INSTRUCTIONS:

Please follow the step-by-step instructions below to complete the Preparedness and Response Plan.

1. Download and save the COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan to your computer prior to filling it out.

2. Complete the report and make sure to save it to your computer.

3. Submit the entire completed report in Epicenter. **Deadline: August 14, 2020**
Michigan Connections Academy
COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan

Address of School District: 3950 Heritage Avenue, Okemos, MI, 48864

District Code Number: 33911

Building Code Number(s): 00469

District Contact Person: Bryan Klochack

District Contact Person Email Address: bklochack@mica.connectionsacademy.org

Local Public Health Department: Ingham County Health Department

Local Public Health Department Contact Person Email Address: Wendy Ridenour, WRidenour@ingham.org


Name of Authorizing Body: Ferris State University

Date of Adoption by Board of Directors: August 19, 2020
Assurances

- The Academy will cooperate with local public health authorities if a confirmed case of COVID-19 is identified and, in particular, will collect the contact information for any close contacts of the affected individual from two days before he or she shows symptoms to the time when he or she was the last present at the Academy.

- The Academy acknowledges that it is subject to the rules governing workplace safety established in section 1 of Executive Order 2020-114 or any successor order, and has adopted a Workplace Preparedness Plan. A copy of this plan is attached.

- The Academy will be or is closed to in-person instruction when the region in which it is located in is in Michigan Safe Start Plan Phases 1-3.

- The Academy’s sponsored inter-school, after school activities and athletics will be suspended when the region in which it is located in is in Michigan Safe Start Plan Phases 1-3.

- The Academy will comply with guidance from the United States Department of Education, including its Office of Civil Rights and Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, and the Michigan Department of Education concerning the delivery of alternative modes of instruction to students with disabilities in light of the impact of COVID-19.

- The Academy will provide for the continued pay of school employees while redeploying staff to provide meaningful work in the context of the Preparedness Plan, subject to any applicable requirements of a collective bargaining agreement if applicable.

- The Academy prohibits indoor assemblies that bring together students from more than one classroom during Michigan Safe Start Plan Phase 4.

Linda Frost
President of the Board of Directors

August 19, 2020
Date
Introduction and Overview

- Provide an introduction as an opportunity to introduce the reader to your school community and efforts to date that you have taken to ensure continued student learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Consider including your school mission, vision and values and describe how they continue to guide your work.
- Identify guiding principles that your team considered when developing your Preparedness Plan.
- Describe how the plan was developed and how feedback from your school community was incorporated into the Preparedness Plan.

Academy Narrative:

- Provide an introduction as an opportunity to introduce the reader to your school community and efforts to date that you have taken to ensure continued student learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - Michigan Connections Academy ("MICA") is a School of Excellence that is a Cyber School, therefore all instruction is delivered remotely, in accordance with MICA's Charter Agreement and applicable state laws. When Governor Whitmer declared a State of Emergency, MICA staff were instructed to work remotely, therefore there was minimal disruption to instructional services provided to students.
- Consider including your school mission, vision and values and describe how they continue to guide your work.
  - MICA’s mission is to help each student maximize his or her potential and meet the highest performance standards. We are a high-quality, high-tech, high-touch “school without walls” that brings out the best in every student. MICA shares a common goal with parents: to ensure that students cultivate confidence, productivity, and success all the way through to adulthood. Michigan Connections Academy’s full-time virtual school program helps students build on their individual strengths and interests in a setting that is both safe and connected to a larger community.
- Identify guiding principles that your team considered when developing your Preparedness Plan.
  - Guidelines from the State Department of Health, Governor’s Executive Orders, Return to School Roadmap as well as, the CDC were utilized in developing MICA’s Preparedness Plan. The virtual nature of MICA’s operations were also taken into account to customize the plan to meet the needs of the school.
- Describe how the plan was developed and how feedback from your school community was incorporated into the Preparedness Plan.
  - Since MICA operates virtually and there will be no changes to the way instruction is delivered, the plan was developed using available resources and best practices, in consultation with the school’s ESP.
Plan for Operating during Phases 1, 2 or 3 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan

