

Lowell Public Schools

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response

April 15, 2020





Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response

- The Lowell Public Schools have been closed since Monday, March 16. The projected return date is Monday, May 4.
 - *On March 13, LPS announced a 2 week closure.*
 - *On March 15, Governor Baker announced all schools in the state will be closed for 3 weeks*
 - *On March 25, Governor Baker extended the state-wide closure until May 4*

- Prior to our closure, we announced that the district was canceling any out-of-state domestic school-related travel and any school-organized international trips for student groups, following the recommendations of Governor Baker and DESE.



Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response

COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS

- Connect Ed – messages sent out to entire student population
 - Emails
 - Phone Calls
- Website
 - COVID-19 info page is updated with the latest information and is accessible from all websites throughout the district. Includes dedicated pages for our grab and go meal service and at home learning opportunities.
- Social Media
 - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
- Translation of messages in multiple languages (Spanish, Portuguese, Khmer, Swahili)
- Language Line and Language Apps





Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response

- **STILL PROVIDING MEAL SERVICE**
 - We are still providing breakfast and lunch for students during the weekdays at **11 sites** while school is closed: Butler, Greenhalge, Lincoln, Moody, [Morey](#), Murkland, Pawtucketville, Robinson, STEM Academy, [Stoklosa](#) and the [Westminster Village Apartments](#).
 - All students ages 2-18 are eligible for meal service
 - Given circumstances, students don't have to be present to pick up food. A parent or neighbor can pick up food.
 - Students / Families are able to pick up breakfast for the next day when they pick up that day's lunch.
 - On Fridays, students / families will be able to pick up meals for the weekend days as well.





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- ALSO DISTRIBUTED TOILETRIES, ACTIVITY BAGS, AND FOOD BOXES
 - Thanks to donations from community partners, such as Catie's Closet, Middlemiss Foundation and the Greater Boston Food Bank, LPS has been able to distribute additional items of need to our students and families.
 - Families will be notified via the connect-ed phone call system when toiletries, food boxes and other distributions are scheduled at their local lunch distribution site.





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EMERGENCY SHELTER OPENED AT STOKLOSA MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Shelter will serve individuals that may have been exposed to other individuals that have tested positive for COVID-19.
- Individuals who have tested positive will not be directed to the shelter.
- The site will be staffed and monitored by professionals from Lowell Community Health Center.

LOWELLMA.GOV/CORONAVIRUS



Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response

REMOTE LEARNING

- An MOA between the Lowell Public Schools and UTL was reached on April 2, 2020
- Following guidance from DESE, the district began implementing a remote learning program last week. Detailed outlines for preschool, elementary school (K-4), middle school (5-8), and high school have been uploaded to the district website, translated into Spanish, Portuguese, Khmer, and shared with families.
- Nothing can replace the in-person schooling experience, and we should not expect that remote learning can replicate the traditional school day. But, we are prepared to offer our students an engaging and meaningful learning experience during this time away from school.





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REMOTE LEARNING

- We are asking students to engage in meaningful and productive learning for approximately half the length of a regular school day (3 to 3.5 hours).
- Learning at all grade levels will take place via a combination of educator-directed learning and student self-directed learning.
 - Given the nature of their coursework, high school students will continue learning the content outlined in each course syllabus.
 - Students in preschool through grade 8 will reinforce the skills and concepts they have learned, as well as engage in new project-based experiences and online learning based on their learning needs.





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REMOTE LEARNING

- For students receiving special education services, teachers and Evaluation Team Chairs will make contact with students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) as they continue to work to develop a temporary distance learning plan that will support each child's individual needs during this temporary closure.
- For students identified for English learner services, teachers will contact their students to determine differentiated supports based on a student's English level.





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REMOTE LEARNING - Chromebook Distribution

- School staff are surveying families to determine each family's access to the internet and devices needed to participate in online learning.
 - Chromebook distribution has almost reached completion at the high school.
 - Middle schools and K-8 schools have started engaging in the Chromebook distribution process which is anticipated to be completed at the end of this upcoming week.
 - Soon thereafter, the district will transition to developing an assessment and distribution process for elementary school students.
 - These Chromebooks are on loan from the district and students will be responsible for returning them in the same condition in which they were received.





