrates that distance learning is required for a time on behalf of our school/local community.**

School wide, full-time distance learning would only occur if a local or school outbreak happens that clearly demonstrates the need for building closure, student quarantine and facility sanitation.

If this occurs, MLC will implement Distance Learning for as little time as possible, OR simply take some days off. The option that provides the best platform and consistency for education for all of our students would be implemented. MLC will be in close contact with local medical professionals to determine if/when this would be necessary.

If Distance Learning is implemented for a short time, assessment and grading will continue. Daily attendance will be expected and recorded unless a student is too ill to participate.

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## Health and Hygiene Emphasis

**Handwashing:** Regular handwashing is known to be one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid getting sick, and preventing the spread of germs to others. Students will be encouraged to wash hands appropriately throughout the day.

**Sanitizer:** While thorough handwashing with soap and water is the recommended choice for preventing the spread of germs, we realize that access to this may not always be available. MLC is providing every classroom with hand sanitizer.

**Student Health:** Parents, students, and staff should be familiar with Covid-19 symptoms (refer to CDC guidelines for the most up to date list of symptoms). Current symptoms include:

- a. Fever (100.4 or higher) or chills
- b. Cough
- c. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- d. Fatigue
- e. Muscle or body aches
- f. Headache
- g. New loss of taste or smell
- h. Sore throat
- i. Congestion or runny nose
- j. Nausea or vomiting
- k. Diarrhea

We understand that some of these symptoms may be a normal part of your child's life. You know your child the best, so we ask that you monitor symptoms appropriately while being mindful of our parent commitment form.

### When should my child(ren) stay home?

- Student temperatures will be routinely taken.
- Staff members will routinely monitor their own temperatures.
- When a student's temperature registers 100.4 or more, the student will be kept in the office and parents will be asked to pick up the student.
- Parents will be asked to help the school by monitoring their children's symptoms at home and keeping children home if any flu-like (COVID) symptoms are noticed.
- Refer to Appendix A at the end of this document for recommendations for families to determine when a student and household family member should be kept home.

### Protocol for Positive COVID-19 Cases:

- If a student/teacher tests positive for COVID-19, we will participate with local and state Health Departments. We will be in close communication with the individual, family if necessary, and possible infected individuals to ensure the safety and health of everyone at the school.
- Any student or staff member that tests positive for COVID-19, or has been exposed\* to an individual that has tested positive for COVID-19, will be required to provide a doctor's note stating they are cleared to return to campus.

\* Exposure is defined as having been within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before the person began showing symptoms until the time the individual was isolated.

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## Face Coverings

- All students at MLC will be provided with a face covering.
- Students will be strongly encouraged to wear a face covering when outside of their cohorts.
- Personal face coverings brought to school must have appropriate imaging.
- When walking in or exiting the MLC building, students are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering.
- Face coverings are required, per our local Health Department, while students are passing through the lunch line.
- Parents/Guardians need to email the office or provide a written note if your student is claiming an exemption according to the criteria stated in the Governor's mandate. According to HIPPA you do not need to give us the reason, just that you are claiming an exemption for your child.

**Face covering regulations will be frequently evaluated as we stay up to date on state mandates, protocol for positive cases, the latest medical research, and our own experiences in the school setting.**

### **Other considerations:**

- Every staff and faculty member is willing to accomplish their call of teaching in our school building. We are grateful for that blessing, and their willingness.
- We believe we can navigate this complex issue through parent partnership, respect for authority, love and care for our neighbor, and common-sense implementation.

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# School Operations & Facilities

## Attendance

We are aware that our request for close monitoring of symptoms and illness may result in a higher number of students absences. However, we also want to guard against absence policy abuse. We are ready to be flexible as we approach each individual absence, knowing that we may be dealing with circumstances we haven't experienced before.

We do intend to follow our absence policy, while being mindful of our request for parent commitment to keeping students home when sick or symptomatic.

When calculating absences that result from health concerns, days missed due to each health concern event (exposure, symptoms, etc.), will be considered one day of absence. Again, we ask for parent partnership and integrity when working with the school on attendance policy.

