



“Raising the Standards of Education”
Nate Seiferlein, Principal
Tracy Cohrs, Assistant Principal
Rob Girvin, Dean of Students/Athletic Director



RETURN TO SCHOOL LETTER- MERRITT ACADEMY

July 22, 2020

Dear Parents & Guardians,

With the release of the Governor’s Return to School Roadmap, our return to school team has been developing plans that meet the requirements of school operations under various “phases” of COVID. It is our intention to have this plan ready for approval by our School Board the first week of August, and release it to our parents promptly after its approval. We also plan to host some “town hall” style meetings (either virtual or in person) to go over the plans and answer any questions or concerns you might have. Below is a link to the roadmap along with a basic overview of each phase of COVID response.

The roadmap can be found using this link:

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/whitmer/MI_Safe_Schools_Roadmap_FINAL_695392_7.pdf

As of today, Merritt Academy fully intends for students to return to school on Monday, August 31st, in the least restrictive manner as possible. However, at this time, our region is in Phase 4 of the COVID response.

PHASES 1-3: Students are not physically able to attend school. In this case, we will make devices available and teachers will facilitate learning much like the spring. The major difference from the spring would be that students are required to do their school work and would receive grades for their work. Attendance will also have to be taken, along with some other regulations.

**If you elected to use the all virtual school option, you would continue with that option like normal.

PHASE 4: Students return face-to-face with many safety protocols. The Return to School Advisory Council decided that wearing masks was the most feasible option for schools to implement to return to face-to-face instruction. Some highlights of Phase 4 are below, for all sanitation protocols please access the roadmap at the link above. Phase 4 and up we are in school 5 days a week.

- All staff required to wear masks.
- All students required to wear masks during transportation.
- All 6-12 grade students required to wear masks.

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www.merritt-academy.org

Merritt Academy will instill academic excellence, character development, a love for life-long learning, and service to others.



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- K-5 grade students in self-contained classrooms will not be required to wear facemasks but can opt to do so.
- All students will be required to wear face masks during transitions.

We know that the wearing of masks has become a very hot topic in our culture today. Please understand we want to return to school as normally as possible, while also making sure our students and their families are safe. To provide options for our students to return to school at a level they are comfortable with we are also going to provide an all online option for the 2020-2021 school year.

We encourage any parents who do not wish for their students to return to the classroom to choose our online option. **These students WILL remain MERRITT ACADEMY students,** be able to participate in our programs and sports, In addition, per-pupil funding will remain mostly with Merritt Academy. Students will have to elect to be online (all virtual) for **AT LEAST one semester minimum** before a possible return to face-to-face learning. We will be hosting an informational meeting about this program once our plan is approved by our School Board and Authorizer. **To confirm your choice of our online option please email Ms. Cohrs directly.**

PHASE 5: Students return face-to-face with very few restrictions. Face masks would be recommended but not required. A lot of the restrictions in Phase 4 would be lifted. We obviously hope for Phase 5 or higher 😊

PHASE 6: Basically life pre-COVID with little to no restrictions.

We know this is a confusing, stressful, and trying time for both you and your students. Please know that we have been spending countless hours meeting and thinking about returning to school in the safest way possible. We look forward to sharing our plans with you and welcoming you back at the end of August either in person or online.

Thank you for trusting Merritt Academy with your students' education! This is a very strong community and we know we will get through this unprecedented situation together as only our Merritt Academy Family can. Please let us know if you have any questions, concerns, or ideas. We welcome and value your input.

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