



Centered in the person of Jesus Christ and grounded in the teachings of the Catholic Church, Father Marquette Catholic Academy is a mission of four Marquette parishes. Partnering with parents, we work to form students into disciples who will go forth to improve the world around them. We accomplish this by uniting the pursuits of faith and reason. Through rigorous academics grounded in the perennial Classical Curriculum and a commitment to personal attention of each student and their growth in virtue, we are dedicated to the complete formation of our students, remembering that in the end, only one thing is necessary.

Special Notice Regarding FMCA Guidelines for Reopening

Dear FMCA Families, Faculty, and Staff:

I pray that you and your families are well and that everyone had a spectacular summer. FMCA is anxious and excited to see everyone on September 8th, the first day of the 2020-2021 school year. As long as the Upper Peninsula remains in Phase 4 or Phase 5, we will have face-to-face school, Monday through Friday. Please note that we are currently in **Phase 5**, and if that should change, I will notify you. Knowing which phase we are in will be crucial to understanding FMCA's plan for return, as each phase has different requirements.

Attached you will find the FMCA Guidelines for Reopening. This plan includes the details of what school will look like for phases 1-5. Here are some important notes:

- 1) **We are currently in Phase 5**
- 2) The FMCA Guidelines for Reopening are closely drafted from the Michigan Roadmap for Schools. FMCA is mandated to follow the requirements, and these Guidelines are not optional.
- 3) Many of the more stringent elements in Phase 4 will still be followed in Phase 5, such as increased and intense cleaning and teaching students about hygiene and proper practices for safety during this time.
- 4) The biggest difference between Phase 4 and Phase 5 is that in Phase 4, middle school students will need to wear a mask all day, rather than just in the common spaces such as hallways and restrooms. Elementary students do not need to wear a mask in either phase when they are in the classroom.
- 5) Please note that 'Cohorts' at FMCA are our grade levels (the word 'cohort' is utilized in the guidelines). For example, second grade is a cohort. Our cohorts are approximately 15 students. Cohorts will not mix with other cohorts.
- 6) If one student in a cohort tests positive for COVID-19, the entire cohort will be sent home for a time recommended by the health department. This is why it is important to keep cohorts separate.
- 7) Student desks are six feet apart in each classroom.

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- 8) Masks should be worn by all students when entering the building in the morning and also worn in all common spaces.
- 9) If we have a COVID-19 case at FMCA, we will work directly with the local Health Department for direction, as the staff at FMCA are not qualified to make decisions regarding health and medicine. We will also be working with the Health Department on a regular basis.
- 10) We are asking that parents check the temperature(s) of their student or students before reporting to school each day. **A temperature of 100.4 or higher should stay home.** Please see other symptoms for staying home in the attached document.
- 11) Mass for grades K-4 will be virtual for now. Grades 5-8 will attend Mass and will follow the protocol set forth by the Diocese and the State.
- 12) Teachers will notify their families of their assigned drop off pick up door/entrance and plan.
- 13) Students will eat lunch in their classroom, at their own desk space. They will also participate in recess as separate cohorts.
- 14) Parents are not allowed in the building for now (once school begins), but can approach the 'walk through window' at the front office for help, questions, SCRIP, etc.
- 15) Assignments will be available to students who are home sick. Work can be picked up as early as the first day, but after three days of absence, the teacher will contact home regarding the plan to keep student(s) caught up.
- 16) FMCA realizes that students may need to stay home due to illness more frequently than in the past, and we are ready to help students and families stay caught up on schoolwork.
- 17) In the case that a student develops COVID like symptoms during the day, we will immediately contact parents and have a quarantine space or room for students who develop COVID like symptoms. PPE is ready and available to teachers and staff.

We realize that this is all very new, strange, and difficult. Our goal is to keep things as comfortable and normal as possible while still putting the safety of our students and staff first. Please know that your classroom teacher will be in close contact with you regarding details of many elements such as 'what each class will look like face-to-face', 'what distance learning will look like if we are sent home', and 'where/how you should drop of and pick up'. Communication will be the key to understanding the

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happenings within our school. Teachers will begin reaching out to families the last week in August. Students will be engaging in a hybrid-like experience through the usage of technology in the classroom, and this will help to prepare them for distance learning incase their cohort is sent home. We will still have after school program for grades PreK-8 and before school program for grades Prek-4 (only for elementary students who have siblings in the middle school). Both programs will run on a 'must' need basis and will be capped at 15. Please notify the office if you plan to utilize either of these programs.

We kindly ask you for your patience, as this situation is fluid. Elements of our plan are sure to change and evolve as we receive new information regarding COVID-19, and additionally, as we practice these new protocols, we will learn and make necessary modifications.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me, the office, or any teachers with any questions or concerns. We are here to help you through this time and always.

Please see the attached "FMCA Guidelines for Reopening".

We place our trust in the Lord and ask for His protection.

Only One Thing is Necessary...

Warmly,

Dr. Jessica N. Betz
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