## Recess (K-6):

- We believe play and social interaction is a crucial part of our day and of child development.
- Outdoor spaces significantly minimize probability of transmission. Therefore, we intend to proceed with recess in our normal routine to begin the year.
- Recess will be executed with reminders to students about good hygiene, encouragement for activities that involve space, and hand washing. If need be, our school would have the flexibility to use cafeteria or gym space to implement "cohort" recess strategies.

## Hot Lunch:

- All students and staff will wear a face covering when walking through the lunch service area.
- Students not needing the lunch service area will enter through the gym.
- Teachers will be available to go to the lunch service area to get what is needed for students.
- Teachers will be giving grades K-6 cartons of milk.
- All kitchen servers/workers will be wearing face coverings and gloves while in the kitchen and serving area.
- Cohorts will be socially distanced in the lunchroom.
- All snacks will be individually packaged and brought by students.
- Open salad bar will not be available until further notice.
- The communal water thermos will not be used in the lunchroom this year. Students will be asked to provide their own water bottles for use at school.
- Students will sit in cohorts at assigned tables.
- Condiments are being individually packaged.
- Silverware and napkins will be individually wrapped and given to students.
- Social distancing will be practiced in the lunch service line and room.
- Elementary teachers will sanitize tables after their class finishes eating.

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**Visitors**

Our offices will be open for visitors. Face coverings will be available in the office for all visitors. A barrier will be placed across the hall near the main entrance to ensure that ALL visitors must walk through the office when entering.

**Bussing**

Students' temperatures will be routinely taken before entering the bus. If a student's temperature is 100.4 degrees or above, they will not be allowed to ride. Family members will be seated together. On arrival at MLC, students are strongly encouraged to go to their lockers and then to their classrooms without loitering in the hall.

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## **Appendix:**

- Parent Commitment Letter
- Parent Waiver Form
- Daily Health Assessment Agreement

# Return to School Parent Commitment Letter

Parents and Guardians of MLC students:

Please read the commitment letter below, sign it, and bring it to the office or scan and email it to DeeAnn Stoesz at [dstoesz@gomlc.org](mailto:dstoesz@gomlc.org). MLC must have a signed commitment letter for every student before they begin attending classes for the 20-21 school year. As the parent/guardian of:

\_\_\_\_\_ (student name),

\_\_\_\_\_ (student name),

\_\_\_\_\_ (student name),

\_\_\_\_\_ (student name),

\_\_\_\_\_ (student name), we understand and commit the following:

1. Prior to each school day, we will assess the health of our student(s) for COVID-19 symptoms based on the current list of symptoms provided by the CDC and Department of Health. We commit to keeping our student home from all school activities if symptoms are present.
2. We will not send our student to school if we have knowledge that they have been exposed\* to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.
3. We will contact the school immediately if we plan on keeping our student home due to any illness.
4. Should my student develop any symptoms while at school, we will ensure someone is available to pick them up promptly when we receive notice from the school.
5. We will contact administration immediately if any member of our household has been exposed by or diagnosed with COVID-19.
6. In the event that our child needs to stay home from school for a time, we are committed to supporting and continuing the learning process in whatever way we can.

## Parent/Guardian

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **NOTICE AND RELEASE**

Mountain Lake Christian School is hereby providing notice to me/us that it currently intends to open its educational and school program for the 2020-21 school year. I/we understand that Mountain Lake Christian School cannot protect my child/student and/or me from risks which may be encountered as a result of my child attending Mountain Lake Christian School.

I/we realize there are natural, mechanical, and environmental conditions and hazards which independently or in combination with any activities engaged in while participating in this program may result in the exposure to certain risks including exposure to coronavirus (COVID-19), or other biological agents, virus or similar bacteriological agents, and the risk of being quarantined, or illness that may result in medical care, hospitalization or death.

I/we hereby state that I, on behalf of my child/student and myself, am an adult, over the age of 18, and legally competent to sign this form. I/we understand these inherent risks and dangers involved with participation in the school providing its educational program and acknowledge the existence of risks which are not obvious or predictable, and hereby intend this release to extend to injury or loss which results from both obvious or predictable risks, as well as risks that are unpredictable and not obvious and to extend to myself and my child/student, as applicable.

