



LINTON
PUBLIC SCHOOL

COVID-19 Response

Submitted to ND Department of Public Instruction on March 25, 2020

Revised & Approved by Linton Public School Board on August 7, 2020

INTRODUCTION

The following COVID-19 Response Plan was submitted to the Department of Public Instruction on March 25, 2020 in advance of the Linton Public School District No. 36 implementing a distance learning and virtual learning plan for Pk-12 students. This revised plan was submitted for LPS Board approval on August 7, 2020 with modifications to prepare for the 2020-21 school year.

The Linton Public School Leadership Team of three district administrators, and our special education director, as needed, have met in person or virtually since March 16 to draft guidance for the district to return to normal operations during the pandemic as well as outlining school and staff expectations for an extended closure.

The district Leadership Team engaged in action planning with our certified staff Crisis Committee to ensure emergency planning that will allow the district to reopen, when appropriate and with the appropriate threat level. The Leadership Team also began the planning process to ensure staff have the appropriate support and direction necessary to plan for extended closure through distance/virtual learning opportunities via added components to our district website and mobile app, robust improvements to our Google Classroom platform, and daily communication of COVID-19 updates and pending strategies to ensure high quality – standards based education is delivered.

In the event of a future closure at Linton Public School, the district is fully committed to continuing to fulfill our district's mission and vision and operating with the same core values.

District Mission

Linton Public School will provide students with a high-quality education that will help them be productive and compassionate citizens.

District Vision

Linton Public School will empower every student with the opportunity to achieve their potential.

Our Beliefs

Linton Public School believes in fostering individualized learning opportunities for unique learners, maintaining high academic standards, and supporting a safe district-wide climate that promotes respect and collaboration for all.

