

**LINK COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL
HEALTH-RELATED CLOSURE PREPAREDNESS PLAN**

Presented March, 2020

Updated May, 2020



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General Information on COVID-19 Coronavirus

Guidance for Schools from NJ Department of Health

https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/covid2019_dashboard.shtml

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Information on Coronavirus

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Signs and Prevention Tips from NJ Department of Health

https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/INFOGRAPHIC-covid-19-quick_facts.pdf

Posters placed throughout the building

NJ Coronavirus and Poison Hotline

1-800-222-1222 or 1-800-962-1253 if using out-of-state phone line

LCCS Response to Seasonal Flu and COVID-19 Coronavirus

December 2019 - February 2020	<p>Communications home through Weekly Purple Envelope with school protocols regarding the flu and cold season</p> <p>Placement and continual restocking of hand sanitizers throughout building</p> <p>Continual cleaning and disinfecting of high contact areas throughout the building</p>
March 3, 2020	<p>Letter to school community regarding school response</p> <p>School Leadership Participation in Governor’s Coronavirus Preparedness Briefing Call (NJDOH)</p>
March 5, 2020	<p>NJDOE issues guidance on “home instruction” for health related closings</p>
March 6, 2020	<p>Staff Meeting to discuss school response</p>
March 9, 2020	<p>School Leadership Participation on Conference call with NJ Office of Charter and Renaissance Schools</p> <p>Leadership Meeting to discuss school preparedness plan</p> <p>School Board Meeting discussion on preliminary plan and scheduling of emergency board meeting on March 19th via conference call (capacity to handle all school families) with notices posted</p>
March 10, 2020	<p>Creation of dedicated webpage on school site https://linkschool.org/covid-19-resources/</p> <p>Leadership Meeting to continue detailing school preparedness plan and initiate early dismissal on Friday, March 13th for planning and disinfecting.</p> <p>Phone blast to school families to inform of early dismissal</p>
March 11, 2020	<p>School response to email request from County Superintendent</p>

	Leadership Meeting to continue detailing school preparedness plan
March 12, 2020	Planning session with school technology consultant Purchase of emergency chromebooks to deploy to students as needed Leadership Meeting to continue detailing school preparedness plan School response to Technology Survey issued by NJDOE
March 13, 2020	Meeting with Social Workers, Nurse and Deans to discuss School Preparedness Plan Presentation on School Preparedness Plan to all staff Instructional Planning Session for Teachers re: remote learning strategies and review of available tools School response to Meals Survey issued by NJDOE
March 16, 2020	Provided laptops to students who indicated in the Link Technology Survey a need for a laptop Provided all students with packets Last day of in-school programming – Early Dismissal Teachers and staff worked to finalize plans on distance learning
March 17, 2020	Launch virtual/distance learning

School Profile
(added May 20, 2020)

Grade Levels:	5 th to 8 th grades
Student Body:	304 approved students/307 current enrollment
Students with Disabilities:	33 students/approx 11%
Speech Services:	12 students
Counseling Services:	10 students
English Language Learners:	None
Free/Reduced Lunch Eligibility:	80%
Residency Distribution:	Newark East Orange Orange Newark Other towns: North Plainfield, Plainfield, Edison, Linden, Hillside, Union

General School Preparedness

Emergency Preparedness

- This document provides a thoughtful plan to deliver LCCS's mission through a robust instructional program and to meet applicable law and regulations during a health-related closure of the school.
- LCCS' general Emergency Plan remains in effect. The school will use guidance from the NJ Department of Health and its local agencies, as well as the NJ Department of Education in responding to health related emergencies.
- This plan is a living document and will be adapted to respond to changing conditions such a health-related closure.

Building Access

- The school building will be accessible for small groups meeting CDC guidelines for the distribution of school meals and technology. Families are asked to send only 1 person to the school.
- The school building will be staffed by the custodian, and one to two members of the leadership team (in rotation).

Building Maintenance

- The building will be maintained by LCCS' plant manager and a custodian from Link Education Partners, the owner of the school building.
- The school's plant manager has a Black Seal boiler license and will maintain all systems throughout the closure.
- Both the plant manager and the custodian will make minor repairs on the facility, while preparing the building for the return of students and staff.
- As local and state guidance/orders permit, essential renovations and upgrades will also be undertaken to increase safety, security, and overall operations.

Essential Employees

In emergency situations that require the closure of the school, essential personnel may be required to report for regular or adjusted duty to continue essential operations that are critical to the school and its stakeholders, including instructional leadership, fiscal management, cafeteria services, and building maintenance. All other employees may be required to work remotely to meet their responsibilities.

