



July 22, 2020

Dear Wisconsin Lutheran High School parents and guardians:

As you have likely seen over the last few days, there has been a lot of conversation in our Milwaukee community, including through peaceful marches, about how to proceed during the upcoming school year. We write today with news of that positive progress and apologize that we've struggled to keep you and our students as informed of the rapidly changing situation as we could have. We're committed to more regular updates to you and our students with the understanding that our plans need to be nimble.

On Tuesday afternoon, the Milwaukee Health Department announced that it has changed course and is **allowing schools and universities with strong safety plans in place to open for in-person education.**

Our WLHS Back-to-School Task Force has developed a safe plan for face-to-face 5-days a week as over 70% of parents expressed that they wanted. Our plans for a safe return are based in science; a plan that mitigates the risk of spreading Covid-19 and is in line with protocols set forth by the American Academy of Pediatrics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. **We plan to submit our plan tomorrow to the Milwaukee Health Department.** While we know there will be more hurdles ahead and more questions that need to be answered, we look forward to working with the Health Department to gain approval on this plan and will share additional details with you in the coming days and weeks as we prepare to open our school this fall. We also want to announce that we are **moving the start of the school year one week later in August** in order to allow ample time to navigate the situation better and for our faculty to prepare.

As we have shared previously, we believe that face-to-face learning is important for student successes, both now and as they grow after high school. More detail on that reasoning is available on our website at [wlhs.org/student-life/let-us-open](http://wlhs.org/student-life/let-us-open) as well as the results of the parent surveys from last week.

This said, and while we understand that over 70% of WISCO families believe this as well, we also recognize that not every family feels the same way or is in the same situation, and I want to personally assure you that if you are not comfortable with your student returning to school in person, or if your student is quarantined, uncomfortable or unable to return for any reason, **we are prepared to virtually support your student in every way possible.**

We also want to clarify that the peaceful march driving important awareness of the Health Department's orders was not organized by Wisconsin Lutheran High School, but by teachers on their own, and any outreach to your student or encouragement of your student to participate was organized out of goodwill by faculty, but unfortunately, not approved by administration. Moving forward, we will ensure that all communications on this subject are shared with you – the parents and guardians of our students – rather than the students directly. For your awareness, we do plan to send this update to your students in the next day so they are also aware of plans for the upcoming school year, but we have shared with you first so you can be prepared to address any concerns with them regarding the situation.

Please feel free to call me or Principal Leyrer at 414-453-4567, or reach out to us via email at [ken.fisher@wlhs.org](mailto:ken.fisher@wlhs.org) or to [phil.leyrer@wlhs.org](mailto:phil.leyrer@wlhs.org) with any questions or concerns. Please look for more regular updates with the understanding that the situation is very fluid. For students, it will come via their student email. For incoming freshman, a WLHS e-mail account will be set up at the start of school. Until then, e-mail to parents of freshmen be the source of communication.

Finally, I urge you to remember in prayer – City leaders, community members and school administration – as we are all facing the need to make unprecedented decisions about the future. We move forward with confidence of the Apostle to, *"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance."*(James 1:2-3) I ask you to continue to be patient, to proceed with empathy and kindness and conduct yourself with the values we hold dear as we trust Christ to lead us.

In Christ's grace,

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