STAFFING EXPECTATIONS/EMERGENCY PREPARATION

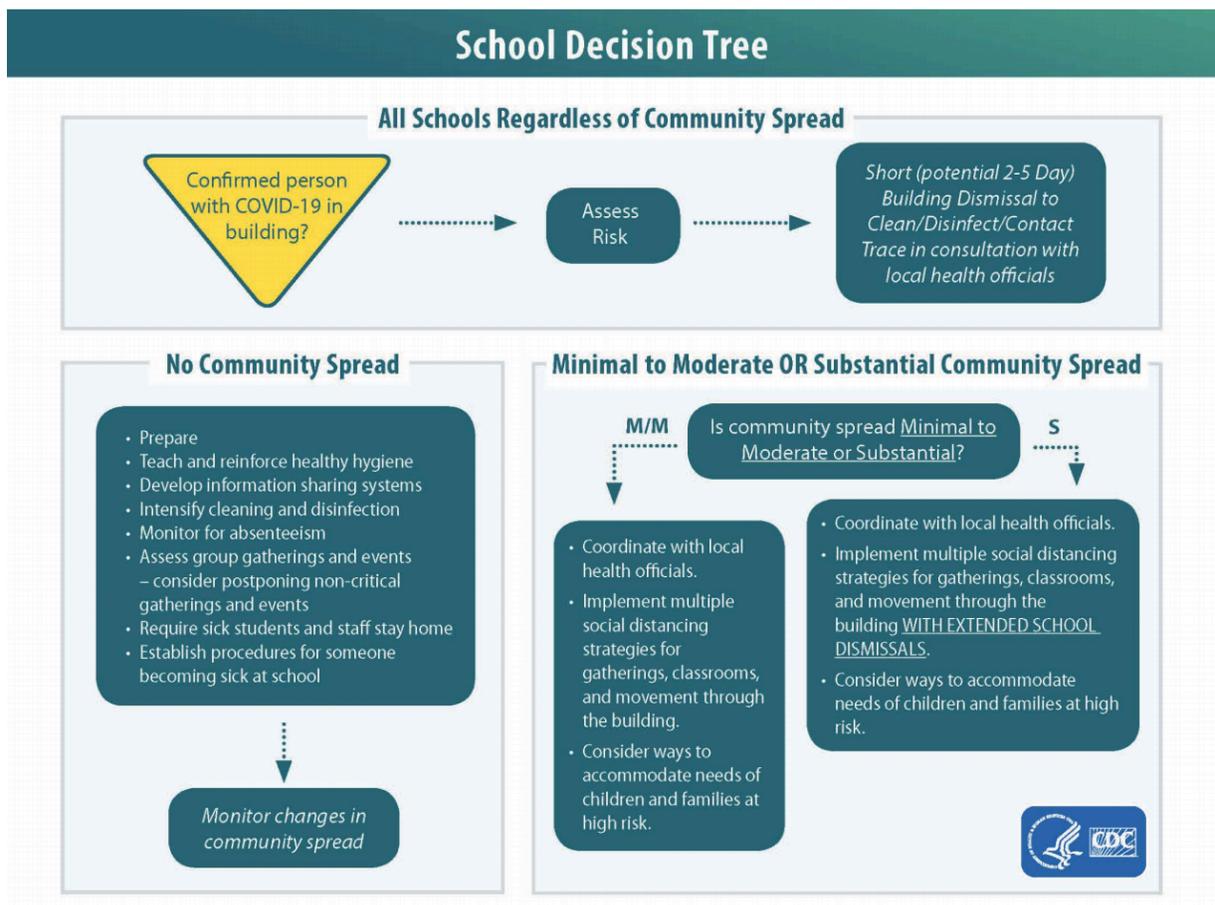
PERSONNEL	ACTION
All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take precautions as directed by Center for Disease Control (CDC) and North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH). • Model and encourage handwashing and other appropriate health hygiene practices at all levels. • Establish and practice isolation protocols. Adults that exhibit symptoms should remain at home. • Establish and practice isolation protocols for students that are symptomatic and contact caregivers as soon as possible.
Linton School Administrators	<p><u>Normal School Operations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor attendance of students to determine the impact and report any significant elevations in absences to the Emmons County Public Health Unit. • Promote attendance policies that reinforce any student or staff exhibiting symptoms of illness to stay home. • Develop processes to address large numbers of staff absences. • Prepare distance/virtual learning plan in the event of a prolonged closure. • Prepare communications, press releases, and statements to share information with stakeholders. • Maintain preparations for responding to pandemic. • Formalize a plan for distance/virtual learning opportunities for students. • Maintain contact and monitor information from NDDoH and NDDPI. • Coordinate with Emmons County Public Health Unit as necessary. <p><u>Extended Closure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify essential personnel to support the transition to distance/virtual learning. • Report to regular, or potentially modified, office hours, as necessary, and establish a central office location. • Execute distance/virtual learning programs. • Organize and coordinate various staff groups that will be necessary to maintain and plan for the extended closure and prepare to be reopened.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to prepare communications, press releases, and statements to share information with stakeholders. • Continue to work with agencies related to health and school closures. • Provide the support, as necessary, for staff to engage in a distance/learning environment. • Continue to monitor and communicate school closures based on recommendations. • Identify essential personnel and work duties during closure. • Prepare for reopening as closure concludes.
Secretary	<p><u>Normal School Operations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement any absence policy changes and ensure parents, families and students are aware of these changes. • Determine location to hold symptomatic students away from well students. • Contact parents when child is symptomatic. • Provide counseling staff with updated lists of students experiencing fear or anxiety. <p><u>Extended Closure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to regular, or potentially modified, hours to maintain the communications hub of the school office. • Create the daily list of family lunch requests and deliver them to the food services. • Conduct any daily work, such as cleaning, taking inventory, etc. as deemed appropriate by immediate supervisor.
Custodian	<p><u>Normal Operations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow enhanced cleaning procedures as prescribed by the superintendent in accordance with CDC environmental cleaning guidelines. • Clean high traffic/highly touched surfaces daily on a regular and as-needed basis. • Monitor cleaning supplies or allow ample time for shipping. • Address safety concerns with superintendent. <p><u>Extended Closure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to regular, or potentially modified, hours. • Maintain regular upkeep and environmental cleaning, as necessary.
Teacher	<p><u>Normal Operations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students that are symptomatic should be kept away from well students and parents contacted.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a plan to provide instructional opportunities in the event of a closure. Prepare to be able to continue teaching from home/office. • Reassure your students and provide emotional supports as needed. • Direct additional supports as necessary including counseling services. <p><u>Extended Closure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate (on-site and through virtual opportunities) as needed to continue focus on professional learning communities. • Continue to appropriately plan and research learning opportunities for students. • Execute virtual learning plan for LPS students. • Provide families and students with scheduled virtual office hours.
<p>Linton Administration and Leadership Team</p>	<p><u>Normal Operations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure operations of educational tools used for online learning. • Prepare to support teachers in providing instruction remotely. • Organize and clean all mobile devices and develop a process to provide devices to students for virtual learning. • Provide additional training and support as needed. • Create survey to gather information from families on internet and device access. • Develop website Alert Center to house all information related to COVID-19 pandemic. <p><u>Extended Closure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create process to disseminate devices to students who lack devices to effectively participate in virtual learning. • Determine mechanisms to provide internet access to those families that lack access to participate in virtual learning. • Continue to support educators and families as needed.
<p>Business Office</p>	<p><u>Normal Operations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support all departments in preparation of school closure. • Prepare offices to begin remote service if necessary. <p><u>Extended Closure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain operations to ensure sound operations of the business office through remote or on-site.

HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

The district has reviewed the CDC and North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) guidelines and created appropriate protocols for cleaning, social distancing, and accommodations for students who are considered at-risk. The district Leadership Team provided daily updates and necessary professional development information pertaining to symptoms and mitigation strategies of COVID-19. Further, staff expectations were shared with all staff to ensure that, regardless of threat level, there is clarity on procedures for how it will be determined when a student or staff member will not be allowed to enter the building in response to health concerns or COVID-19 recommended responses. ([LPS Artifact 1](#)).



STATE GUIDELINES

For efficient review of the Linton Public School District plan for distance/virtual learning opportunities, state guideline requirements have been outlined in this section. Further detail, as necessary, is outlined in the plan breakdown that follows this section.

Do our students have access to a device?

Yes, a survey was given to all families and devices were provided to those families in need of the technology necessary to fulfill learning objectives. In addition, a student advisor system has been developed and implemented to ensure all families are able to access technology or receive other assistance from a certified staff member if necessary.

Do all students have access to reliable, high-speed internet?

Yes, the above-mentioned survey also provided the district with information about families that required internet access in order to fulfill learning objectives. The district's administrators worked with our local provider to provide access. All families surveyed will have high-speed internet installed by March 27th, 2020. Further communication will be made to new families in our district, families that may have relocated, or families that have lost internet capabilities to ensure that high-speed internet will be provided.

Does the plan include provisions to address the unique needs of all grade levels, classes, and courses?

Instruction will be provided through both synchronous and asynchronous methods based on the needs of the students, at age-appropriate levels, and in a manner which, with district guidance, can be supported in a home environment. The plan details at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels are further outlined in the Providing High-Quality, Effective, Standards-Based Education section.

Have teachers considered students' specialized and unique needs?

Students with specialized and unique needs will continue to be serviced as required through state and federal law. This includes students on an Individualized Education Plans (IEP), students with 504 plans, and student's targeted for additional supports through Title I. Specifics for each of these areas are outlined in the Ensuring Equitable Services section.

Does the distance/virtual learning plan provide high-quality, effective, standards-based education that includes access to an educator?