Essential Employees shall be defined as:

- Head of School
- Chief Operating Officer
- School Business Administrator
- Instructional Operations Manager
- Facility Manager

- Principal and Deans
- Cafeteria Manager
- Technology Consultant

Communication

- LCCS will continue to use its School Messenger communication system to send emails, phone calls and text messages to school families and staff with updates regarding school operations and health/safety.
- LCCS developed a dedicated page on the school website to keep the school community informed: <https://linkschool.org/covid-19-resources/>
- LCCS will also use its social media platforms (facebook, twitter) to communicate with the community.
- All staff and students will have access to their LCCS email addresses.
- All communications with stakeholders, the media and the public are directed by the Head of School in collaboration with the Principal, Chief Operating Officer, and the Director of Communication.
- Meetings will be conducted via Google Hangout with Zoom as the backup platform.
- Mobile devices/service will be provided to the school social workers, nurse, deans and director of admission and high school placement for ongoing communication with families and discharge of their duties.

Student Records

- All student and family data may be accessed remotely by school personnel through the Student Information System (PowerSchool) which is hosted off site by Pearson and provides appropriate levels of privacy/confidentiality.
- DeansList is also available to all staff as a communication tool.

School Operations Leadership and Staffing Team

LCCS will continue to function under the leadership of the head of school and the direction of the principal and chief operating officer. During any school closure where operations continue, the following administrators and staff will lead/implement the major areas of the school:

Maria Pilar Paradiso, Head of School

- State and County Level Communication, Coordination, Compliance
- Board Relations/Meetings

- Public Relations and Community Engagement
Sharon Machrone, Director of Communications

- Enrollment, High School Placement, Summer Opportunities
Greg Silver, Director of Admission and HSP

- Transportation, SIS, Enrollment, Student Records
Erica Bradshaw, Instructional Program Operations Manager

Leslie Baynes, Chief Operating Officer and Bima Baje, School Business Administrator

- Food Services
Marlene Wilson, Cafeteria Manager
- Facility Maintenance and Cleaning
Vidal Carrasco, Plant Manager
Building Cleaner (contractual)
- HR, Benefits, Purchasing
Joven Freeman
- Payroll, Accounting, Compliance, Pension
Bima Baje and Leslie Baynes

Kathleen Hester, Principal

- Supplies, Parent Support
Monique Brooks, School Secretary
- Attendance
Monique Brooks, School Secretary
Da'Cheray Thomas-Ruth, Assistant Dean of Students
- Instructional Program Delivery
Detra DeNully, Dean of Students (English Language Arts)
Christine Kelley-Kemple, Science Specialist and Instructional Coach (science & ss)
Danielle Perrota, Math Specialist and Instructional Coach (math)
Christine Lynskey, Special Education Coordinator (special education)
Hannah Kennedy, House Culture Leader (SEL)
- Health and Wellness Checks
Nancy Merwede, school nurse
Karen Hannah, nurse
Dr. Kia Gundry, school physician (for consultation)
- Counseling Services, Speech Services, Crisis/Trauma Support
Erika Turner, School Social Worker/HIB Coordinator/Child Study Team Internal Caseworker

Staffing

- The school will continue to employ its regular staff.

Continuity of Operations

- Payroll and benefit will continue on schedule.
- Staff will have access to SBA (Bima Baje) and Finance and Operations Coordinator (Joven Freeman-Wright) during normal school hours via email.
- LCCS Board of Education meetings will continue as scheduled via conference call with secured conference call number: 857-799-9533. An emergency meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, March 19, 2020, at 6:30 pm, to try out this new structure. The secured conference line can support robust parent participation.
- An additional School Board meeting will be scheduled for April 29th.

Financial Considerations

The School has an appropriate fund balance and cash balance to support temporary disruption to district payments and has secured authority from the school board to explore short term financial options such as a loan and/or line of credit. There are strong concerns about impact of interruption in local funding and reductions in local and state funding of over 5%.

Staff Attendance

All LCCS staff are expected to participate fully during a health-related school closure. Staff will sign in and out through Paylocity with individual IDs to capture attendance. Staff who are ill would communicate via LCCS' Call Out procedure and take a sick day pursuant to school policies. Instructional coverage would be provided for teachers who are sick by the administrator assigned to the teaching team. LCCS staff are expected to check-in with the administrator assigned at least two times per day.

Food Services

LCCS will support families with food through the Federal Lunch Program under the Summer Food Service Program.

- The school will continue to make available breakfast and lunch to families, at least twice per week with up to 3 days worth of breakfast and lunch meals each time.
- LCCS food program participation ensures that any student in Newark can come to Link for meals and that all Link families can access meals for their children at Link.
- Food is prepared off site by Maschio's Food Service and delivered to the school on Tuesdays and Fridays. The schedule will be maintained in a consistent basis except that an adjustment is necessary to comply with the Newark Mayor's "Be Still Monday" initiative.
- Link stores both refrigerated and shelf-stable foods and provides meals to families as they arrive to the school.