In consideration of myself and my/our child/student participating Mountain Lake Christian School's educational and school program, I/we, and any legal representatives, heirs and assigns, hereby release, waive, and discharge Mountain Lake Christian School, its officers, directors, employees, agents, and representatives from any and all liability for any and all loss or damage, and any claim or damages resulting therefrom, on account of any injury, illness or exposure to and/or contracting the corona virus (COVID-19) or other biological agents, virus or similar bacteriological agent by me or my/our child/student's attendance at and participation in Mountain Lake Christian School's educational program, including any medical expenses, injury and/or death.

I/we agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless Mountain Lake Christian School, its officers, directors, employees, agents, and representatives from any loss, liability, damage, injury resulting from sickness or other injury listed above, or cost that may be incurred due to my child/student's participation in the aforementioned program, whether caused by negligence of Mountain Lake Christian School, or otherwise. I fully understand, on my own behalf and on behalf of my child/student the risks associated with the aforementioned participation and assume any risk associated therewith.

I acknowledge this notice, release and indemnity agreement contains the entire agreement between and among the parties hereto, and the terms of this release are contractual and not a mere recital.

I acknowledge the parties to this agreement hereby agree that the interpretation and enforceability of this release shall be governed by the laws of the State of Minnesota.

I /we expressly agree that this release, waiver, and indemnity agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by applicable laws, and that if any portion thereof is held invalid, it is agreed that the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect.

I acknowledge there is a potential risk of exposure to infectious/communicable disease (including transmission of viruses like COVID-19).

I/we understand that by signing this agreement I am giving up on behalf of my child/student and myself certain legal rights and remedies including the right for my child/student and/or myself to recover damages in the event of death, personal and/or bodily injury of any kind, property loss or damage, expenses of any nature whatsoever including attorney's fees, and other losses that my student(s) or that I may sustain in association with my child's participation in the Mountain Lake Christian School's educational program.

I/WE HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FOREGOING RELEASE AND KNOW AND UNDERSTAND THE CONTENTS THEREOF. I/WE SIGN THIS RELEASE VOLUNTARILY AS MY OWN FREE ACT WITH FULL KNOWLEDGE OF ITS SIGNIFICANCE, INTENDING TO BE LEGALLY BOUND THEREBY.

Parent/Guardian\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_

# Mountain Lake Christian School

## 2020-2021 Daily Health Assessment

Please do the following every morning before school!

### **FIRST, take your temperature**

If you/your child's temperature are 100.4 degrees or more you/they may **not** come to campus.

### **SECOND, check for any of the following symptoms**

In the past 14 days, if you have experienced the **onset, worsening, or haven't recovered** from any **ONE** of the following symptoms listed below, you **may not** come on campus.

HIGH RISK SYMPTOMS	
Fever greater than 100F	Loss of taste and/or smell
Combined Fever & Body Aches	Combined Cough & Difficulty Breathing
Nausea	Diarrhea

In the past 14 days, have you experienced the **onset, worsening, or haven't recovered** from any **TWO** of the following symptoms listed below, you may not come on campus.

LOW RISK SYMPTOMS	
New or worsening headache	Nasal congestion or runny nose
Fatigue	Body Aches
Cough	Sore Throat

If you have been sick, you will need to follow the "Process for Return to In-School Instructions" listed on the **BACK** of this sheet to return to campus.

\*Information current as of 8/26/20. Guidelines subject to COVID-19 changes.

## PROCESS FOR RETURNING TO IN-SCHOOL INSTRUCTION

<p>Person was . . .</p> <p><b>SICK</b> (but <b><u>NOT</u></b> with COVID-19)</p>	<p>Person <b>RETURNS</b> to school when. . .</p> <p>Symptom <b>FREE</b> for 24 hours (without medications)</p>
<p>Person was. . .</p> <p><b>DIAGNOSED</b> and/or has a <b>POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST</b></p> <p>or</p> <p><b>DESIGNATED</b> as a <b>CLOSE CONTACT</b> by a Health Department</p>	<p>Person <b>RETURNS</b> to school when. . .</p> <p>1. Symptom <b>FREE</b> for 24 hours (without medications)</p> <p>and</p> <p>2. Must have a written note from: A health department of the county they reside in or a doctor's note.</p>

If you have questions, please contact the MLC office at 507-427-2010 or [info@gomlc.org](mailto:info@gomlc.org)