Yes, the distance/virtual learning plan, outlined below, provides distance/virtual learning that is high-quality, and is aligned to North Dakota Content Standards. The district is expected to offer a full continuation of services through traditional distance learning (CRACTC, ITV, and NDCDE) and virtual learning opportunities. Students will be able to access grade-level and subject-matter content. Instructional support is provided, including assessment and evaluation of work. Measurable student progress is expected.

The staff and administration remain committed to Linton Public School's mission, vision, and beliefs regardless of the changing delivery method. Further, the district is firm in the position that Learning for All is first developed through the cultivation of strong relationships. The district is working to fortify the methods used to continue to develop relationships between school and home, and student and teacher. Linton Public School will be purposeful in supporting families through this transition, and intentional in how the district makes even stronger connections to families given this new reality. This may include but is not limited to: regular communication between school and home, online connections and relationship building opportunities for students, availability through online office hours, as well as other individual strategies.

How is the school district providing professional development to educators to prepare them for the transition into a distance learning environment?

Linton Public School administrators prepared key e-learning guidance for staff, developing e-learning expectations ([LPS Artifact 2](#)) and outlined specific professional learning necessary to support all instructors to make the transition to an online modality. Training for staff began during the week of March 16 – March 20, with more specialized training made available, as needed, during the week of March 23 – March 27. The professional development opportunities included all staff creating Google Classrooms as well as completing training in Zoom virtual communication strategies. Future professional development opportunities are provided to staff in the form of workshops, Zoom meetings, and possible courses in online instruction provided through the NDCEL, and the University of Mary (Remote Teacher Course). All certified staff have a Google Classroom set up for each grade/subject taught and will receive additional professional development on August 13 and August 18, 2020.

How will the school transition all students into a distance learning environment?

All parents and students were provided with a detailed description of the online learning process ([LPS Artifact 3](#)) at each level and were also provided with additional guidance, as necessary, to support both students and parents in this transition ([LPS Artifact 4](#)). Additionally, each staff member is required to operate with online office hours to be available for students and families. These opportunities will be considerate of different hours that families and students may be available. Weekly phone calls or Zoom meetings by teacher advisors will ensure that sound relationships are maintained, and distance learning difficulties are addressed in a timely fashion.

Student services, such as counseling, will be made available through virtual modalities. This is more fully outlined in the Ensuring Equitable Services section.

What is the school district's process to revisit human resources policies and procedures to provide adequate flexibility and guidance regarding sick leave, personal leave, and leave without pay?

The Linton Public School District has approved an ongoing payment plan for all certified and support (i.e. classified) staff. All staff will be paid at regular wage and for regular hours throughout the mandated closure.

Essential staff will report to work, as requested, to ensure the facilities continue to be ready to reopen, food service is able to maintain providing meals to all children/families requesting meals, and to fulfill all teaching/learning expectations. Staff will be limited, to the extent possible, for on-site meetings, in favor of virtual meetings/gatherings. In all cases, CDC and NDDoH guidelines will be followed.

The Linton Public School District has reviewed its policies related to staff leave and will monitor other policies that may need to be addressed to ensure operations amidst local health requirements or other state/and/or federal requirements. If applicable, FMLA guidelines will be followed for staff members absent from work due to COVID-19 – as defined with recent guidance related to FMLA.

How will educators measure participation and attendance?

We are asking all educators to utilize Google classroom learning platforms to post on their virtual classrooms when to complete the weekly learning objectives, or other necessary communications. All Pk-12 educators have added their building administrator(s) as co-teachers to their Google Classrooms and will guide students through the learning needed to complete their classroom assignments. During an extended closure, student engagement in learning opportunities is critical to a student's continued academic growth. Attendance shall still be monitored by teachers through student logins in asynchronous learning experiences and participation in synchronous learning experiences. Students will be required to attend classes while Linton Public School implements online learning. Attendance will be taken for all Zoom class meetings. Online classes will take place during regular school hours (8:00 AM -3:30 PM) and coincide with the Linton Public School 2020-21 class schedule. Attendance may also be given for completion of assignments given on a particular day. Any student demonstrating prolonged absence or disengagement is a cause for concern. Teachers, counselors, and/or building administrators shall contact students and/or caregivers to seek input, mitigate barriers for student participation, and provide any supports needed.