Phase 1, 2, or 3 Safety Protocols

- All protocols included on page 15 of the Roadmap are “Required.” This includes the closure of school building for in-person instruction and to anyone other than: 1) district employees or contractors necessary to conduct minimum basic school operations, 2) food service workers preparing food for distribution to students or their families, and 3) licensed child-care providers and the families they serve. It also includes the suspension of all athletics and busing operations, if applicable.
- Identify whether the Academy will be used by licensed child care providers and if so, under what conditions.
- Outline the extent to which school employees and contractors will be physically present in the school building for the purposes of conducting basic school operations, include remote live instruction, as determined by school administrators.
- Describe plans to ensure continued food distribution to eligible students.
- While the school is closed for in-person instruction, describe the cleaning protocols that will be adjusted to ensure the school building remains functional.
- If applicable, provide an assurance that states that all busing operations will be suspended.

Academy Narrative:

- All protocols included on page 15 of the Roadmap are “Required.” This includes the closure of school building for in-person instruction and to anyone other than: 1) district employees or contractors necessary to conduct minimum basic school operations, 2) food service workers preparing food for distribution to students or their families, and 3) licensed child-care providers and the families they serve. It also includes the suspension of all athletics and busing operations, if applicable.
- Identify whether the Academy will be used by licensed child care providers and if so, under what conditions.
  - Not Applicable
- Outline the extent to which school employees and contractors will be physically present in the school building for the purposes of conducting basic school operations, include remote live instruction, as determined by school administrators.
  - Only staff who have a critical need to be physically present in the school facility will be permitted and all safety protocols will be followed in accordance with MICA’s COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan.
- Describe plans to ensure continued food distribution to eligible students.
  - Not Applicable
- While the school is closed for in-person instruction, describe the cleaning protocols that will be adjusted to ensure the school building remains functional.
Since MICA delivers instruction virtually, no students are onsite. Only staff-members with a critical need to work in the school facility will be permitted to do so therefore cleaning protocols which apply to office environments are applicable to MICA’s operations. Cleaning protocols are outlined in the COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan which adheres to the requirements set forth in Executive Order 2020-161 (formerly Executive Orders 2020-91, 2020-97, 2020-114, and 2020-145) for businesses. MICA will ensure the school facility undergoes more frequent cleanings as needed. Cleaning services staff will be instructed to follow CDC guidelines for properly disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.

- If applicable, provide an assurance that states that all busing operations will be suspended.
  - Not Applicable

### Phase 1, 2, or 3 Mental & Social-Emotional Health

- All protocols included on page 16 of the Roadmap are **“Strongly Recommended.”**
  Using these protocols as a guide, describe how the Academy will provide mental and social-emotional health services for students.
- Specifically identify which protocols on page 16 that are identified as **“Strongly Recommended”** that the Academy will not implement.

#### Academy Narrative:

- Using these protocols as a guide, describe how the Academy will provide mental and social-emotional health services for students.
  - MICA’s Emergency Operations Plan addresses mental health procedures and behavioral health crisis intervention to assist students, staff and parents with social/emotional recovery after a traumatic event, including a pandemic. Protocols include:
    - Evaluate the situation and determine the need for behavioral health crisis interventions for staff, students and families
    - Provide grief counseling as necessary
    - Arrange for information and referrals to community mental health resources
    - Ensure ongoing support for staff, students and families
    - Identify and monitor at–risk students
    - Follow–up with assessment or treatment referrals, if necessary
    - Implement longer-term social/emotional recovery plan
  School staff have been instructed to:
    - Be aware of staff and student need for behavioral health crisis interventions
    - Make referrals to designated staff professionals as necessary
    - Identify, monitor and refer students (or other staff) at risk
    - Re-establish school and classroom routines as quickly as possible
    - Facilitate opportunities for students to talk about their fears or concerns.
    - In the event of a tragic, highly publicized event, unsolicited mental health professionals from federal, state and non-government agencies should be
consulted with for post-crisis aid. The Michigan Department of Health and its resources will be utilized for support, advice and assistance when coordinating the activities of these outside organizations.

