



Linn-Mar High School Student and Parent Announcements and Updates September 1, 2020



ANY NEW INFORMATION IS HIGHLIGHTED IN YELLOW. ANY EXTRA EMPHASIS IS HIGHLIGHTED IN GREEN.

1. Pre-School Year:

A. Current Planning for Starting School Year during a Pandemic and following a derecho.

The decision has been made that Linn-Mar will be using an A/B schedule at the start of the school year. For the high school, this schedule will be used for 1st Quarter. (It will be used for the first two weeks in grades K-6th). Superintendent Bisgard sent out information on Thursday afternoon updating the district Return-To-Learn Plan. The following begins to provide more specifics to the hybrid 'A'/'B' schedule in place for 1st Quarter at LMHS.

If we choose online-only learning (Hybrid Option A), what will this look like at LMHS?

We want everyone to feel safe as a student and we want every parent to feel their student will be as safe as possible when they are in the building. The 'A'/'B' hybrid schedule (see attached) has been established to help provide a better opportunity to ensure this even with a large student body.

For parents choosing the online-only option at LMHS, their student(s) will still be taking their current schedule of courses. They will simply be doing so online each day. We want students to be able to take all of the courses on their schedule. The 'A'/'B' hybrid schedule has been set up so that students in Group 'A' will be attending classes 'on-site' on 'A' days, while Group 'B' students will be attending the same classes using the same schedule 'online' on 'A' days. Online-only students will simply be online for classes each day rather than 'on-site' every other day. Students signing up for 'online-only' will stay in this for the 1st Quarter. Should the Hybrid schedule be extended, then a change may be made prior to starting the new term.

What will on-site learning look like at LMHS?

On designated 'A' days, students in Group 'A' (Last names A-K) will report to classes at school. On designated 'B' days, students in Group 'B' (Last names L-Z) will report to classes at school. It will be a normal classroom day using our LMHS Hybrid Daily Schedule for 1st Quarter 2020-21. Again, many precautions are taking place to help maintain the safety of everyone in the school building (see below).

One additional precaution we are implementing at this time in an effort to minimize the number of students within the building at any one time is to allow, with parent permission only, all students 9th-12th to go home during any non-class time (e.g. Learning Center, Lunch, Study Table). The intention of doing this is so students would just be on campus for their classes during the pandemic. The form for granting parental permission for non-class campus release during the LMHS 1st Quarter Hybrid Schedule is attached today. This form must be signed by both parent and student (unless student is 18 years of age) before a student may leave using non-class campus release. Again, this is for all grade levels (9th-12th) ONLY while the LMHS 1st Quarter Hybrid Schedule is being used. Non-Class Campus Release will no longer exist when we return to the Regular Daily Schedule. Non-Class Campus Release Forms may be turned in to respective grade-level offices at any time during building office hours (7:30-3:30 p.m.).

How was the LMHS hybrid schedule developed?

The driving forces in the development of the schedule are to minimize the number of students (thus interactions) within the building at any one time, ensure all classes do meet each day, it works to minimize the total amount of time a student must be online for school on any given day, and it allows for no change in the schedule if a building closure occurs and all classes are online for a day or extended period of time.

What are the precautions and changes that are currently being made for in-class schooling? We have utilized Linn County Public Health COVID-19 Guidance Return to School (K-12) July 2020 in addressing needed precautions and changes to all learning spaces and common areas within LMHS.

At this time, a few of these precautions include: (this listing continues to grow each day)

- A. **Facemasks will be required** for everyone when in either Linn-Mar High School, LRC, Aquatic Center, or LM Stadium. All students will receive a facemask. No one will be allowed to enter LMHS without a facemask, which must also be worn while in the building. This includes any spectator events which may take place on campus during 1st Quarter.