Meetings and Planning Sessions

A strong tiered system of supports for teachers will be used to maintain connections, positive spirit and robust instruction.

Instructional Level Administrators will participate in a daily conference at 3:00 pm to address the following preliminary agenda and any other relevant topics with respect to health-related closure activities and programming:

- I. Instructional Delivery Updates and Needs for all Subjects
 - a. Lesson Planning Status Check/Needs
 - b. Teacher Technology Resources Status Check/Needs
 - c. Student Technology Resources Status Check/Needs
 - d. Special Education Status Check/Needs
- II. Attendance Update and Needs
- III. Support Services Update and Needs
 - a. Counseling
 - b. Speech
 - c. Crisis/trauma
- IV. Food and Nutrition Delivery Update/Needs
 - a. Free and Reduced Lunch compliance
 - b. Others
- V. Communication Needs
- VI. Other topics

Ongoing Operations: To keep planning moving forward in anticipation of returning to traditional school operations, Instructional Administrators and other staff will continue to meet regularly to address regular instructional program and curriculum, state assessment, school calendar, summer academy, summer remediation, capacity building/growth, athletics, extracurricular programming, field trips, materials and resources, compliance, enrollment, etc. Meetings to be scheduled via Google Hangout as needed between 8:30 am and 10:00 am.

Leadership Team: LCCS school leadership (head of school, principal and chief operating officer-with SBA as needed) to meet daily via conference call/video.

Plan for Instructional Delivery

Overall Goal: LCCS will provide mission aligned robust instruction with strong student engagement and positive learning outcomes for ALL students during a health-related school closure.

To meet this goal, LCCS will provide

1. **Access** for all students to programs provided during a health-related school closure; including:
 - a. G-Suite Link username and password for all students
 - b. Paper packets to provide no interruption in learning
 - c. Laptops and mobile hotspots for all students without either
 - d. Use of technology platforms and programs that are accessible by all students
 - e. Videotaped and live sessions making access possible at any time of day
 - f. Posted assignments that students can work on on their own or in the class environment.
 - g. Home delivery of materials and supplies needed for elective enrichment programs
2. **Instructional programming** that is robust, standards aligned and developmentally appropriate
 - a. Instruction has been designed with student grade level and development needs in mind and grade levels supports through the Deans, Social Workers, and the Nurses.
 - b. LCCS teacher-developed instruction that meets the school's curriculum/course of study. Instruction will mostly be delivered via Google Classroom and Google Hangout. Instruction will include mini-lessons and independent student work.
 - c. Differentiated learning materials and resources, including digital learning platforms, teacher-created presentations, teacher-created learning packets, independent reading texts, and online access to textbooks, all will maximize student learning.
 - d. Platforms for student engagement that allow students to ask questions, contribute to, and respond to questions/prompts.
3. **Assessment that provides data that a teacher can use for both current planning and evaluation of student progress**
 - a. Throughout the remote learning period, teachers will deliver the curriculum with its existing assessment tools, whenever possible.
 - b. Online platforms will be use for all tested subjects, including Kahn Academy assessments for the current grade level and the upcoming grade level to gauge where each student is.
 - c. Immediate steps will be taken to remediate including use of differentiation of lessons, individuals support and collaboration with the Special Education teachers and paraprofessionals

4. **Technology** tools to support digital learning, including devices (chromebooks) and mobile hotspots/modems to ensure connectivity for all students. Those students without internet and without any laptop access were prioritized.
 - a. A Link family survey revealed specific needs so that Link could respond to individual families immediately.
 - b. Laptops were repurposed as chromebooks and made available to all students who did not have access to one from home. Approximately 1/3 of the school took one in the first days of the closure.
 - c. Chromebooks were purchased so that additional family needs could be met.
 - d. Mobile hot spots were purchased for family and staff who might need connection.
 - e. A dedicated technology line and email provide direct access to technology support.
 - f. The school secretary remains easily accessible through the rerouting of the main school line to a dedicated cell phone provided to her.
5. Ongoing development/planning to increase technology access for ALL students in future closures and for ongoing instructional programming
 - a. Additional Chromebooks are being purchased to create a 2:1 environment so students have access to technology from home and from school.
 - b. Systems and procedures will be developed and implemented during summer program as a pilot so we can launch strong 2:1 program in September
6. Strong weekly **“school to home” communication**
 - a. Advisor and teacher emails
 - b. Immediate transition of “Link to Home” newsletter to electronic format and electronic delivery
 - c. Regular website postings
 - d. Regular monitoring of local and state advisories and information and sharing of such with families through ongoing
7. Regular **Attendance and “Health and Wellness”** checks via phone/video by the social workers, nurse and deans.
 - a. LCCS will use state guidance and its policies to guide attendance procedures.
 - b. Attendance will be monitored through direct class-based teacher/and daily advisor contact.
 - c. Lack of student work or presence online triggers calls home
 - d. Parents will continue to notify Link of absences due to illness, deaths in family, etc.
 - e. LCCS will use a combination of work product and online participation to determine promotion and retention.
8. Ongoing dedication to serving all special needs students through the provisions of their **Individual Educational Plans**
 - a. All students with an IEP will receive direct support from special education teachers and paraprofessionals who will be present for online instruction every day