ENSURING EQUITABLE SERVICES

The Linton Public School District has considered and implemented a plan that addresses the unique needs of all families and students when considering distance/virtual learning opportunities. During distance/virtual learning, students will be provided work from their teachers, across the same subject areas, through either distance or virtual learning experiences. The district has the infrastructure and professional capacity in place to support distance/virtual learning experiences as an emergency measure for an extended spring closure.

Student Access to Technology and Internet Access

Linton Public School is currently a 1:1 technology school. The LPS technology committee has developed a plan to disburse Chromebooks and Surfaces to our student body at the beginning of the 2020 school year. Students in grades 9-12 will each be issued a Microsoft Surface for in-

school and home use. Students in grades PK-8 will have a device assigned to them but will not take them out of the school unless administration approves this practice while LPS is operating under a traditional teaching model. If LPS shifts to online learning, ALL students will take their assigned devices home.

Internet Access

Through the work of our local internet provider, all families in our district were granted home internet capabilities by March 27, 2020. Further communication will be made to new families in our district, families that may have relocated, or families that have lost internet capabilities to ensure that high-speed internet will be provided.

Access for Devices

All students that do not have devices available at home to be utilized, will have access to a school district-owned device. Each family will complete a *user agreement* for home use and will be made available before any virtual learning opportunities are assigned.

Assistive Technology

The Linton Public School District, through the special education department, will contact families with students that may require assistive technology to ensure continued access to quality education and services during any prolonged closure.

Providing Services to Needy Populations

The Linton Public School District ensures high-quality, age-appropriate instruction for all students. Unique populations and sub-groups will continue to be supported through special considerations. This includes PK-12 students on Individualized Education Plans, students on 504 plans, and students receiving Title I services.

Special Education

Linton Public School is a member of the South Central Prairie Special Education Unit. The goal of the South Central Prairie Special Education Unit and our local school district is to continue to provide special education and related services to our students to the greatest extent possible during any prolonged closure. Our greatest concern is for the health and safety of our students, staff and communities.

All case managers and service providers have reviewed each Individual Education Program for the students they serve. A Temporary Contingency Plan (TCP) has been developed for each student that includes a plan to assist students to continue to make progress towards their annual goals during the time of school closure. The TCPs are working documents that may be enhanced as the skill and comfort levels of staff and families increases.

Each parent, guardian, or adult student will be contacted by their child's case manager and/or service provider to discuss these plans. The TCPs are to be mailed via USPS along with a letter

from the Director and two copies of a parent consent form that includes a Notice of Changes to an IEP without a Meeting and Prior Written Notice Statement. Parents are asked to agree to, or refuse, the services outlined in the TCP. Refusal does not extend to core curriculum classes being taught by special education teachers. A self-addressed stamped envelope is provided to return a signed copy of the form. Alternate methods such as email and fax are also provided. The Director will follow up with parents who do not return their forms in a reasonable amount of time.

All case managers and service providers will work with students via the platform determined by their local school district. This may also include the distribution of instructional packets that can be completed at home with parental guidance and/or virtual instruction. Case managers and service providers will maintain contact with students and parents on a weekly basis, or as determined in the TCP. Resources for supplemental instruction, including online learning programs such as Dreambox, Lexia, Learning Ally, Renaissance Math and Ripple Effects are provided by the Unit. Additional resources will be extended as needed. Equitable online learning procedures will be followed by each school district.

Case managers will document all communication with students and families during this time including online lessons, provision of materials and student contact time.