- Additionally, MICA will communicate with parents and guardians, via a variety of channels, return to school transition information including:
  - Destigmatization of COVID-19.
  - Understanding normal behavioral response to crises.
  - General best practices of talking through trauma with children.
  - Positive self-care strategies that promote health and wellness.
  - Specifically identify which protocols on page 16 that are identified as “Strongly Recommended” that the Academy will not implement.

Phase 1, 2, or 3 Instruction

- All protocols included on pages 17-18 of the Roadmap are “Strongly Recommended.”
- Describe the alternative modes of instruction that will be used while in-person instruction is suspended. Reflect upon the challenges and successes of implementing your Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan, incorporate feedback from your school community, and outline in detail how you will ensure continued student learning. Specifically include a summary of materials each student and the student’s parents or guardians will need to meaningfully access the alternative modes of instruction.
- Describe how the Academy will strive in good faith and to the extent practicable, based on available resources, technology, curriculum, as well as the circumstances presented by COVID-19, to provide equal access to any alternative modes of instruction to students with disabilities consistent with their individualized education plans, including the provision of auxiliary services.
- Use the protocols listed on pages 17-18 of the Roadmap, as well as other best practices, as a guide in outlining and highlighting your plan for remote instruction.
- Specifically identify which protocols on pages 17-18 that are identified as “Strongly Recommended” that the Academy will not implement.

Academy Narrative:

- Describe the alternative modes of instruction that will be used while in-person instruction is suspended. Reflect upon the challenges and successes of implementing your Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan, incorporate feedback from your school community, and outline in detail how you will ensure continued student learning. Specifically include a summary of materials each student and the student’s parents or guardians will need to meaningfully access the alternative modes of instruction.
  - Michigan Connections Academy (“MICA”) is a school of excellence that is a cyber school. Therefore all instruction is conducted virtually and the school will continue to operate in
accordance with the terms of its charter contract. At Michigan Connections Academy, we have structured our classes to incorporate both teacher-led and self-directed, self-paced learning. This allows each student to learn in the way that works best and to reach his or her full potential at each grade level. These courses also develop four crucial skills known as the “four Cs” of 21st century learning: Critical thinking and problem solving; Communication; Creativity and innovation; Collaboration

Pursuant to applicable law and the terms and conditions of the charter contract, including Article VI, Section 6.2, MICA shall implement, deliver and support the curriculum as identified in Schedule 7 Section c. A complete description of the curriculum is on file at the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office and at the school. The Curriculum may also be viewed using the following link: http://www.connectionsacademy.com/michigan-virtual-school/curriculum/home.aspx

- Describe how the Academy will strive in good faith and to the extent practicable, based on available resources, technology, curriculum, as well as the circumstances presented by COVID-19, to provide equal access to any alternative modes of instruction to students with disabilities consistent with their individualized education plans, including the provision of auxiliary services.
  - For students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) MICA provides a continuum of virtual special education services that range from consultation, curriculum accommodation and modification, collaboration with learning coaches and general education teachers, to virtual direct instruction. MICA provides students with IEPs with related services, that may include virtual speech language and virtual occupational therapy, as determined by the IEP team. For eligible students with disabilities who do not require special education, the school develops (as needed) and implements Section 504 plans that detail appropriate accommodations and modifications.

- Use the protocols listed on pages 17-18 of the Roadmap, as well as other best practices, as a guide in outlining and highlighting your plan for remote instruction.
  - Since MICA operates virtually and there will be no changes to the current instructional model. Additionally, MICA already has Communication & Family Supports, Professional Learning for educators and policies and procedures to monitor student attendance and teachers communicate and provide feedback to students regularly.