- b. Special education teachers and paraprofessionals provide all modifications and accommodations included in IEPs during their online sessions with students
 - c. The school case manager (a school social worker) will call the parents of every student with an IEP every week to check in.
 - i. The calls will provide information from families about their perspective on services and learning progress, as well as feedback from teachers.
 - d. Counseling and speech services as provided in IEPs (no other services are currently required by IEPs for the 2019-2020 school year) will be delivered to students via phone conferencing.
 - i. Any missed sessions are documented and will be offered to families.
 - ii. Progress is documented throughout the session by the practitioner/provider.
 - e. The Child Study Team will continue to meet for Annual Meetings, Re-Evaluations and Initials, providing testing when advisable and appropriate, through teleconferencing.
 - i. Due to the nature of testing, it may not be advisable to implement in virtual landscape.
 - ii. Testing that could not be implemented during the closure would be scheduled immediately after reopening or the summer if permissible.
 - iii. The internal case manager and CST Case Manager will continue to collaborate.
9. **Counseling and crisis intervention** as needed by the social workers.
- a. Teacher and staff referrals will continue as needed
 - b. The Social Workers will provide services and direct families to ongoing/outside services as appropriate.
10. **Administrative/instructional support** will be provided to all teachers with content area assignments.
- a. Training and resources for teachers to support digital instruction.
 - b. Visits to virtual classrooms
 - c. Ongoing coaching and support from instructional leaders and the administrative team
 - d. Continuation of grade level meetings

**As LCCS does not have any ESL, ELL or Bilingual students, no services will be provided during the health-related closure

The instructional program will comprise a minimum of four (4) hours daily with the following course of study:

Lower House: 5th and 6th grade

- English language arts (balanced literacy model)
- math
- science
- computers
- Spanish
- The arts
- life skills/advisory/social emotional learning

- independent reading
- health/physical education

Upper House: 7th and 8th grade

- English
- math
- social studies
- science

- computers
- Spanish
- The arts
- advisory/social emotional learning
- independent reading
- health/physical education

All four grades also participate in advisory and circle, as well as an array of electives that will provide enrichment and exposure, including: Hip Hop Dance, Cooking, Manga Drawing, Calligraphy, Canvas Painting, Introduction to French, and much more.

Plan for Graduation

LCCS will conduct its annual 8th grade graduation and 6th grade moving up ceremony virtually.

Link will create a pre-recorded graduation ceremony to highlight the departure of our 8th grade class as they complete the four year program; involving speakers and presenters, to be made available to families on Thursday, June 18th, at 6 pm (the scheduled date and time for graduation for the Class of 2020). In advance of the June 18th virtual graduation, graduates will receive a box with graduation cap and gown, their diploma and case, their class t-shirt, items to decorate their front doors, and a lawn/window sign.

A similar approach will be taken for the annual Moving Up Ceremony for the 6th grade, with a pre-recorded ceremony that is shared at the regularly scheduled date and time.

Plan for Summer Learning

LCCS in partnership with Link Education Partners will make available to all incoming 5th graders and all returning students a virtual summer learning program. The instructional staff will be Link teachers with the experience and knowledge of the 2019-20 school closure and student progression. All participating students will receive a school laptop/chromebook. Anyone without internet will also receive a mobile hotspot to gain connectivity.

- Incoming 5th graders: Students will be expected to participate actively through a scheduled program from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm from Monday, July 6th to Friday, July 30th. Instruction will be synchronous each day, including English language arts, math, science,

art, yoga and centering practice, advisory and morning circle, and diverse enriching electives.

- Returning students/Rising 6th, 7th, and 8th graders: Students will be expected to participate actively through a scheduled program from 8:30 am to about 2:30 pm from Monday, July 6th to Friday, July 30th. Instruction will be synchronous each day, including English language arts, math, and diverse enriching electives.