



July 31, 2020

Dear Faculty, Staff and School Parents:

As you are well aware, St. Marcus, along with many other schools, is struggling with how to respond to the current pandemic as it pertains to school reopening. Our response has been complicated by radically divergent viewpoints, new research, constantly changing realities, and the need to balance the safety of students, staff and their family members with the urgent need to provide a school environment that supports the social, emotional, and academic development of St. Marcus students.

Over the last few weeks, St. Marcus has pivoted from a plan to reopen with most students on campus for in-person learning to most students off campus for remote learning. The following factors were used to inform that decision and guide the development of our reopening plan:

- City and state guidelines and restrictions, particularly the Milwaukee Health Department (MHD)
- Research - many, many studies but especially a recent study from Harvard found [HERE](#) and the American Academy of Pediatrics found [HERE](#).
- Current state of the pandemic in Milwaukee as evidenced by data found [HERE](#). Specifically:
 - Positive test rate in Milwaukee County remains over 10%
 - Contact tracing and testing remains significantly inadequate
- Multiple parent and staff surveys as well as feedback from virtual home visits.

This information was used to develop the reopening plan, which can be summarized as follows:

- School will reopen remotely for all students on August 18th. We will move to in-person instruction using a phased approach starting with the youngest students. The detailed, phased reopening plan by grade level can be found [HERE](#).
- All students in grades 1-8 will be provided with a school issued Chromebook. Students in grades K4-K5 may request a school issued device. Please complete the survey linked below to request a device. More information on this as well as material pick up will follow on August 7th.
- During times of remote instruction, the school is committed to providing students with robust academic instruction, spiritual development, and social and emotional support. More details about remote instruction will be provided to parents at back to school parent meetings.
- St. Marcus recognizes that having children at home for remote instruction presents huge challenges for some families. We will be providing parents with resources for support from the YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, COA, and other organizations who are ready and able to provide extensive support. This information will be provided to parents in the next update on Friday, August 7th. Please contact your child's teacher or an administrator if you need assistance making the reopening plan work for your family.

On Friday, August 7th, parents will receive another update which will include the following information:

- A detailed plan that describes how remote learning will work at each grade level.
- Detailed information pertaining to back-to-school parent meetings and device/material pick up.
- Resources for parents to support their children during periods of remote instruction.

Later in August, parents will receive a supplement to the parent handbook describing in detail the safety precautions that will be in place for when in-person instruction resumes. A preliminary version of the safety precautions being implemented in the school buildings can be found [HERE](#). The handbook will also describe how school will be different from normal school during Phase 2 of reopening.

Please continue to monitor the [PARENT ROOM](#) on the St. Marcus website for the latest reopening information and for resources for parents.

Finally, we very much value your feedback on what worked and what did not work with remote instruction last Spring. Please respond to one or more of the following surveys on remote instruction so we can implement the best possible remote learning platform. To gather data efficiently and in order to best serve students of various grade levels and ages, we have a separate survey for each level: Kindergarten, Primary, and Middle School. If you have students across the different levels, please take each survey provided.

Main Campus & North Campus: [Kindergarten Remote Learning Survey](#)

Main Campus & North Campus: [Primary Remote Learning Survey](#)

Main Campus & North Campus: [Middle School Remote Learning Survey](#)

Thank you so much for your patience and your continued support.

Sincerely,



Henry Tyson
Superintendent

For questions or additional support, please contact your child's teacher or director:

Main Campus K4-K5: kristy.wegner@stmarcus.org

Main Campus 1-4: maria.smessaert@stmarcus.org

Main Campus 5-8: garrett.mandeville@stmarcus.org

North Campus K4-K5: april.richter@stmarcus.org

North Campus 1-4: lisa.rouse@stmarcus.org

North Campus 5-7: hannah.adermann@stmarcus.org