- Specifically identify which protocols on pages 17-18 that are identified as “Strongly Recommended” that the Academy will not implement.
  - Not Applicable
Phase 1, 2, or 3 Operations

- All protocols included on pages 19-20 of the Roadmap are “Strongly Recommended.” Using these protocols as a guide, describe how the Academy will manage operations and technology.
- Specifically highlight the level of access to digital devices your students and families have, how you know this information, and how you will ensure equitable access to learning, as needed, through the use of technology.
- Describe the specific ways staff will be redeployed to meet the needs of the Plan.
- Specifically identify which protocols on pages 19-20 that are identified as “Strongly Recommended” that the Academy will not implement.

Academy Narrative:

All protocols included on pages 19-20 of the Roadmap are “Strongly Recommended.” Using these protocols as a guide, describe how the Academy will manage operations and technology.

- Specifically highlight the level of access to digital devices your students and families have, how you know this information, and how you will ensure equitable access to learning, as needed, through the use of technology.
  - MICA supplies laptops to families and households may request a subsidy towards the cost of internet service pursuant to the terms of the school handbook. Additional information on technology, including interactive web tools, online lesson plans and instruction, message boards can be found on the school’s website https://www.connectionsacademy.com/michigan-virtual-school/about/technology
- Describe the specific ways staff will be redeployed to meet the needs of the Plan.
  - MICA will be adequately staffed to ensure instructional needs are met.
- Specifically identify which protocols on pages 19-20 that are identified as “Strongly Recommended” that the Academy will not implement.
  - MICA will implement all “Strongly recommended” protocols as it pertains to the school’s virtual operations.

Plan for Operating during Phase 4 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan

Phase 4 Safety Protocols

- To the extent that the Academy will offer in-person instruction during Phase 4 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan, describe how the Academy will ensure compliance with the Personal Protective Equipment protocols identified as “Required” on page 22 of the Roadmap, including when and where staff and students are required to wear facial coverings. Identify exceptions to this requirement for staff and students who cannot medically tolerate a facial covering by using the strong recommendations on page 28.
Choose an item. COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan

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of the Roadmap, as well as describing how the Academy will address staff or students who do not comply with these requirements.

• To the extent that the Academy will offer in-person instruction during Phase 4 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan, describe how the Academy will ensure compliance with the Hygiene protocols identified as “Required” on page 22 of the Roadmap, including adequate supplies of soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, tissues, signs and the teaching/reinforcing of hygienic behaviors.

• Describe the COVID-19 screening and reporting protocols for students and staff, including the reporting of any positive cases to the local public health authority.

• While schools are not required to implement the protocols on pages 23-24 with respect to Spacing, Movement and Access, if the Academy decides to offer in-person instruction, describe which, if any, practices the Academy will implement.

• Describe the Academy’s plans to ensure compliance with Food Service, Gathering, and Extracurricular Activities protocols identified as “Required” on page 26.

• Describe the Academy’s plans to ensure compliance with Athletic and Cleaning protocols identified as “Required” on page 27.

• Describe how the Academy will comply with each of the Transportation protocols identified as “Required” protocols on page 28.

• Specifically identify which protocols on pages 22-28 that are identified as “Strongly Recommended” that the Academy will not implement.

Academy Narrative:

• To the extent that the Academy will offer in-person instruction during Phase 4 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan, describe how the Academy will ensure compliance with the Personal Protective Equipment protocols identified as “Required” on page 22 of the Roadmap, including when and where staff and students are required to wear facial coverings. Identify exceptions to this requirement for staff and students who cannot medically tolerate a facial covering by using the strong recommendations on page 28 of the Roadmap, as well as describing how the Academy will address staff or students who do not comply with these requirements.

  o Since MICA delivers instruction virtually, no students are onsite. Only staff-members with a critical need to work in the school facility will be permitted to do so and are required to wear face-coverings when other staff are present and social distancing is not feasible. Therefore most of the Phase 4 Safety Protocols are not applicable and will be addressed in the manner in which they apply.

  o Facial coverings will be worn by staff reporting to the school facility, except for meals. Facial coverings may be homemade or disposable level-one (basic) grade surgical masks. Any staff member who cannot medically tolerate a facial covering must not wear one. Any staff member that is incapacitated or unable to remove the facial covering without as PreK-5 and special education teachers should consider wearing clear masks.
    - Homemade facial coverings must be washed daily.
    - Disposable facial coverings must be disposed of at the end of each day.
• Any staff-members who are unable to medically tolerate a facial covering must not wear one. Any staff-member who is incapacitated or unable to remove the facial covering without assistance, must not wear one.