Meetings required under IDEA will be reviewed on an individual basis. If possible, meetings may be held virtually or by phone if all parties are in agreement. If it is not possible to hold meetings while allowing for meaningful participation by all team members, the meetings will be postponed until school resumes. Assessments will not be conducted until school resumes unless reliability and validity of assessment results can be ensured during the assessment process. For triennial assessments due during the school closure, parents and school districts may agree in writing that an evaluation is not necessary and re-examine assessment opportunities when school resumes. A Prior Written Notice of Special Education Action will be sent by the case manager in all instances.

Parent resources and information including a Parent FAQ are located on the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction website: <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/covid-19-special-education>

Section 504

The district will continue to follow each student's team-developed 504 plan as applicable to distance/virtual learning. The district will ensure that a student who has a 504 plan will have equitable access to the general education curriculum and instruction of the distance/virtual learning plan. The district will, as necessary and as requested by students and parents, revise 504 plans to accommodate for virtual learning.

Title I

Title I services will continue to be provided to qualifying students at Linton Public School. The Title I teacher has created a Google classroom for all qualifying students providing additional supports to ensure delivery of equitable education. The Title I teacher will continue to work closely with general education teachers to

provide supports. Supports could be, but are not limited to, learning materials sent home, assisting parents in supporting students at home, online resources, and communication with parents through virtual means.

EL Learners

Linton Public School District currently has no English Learners (EL) students at this time. In the event we are required to service an EL student(s), they will access instruction through distance/virtual methods. These students will continue to be serviced by the EL instructor through virtual supports. Additionally, the EL instructor will communicate with the family to address individual issues. The EL instructor will support the teacher of record to accommodate, as necessary, for the specific needs of the EL student.

Homeless Students

Linton Public School District currently has no homeless students at this time. In the event we provide services to a homeless student(s), the Linton Public School District homeless student liaison will follow established school policy to meet the needs of this student(s). Linton Public School District will deliver packet-based learning materials to all homeless students in lieu of e-learning guidance on a weekly basis, or as needed.

Counseling Services/Social Emotional Needs

Counseling services will be made available through individual appointments, via virtual opportunities. Our Pk-12 counselor has updated the counselor's website with activities, coping skills, and behavioral information. The counselor will reach out personally to all high-risk students to set up a virtual visitation schedule, in addition to posting virtual office hours. A Google classroom has been established to continue character education for grades Pk-8. Scholarship, college, and career information will continually be sent out via e-mail, website updates, and Google classroom notifications. The counselor has created a student [in-take form](#) as well.

Family and Student Virtual Access and Support

Each staff member will provide online office hours to be available for all student and families at least two hours per day. Principals will hold Zoom virtual meetings with community members to review Zoom capabilities and Google classroom features as needed. These services will be conducted to continue to cultivate strong relationships with students and families throughout an extended closure as well as provide a mechanism for student and family questions on learning opportunities and troubleshooting.

Development of Virtual Learning Guidelines and Guidance for Staff

The district Leadership Team developed an e-learning rollout plan and led a professional development day on March 19th with all staff to implement virtual learning. This guidance is housed in a shared cloud folder available for all staff. This includes state guidance, implementation checklists, planning guides, family communications, how to monitor progress, and other supports. ([LPS Artifact 5](#))

The district provided professional learning on March 19th and March 23rd on the various platforms that may be used across the district in a virtual learning environment. This includes Google Classrooms, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom. More advanced trainings in these platforms will be provided as needed.

PROVIDING HIGH-QUALITY, EFFECTIVE, STANDARDS-BASED EDUCATION

The expectation is to focus on continuing to provide the same level of high quality, standards-based education during virtual/distance learning as offered in the traditional setting for all students at every grade level, with expected concessions depending on the ability level of the student. This can be adjusted, as necessary, to adapt to the existing environment and to provide an age-appropriate learning expectation.