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SUPPORTING THE REMOTE LEARNING NEEDS OF STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE AND STUDENTS THAT QUALIFY FOR MCKINNEY VENTO PROVISIONS DURING THE COVID-19

- The [McKinney-Vento Specialists](#) are reaching out to each of their assigned schools to:
 - Cross reference the list of students that have received Chromebooks or have responded to surveys indicating a need.
 - Verify that families of students receiving McKinney-Vento services have been contacted and in touch.
 - Assess the immediate housing and food needs of students and families.





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SUPPORTING THE REMOTE LEARNING NEEDS OF STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE AND STUDENTS THAT QUALIFY FOR MCKINNEY VENTO PROVISIONS DURING THE COVID-19

- Additionally, lists of students identified as being in a Foster Care arrangement are being cross-referenced with schools to ensure the learning needs of students in foster care are being met.





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REMOTE LEARNING - GRADING AND REPORT CARDS

- Report cards for elementary school students were mailed at the end of last week, which closely aligned with the regular schedule for elementary school report card distribution.
- Middle and High School report cards schedules are under review, and more information will be provided to students and families as we approach the regular timeline for secondary school report card distribution.
- Grading Policy to be discussed under New Business





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MCAS UPDATE - from DESE Commissioner Riley as of Friday, 4/10

- DESE previously requested and received a waiver from the federal requirement for annual statewide student assessment.
- With the state legislation enacted, the MCAS testing requirement is waived for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year.
- The commissioner is canceling this spring's regular administration of grade-level MCAS tests for students in grades 3-10.
- In addition, the legislation allows the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, upon DESE's recommendation, to modify or waive the requirements of the competency determination for high school graduation in order to address disruptions caused by the outbreak of COVID-19 or the state of emergency.
- Further guidance will be forthcoming.





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AT HOME LEARNING

- Before making a transition to remote learning, we were offering optional enrichment opportunities for all students.
- The at home learning section on our website is still populated with enrichment activities the Curriculum Office has put together to support your child's learning at each grade level and across various subjects to include ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, Social Emotional Learning and Physical Activities.
- At home learning packets have been made available at our lunch sites for students/families to take home. These packets can also be found on our website as downloadable PDFs. 2500 packets were printed for each week's distribution.





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RESOURCES FOR SOCIAL EMOTIONAL NEEDS

- The “at home learning” section of the Lowell Public Schools website includes links to social emotional learning (SEL) activities/resources to help children to talk about their feelings and adjusting to our new “normal”.
- Stay tuned for LPS #wellnesswednesdays where social emotional activities are selected and highlighted for students and families.
- Students and families who are in need of speaking with someone with questions or concerns during this time of need can call the Family Resource Center at 978 674-4321.
- The FRC will connect students and families with an SEL team member who can help connect families with community programs, support hotlines and even a way to consult with our school staff who specialize in mental health and social emotional needs for students and families.





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- **CENTRAL OFFICE & FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER:** As of Tuesday, March 17, both locations have been closed to the public, with all staff working remotely.
 - Even with Central Office and FRC both closed to the public, families will still be able to call both offices:
 - Central Office - 978-674-4320
 - FRC - 978-674-4321





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ONGOING MATTERS

- **REGISTRATION DELAYED:** School registration for preschool was scheduled to start on March 16, and registration for kindergarten was scheduled to start on March 30. We will be delaying both registration periods and will provide you with more details once new dates are finalized.
- **APRIL VACATION:** Recommendation will be provided under New Business





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ONGOING MATTERS

- **GRADUATION:** High school graduation was originally scheduled on the 2019-2020 school calendar for June 3rd. Given Covid-19 and the ongoing updates to the Covid-19 response, June 24 has been identified as a contingency date.
- **SCHOOL PROM:** LHS leadership is meeting with class officers to determine contingency dates and plans for school prom.