• Facial coverings may be homemade or disposable level-one (basic) grade surgical masks

• To the extent that the Academy will offer in-person instruction during Phase 4 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan, describe how the Academy will ensure compliance with the Hygiene protocols identified as “Required” on page 22 of the Roadmap, including adequate supplies of soap, hand towels, tissues, signs and the teaching/reinforcing of hygienic behaviors.
  o Hygiene: MICA will provide adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors (including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol for safe use by staff, paper towels, tissues, and signs reinforcing proper handwashing techniques).
  o Teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and/or the safe use of hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
  o Educate staff on how to cough and sneeze into their elbows, or to cover with a tissue.
  o Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately using proper hand hygiene techniques.
  o Staff will systematically and frequently check and refill soap and hand sanitizers.

Please see MICA’s COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan for additional hygiene protocols

• Describe the COVID-19 screening and reporting protocols for students and staff, including the reporting of any positive cases to the local public health authority.
  o Screening: MICA will cooperate with the local public health department regarding implementing protocols for screening staff. Additionally, MICA’s COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan provides a symptom checklist for staff in accordance with CDC guidelines as well as, protocols for responding to staff with suspected and positive cases of COVID-19, including sending staff home, disinfecting the office and temporary closure, if necessary.
  o Testing: MICA will also notify health officials and individuals who may have had contact with the infected staff-member. Notifications to staff regarding infected coworkers will be carefully worded in order to protect the privacy of the infected individual in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

• While schools are not required to implement the protocols on pages 23-24 with respect to Spacing, Movement and Access, if the Academy decides to offer in-person instruction, describe which, if any, practices the Academy will implement.
  o Not applicable

• Describe the Academy’s plans to ensure compliance with Food Service, Gathering, and Extracurricular Activities protocols identified as “Required” on page 26.
  o Not applicable
• Describe the Academy’s plans to ensure compliance with Athletic and Cleaning protocols identified as “Required” on page 27.
  o Not applicable

• Describe how the Academy will comply with each of the Transportation protocols identified as “Required” protocols on page 28.
  o Not applicable

• Specifically identify which protocols on pages 22-28 that are identified as “Strongly Recommended” that the Academy will not implement.
  o All highly recommended protocols which are applicable to the virtual learning environment will be implemented accordingly.

Phase 4 Mental & Social-Emotional Health (Strongly Recommended)

- All protocols included on page 29 of the Roadmap are “Strongly Recommended.” Using these protocols as a guide, describe how the Academy will provide mental and social-emotional health services for students.
- Specifically identify which protocols on page 29 of the Roadmap, all of which are identified as “Strongly Recommended” that the Academy will not implement.

Academy Narrative:

MICA will follow the same protocols identified for Phase 1, 2, or 3 Mental & Social-Emotional Health

Phase 4 Instruction

- All protocols included on pages 30-32 of the Roadmap are “Strongly Recommended.”
- Outline the Academy’s plan to deliver instruction during Phase 4 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan. Begin by specifying the options available to students and families. Consider describing the results of surveys or other methods to solicit feedback from families as a basis for developing these options. Include whether the Academy will offer in-person instruction, remote learning options, hybrid approaches, and/or rotating in-person schedules.
- When a district provides in-person instruction to its students without disabilities, the district must also provide in-person instruction to its students with disabilities, consistent with their individualized education plans. If the Academy will use any form of remote or hybrid learning models during Phase 4 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan, describe the Academy’s plans to ensure students with disabilities receive equitable services and in compliance with their individualized education programs, including the provision of auxiliary services.
• Using the protocols outlined on pages 30-32 as a guide, and incorporating other best practices, address each of the following sub-sections: Governance; Instruction; Communications and Family Supports; and Professional Learning. As all of the protocols in this section are identified as “Strongly Recommended,” list any that the Academy will not implement.