Learning priorities will be focused on essential learning standards, using assessment tools to ensure student engagement and effective learning is taking place for each course or grade level. Linton Public School District staff will continue to teach their usual units aligned to state standards. Teachers will post these learning standards each week on their Google classrooms as they align to their activities and assessments. Students may have online, offline, and hybrid learning activities. The primary tools for communication will be learning management systems, such as Google Classroom, other online applications, such as Apptegy's push notification system and mobile app platform, social media, video conferencing, such as Zoom, and email.

In addition to traditional distance learning methods, the district is supportive of new learning experiences and has directed staff to prioritize maintaining positive and effective relationships and continuing to provide high-quality education.

Assessments and Grades

Teachers will use a combination of Google classroom assessment tools, IXL, Lexia, Dreambox, and other electronic delivery methods to measure student achievement as related to content standards. Linton Public School grading practices will not be suspended for online learning. Failing a course will result in not receiving credit, or possibly being retained. Grades will be tracked and reported to families via PowerSchool.

Attendance

Students will be required to attend classes while Linton Public School implements online learning. Attendance will be taken for all Zoom class meetings. Attendance may also be given for completion of assignments given on a particular day. Online classes will take place during regular school hours (8:00 AM - 3:30 PM) and coincide with the Linton Public School 2020-21 class schedule.

Distance and Virtual Learning Support

LPS staff is expected to maintain an online learning platform that is updated and operational during the 2020-21 school year to ensure a smooth transition to distance learning if needed.

Staff experiences in supporting distance and virtual learning will be monitored by the building administrator. Additional support, including technical training, professional learning opportunities, and collaborations, will be scheduled, as necessary, to further build the capacity across the school continuum to provide high-quality instruction for all students.

Collaboration and Coordination of Instruction

Linton Public School District staff have already been trained and are implementing standards-based education practices through Professional Learning Communities. These PLCs will continue to operate to ensure high quality learning experiences. Each virtual team will determine the appropriate avenue to meet regularly. Online surveys will continue to be utilized to gauge which, and to what degree, the 4 Corollary Questions (What do we want students to know and learn, How do we know, What do we do when they don't know it, and How do we react when they do) are being considered during each meeting. These will continue to be monitored by the building administrator.

These PLC teams have been trained and are implementing Standards Based Education practices that is monitored to ensure these high-quality learning experiences continue virtually.

Building administrators will coordinate staff, as necessary, either through virtual or face-to-face, to coordinate and collaborate on instruction. This may include the development of cross-curricular activities, development of virtual activities, utilizing online methods to connect with students, professional development, and research and discussion on available resources.

FOOD SERVICE, HUMAN RESOURCES, AND BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Food Service

Students in grades K-12 will receive access to nutritious meals through Linton Public School. Meals will be provided using a pick-up process for Linton School students.

Business Office and Human Resources Operations

Before the event of a full closure of the Linton Public School District operations due to a pandemic, preparations shall be made to ensure continuation of payroll, funds receivable, funds payable, and human resources management through remote systems.

Operational plans shall be organized by the business manager/human resource manager and approved by the superintendent.

Classified and certified staff will be paid at regular wage and for regular hours during the school closure due to COVID-19. These payments will be made as prescribed by the district's approved 2019/2020 district budget.

The consistent operations of human resources is critical in the school district at any time, and consistent operation is even more crucial in uncertain times. Human resources must be prepared for emergency planning and be prepared to enact policies and procedures to ensure operations with local health requirements as well as other state and/or federal guidelines.

Human Resources Policies and Procedures

Before the event of a full closure to schools and district operations, the district Superintendent and business manager/human resource manager shall present a plan on how to address sick leave, personal leave, and leave without pay for consideration by the Linton School Board of Education.

The school board may wish to suspend policies that limit or prevent operational efficiency or conflict with emergency declarations or guidance from community officials.

Federal Programs and Funds

The Linton Public School District will continue to comply with guidance and regulations on all federal programs utilized by the district.