Academy Narrative:

*Not applicable as Phase 4 instructional protocols apply to in-person or hybrid instruction*

Phase 4 Operations

• All protocols included on pages 33-36 of the Roadmap are “Strongly Recommended.” Using these protocols as a guide, describe how the Academy will effectively manage each of the following: Facilities; Budget, Food Service, Enrollment and Staff; Technology; and Transportation.
• Specifically highlight the level of access to digital devices the Academy’s students and their families have, how the Academy has collected this information, and how the Academy will ensure equitable access to learning, as needed, through the use of technology.
• Address operational plans in the event that the Academy is required to close for in-person instruction, including the deployment of digital learning devices and transitioning to a fully remote learning environment.
• Specifically identify which protocols on pages 33-36 of the Roadmap, all of which are identified as “Strongly Recommended” that the Academy will not implement.

Academy Narrative:

*Not applicable as Phase 4 operations protocols apply to in-person or hybrid instruction. MICA will follow the same protocols as indicated for Phase 1, 2, or 3 Operations.*
Plan for Operating during Phase 5 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan

Phase 5 Safety Protocols

- All of the protocols listed on pages 38-44 of the Roadmap are listed as either “Strongly Recommended” or “Recommended.” Using these protocols as a guide, and incorporating other best practices, describe the Academy’s plans during Phase 5 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan for each of the following areas: Personal Protective Equipment; Hygiene; Spacing, Movement and Access; Screening Students, Staff, and Guests; Testing Protocols for Students and Staff and Responding to Positive Cases; and Responding to Positive Tests Among Staff and Students; Food Service, Gatherings, and Extracurricular Activities; Athletics; Cleaning; Busing and Student Transportation; and Medically Vulnerable Students and Staff.
- Highlight specific examples of how the Academy’s Plan for Operating during Phase 5 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan is different from its Plan for Operating during Phase 4 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan.
- Specifically identify which protocols on pages 38-44 that are identified as “Strongly Recommended” that the Academy will not implement.

Academy Narrative:

*MICA will follow the same protocols as indicated for Phase 1, 2, or 3 Safety Protocols, as they apply to staff working in the school facility*

Phase 5 Mental & Social-Emotional Health

- All protocols included on page 45 of the Roadmap are identified as “Recommended.” Using these protocols as a guide, describe to what extent the Academy will provide ongoing mental and social-emotional health services for students.

Academy Narrative:

*MICA will follow the same protocols identified for Phase 1, 2, or 3 Mental & Social-Emotional Health*

Phase 5 Instruction

- All of the protocols included on pages 46-48 of the Roadmap are identified as “Recommended.” Outline the Academy’s plan to deliver instruction during Phase 5 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan and how that plan is different during Phase 4 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan.
- Using the protocols outlined on pages 46-48 as a guide, and incorporating other best practices, address each of the following sub-sections: Governance; Instruction; Communications and Family Supports; and Professional Learning, with particular
emphasis on any differences from the Academy’s plans during Phase 4 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan.

Academy Narrative:

*Not applicable as Phase 5 instructional protocols apply to in-person instruction. MICA will follow the same protocols as indicated for Phase 1, 2, or 3 Instruction.*

**Phase 5 Operations**

- All protocols included on pages 49-52 of the Roadmap are “Recommended.” Using these protocols as a guide, describe how the Academy will manage each of the following sub-sections: Facilities; Budget, Food Service, Enrollment and Staff; Technology; and Transportation, with particular emphasis on any differences from the Academy’s plans during Phase 4 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan.

Academy Narrative:

*Not applicable as Phase 5 Operations protocols apply to in-person instruction. MICA will follow the same protocols as indicated for Phase 1, 2, or 3 Operations.* Click here to enter text.