- B. **Potential Daily Schedule Adjustments** that limit the number of students on campus at any one time. Again, the four driving forces in the development of the schedule are to minimize the number of students (thus interactions) within the building at any one time, ensure all classes do meet each day, it works to minimize the total amount of time a student must be online for school, and it allows for no change in schedule if a building closure occurs and all classes are online for a day or extended period of time.
- C. **Restricting building entry and minimizing unstructured time before school** for when students are in the building. This will include restrictions for when students may enter the building prior to the school day. **Doors will open at 8:25 a.m. unless for Zero Period Class (Marching Band) or pre-scheduled meetings/practices/workouts/teacher study sessions. Students will be required to report directly to their 1st Period/1st Block classroom upon arrival in the building** unless for a pre-scheduled meeting/practice/workout/study session with a teacher.
- D. **Minimizing any 'communal' spaces within the building**, including the removal of furniture and specific seating designations in all 'commons' areas. The phrase we are using during set up of the 'commons' areas is 'one per'. **One student per table, bench, desk, etc. in all 'commons' areas.** We have completed setting up the 'commons' areas in the building. All tables are 6' apart and all cushioned furniture has been removed as have excess chairs. **During the pandemic, all 'commons' area furniture must stay as it is currently arranged.** To give an idea of the change, our total seating capacity for the seven 'commons' areas and Food Court is now 275. This is down from approximately 850 spaces during a non-pandemic time. We will also be closing off the circle drive near doors #10 and #13 during the day so that students may sit outside including during lunch.
- E. **Classroom seating** is being changed so that all students will be facing the same way with a 6' distance from other students. We have established a 6' COVID-capacity for each classroom and will move some sections as needed to rooms that can accommodate a higher number of students while maintaining a 6' distance with all student desks. No classroom will be allowed to exceed the 'COVID-capacity'. Thus, any section over the COVID-capacity will be moved to another classroom. At this time, we have cross-referenced class listings with those who are 'online-only' and those who have requested and were granted a change in Group, either 'A' or 'B'. Of more than 400 class sections, we originally had 101 sections over 'COVID-capacity' in a particular classroom. After cross-referencing, we currently have 24 sections over 'COVID-capacity'. 12 of the sections currently over 'COVID-capacity' are within one student of being within the capacity. No room changes will be made until just before the start of school as schedule changes will still be taking place over the next two and a half weeks. We will be able to move sections to rooms with larger 'COVID'-capacity' easily as the variation in room sizes is the primary reason some class sections are over capacity.
- F. **Passing time protocols** between classes which limits interaction between students by directing movement. Directional arrows and signage have been placed on hallway floors and in hallways to help students navigate during pandemic passing time. We will have a few 'one-way' areas designated during passing times which include the Four Corners area, Math rooms B003-007 area, stairs near door #16 (down only), stairs near door #14 (up only). We have attached current building maps today so that students and parents can view the changes. Again, these changes are temporary during the pandemic. **Use this link to view one of our first videos on 'Passing Time'.**
<https://youtu.be/pd7D83jAasw>
- G. **Breakfast and Lunch procedures** which **do not allow for buffet-style serving** of any food and provide as much **social distance seating** as possible. All seating is 6' apart. I will say that we are usually working to ensure no student sits alone during lunch, so the pandemic seating arrangement while necessary and in place at this time does not match the everyday lunch experience we want for students.
- H. **Cleaning** of desks, tables, machinery, and **common areas or items** will take place **after each use**. The district is providing wipes and other cleaning solutions to help clean and maintain each piece of furniture after each use, including in the 'commons' areas.
- I. Only the bottle-fill portion (we have 9 of these) of water fountains will be available for use. The communal fountains have all been covered at this time.
- J. **Staggering release times at the end of the school day** to alleviate the number of students exiting the building at the same time. With the 'A'/'B' hybrid schedule now being used for 1st Quarter and the RTI periods at the end of the school day, the staggering of release times may not need to take place. We will always adjust as needed.

Can I participate in extra-curricular activities if I am signed up for the 'online-only'?

Yes. Students may still participate in extra-curricular activities, including for credit Marching Band, if they are signed up for 'online-only' during the LMHS 1st Quarter Hybrid Schedule.

How will social distancing be maintained in classrooms?

We are assigning each classroom in the building a 'COVID capacity' that allows for 6' between each student desk or table in the room. (e.g. room B004 has a 'COVID capacity' of 16, room E137C has a 'COVID capacity' of 24, room C114 has a 'COVID capacity' of 12). If the number of students in an 'A' or 'B' section is above the COVID capacity, then we will move the section to an available classroom with a higher 'COVID capacity'.

Is there a criteria if we would like to request our student(s) switch groupings ('A' or 'B')?

The criteria for moving groupings is: 1. Same household but different last names (change will be approved), 2. Other on a case by case basis (change approval not likely). Please know that we plan to keep the groupings as even as possible to minimize the number of students in the building at any one time. To request a change, please contact Jeff Gustason (jgustason@linnmar.k12.ia.us). Be sure to include your student's full name as well as the reason for the change request. If this request concerns a COMPASS-only student, please contact Steve Goodall (steve.goodall@linnmar.k12.ia.us).

B. E-Registration for the 2020-21 School Year

The e-Registration portal is open. Please make sure to enter the portal to register all of your students.

C. Student Pictures

Student pictures for grades 9th, 10th and 11th have been postponed until the spring of 2021.

D. Student Computer Distribution Prior to School Year.

Students in 10th-12th Grades still needing to pick up computers may stop in the **LMHS Library between 1:00-4:00 p.m. through September 11** to pick up their school-issued computer.

9th Grade school-issued computers will be distributed on the 9th Grade-Only 1st Days with Group 'A' (Last names A-K) on **Monday, September 14**, and Group 'B' (Last names L-Z) on **Tuesday, September 15**. This will include any 9th Grade student taking classes 'online-only' for 1st Quarter.

Specific Information for 'Online-Only' 9th Grade Students:

We have determined when and where school-issued computers will be available for 9th Grade students taking 'online-only' to pick up at the LM Stadium entrance on September 14 (A-K) and September 15 (L-Z) from 10:00 a.m.-Noon. Students will also receive their Student ID and, possibly, pick up any course books. Students will need to log on to computers and will also have their pictures taken individually for the Class of 2024 picture. Again, 9th Grade 'online-only' students will pick up school-issued computers at the LM Stadium entrance from 10:00 a.m.-Noon on September 14 (last names begin with A-K) and on September 15 (last names begin with L-Z).

Course Material Distribution for 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th Grades students taking 'online-only' for 1st Quarter:

Course materials for 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th Grades students taking 'online-only' for 1st Quarter will take place on **Tuesday, September 15, and Wednesday, September 16, from 4:15-5:30 p.m. in the Pride Rock Commons**. Students will also be able to pick up their student ID at this time. 9th Grade students taking 'online-only' will also pick up course materials when getting school-issued computers on September 14 and September 15 at the LM Stadium entrance.

F. Student Medications/Health Office Needs

Students who take prescribed medication at school must have written authorization on file in the Health Office. Non-prescribed medications will be given with parent approval. Students are not allowed to carry any medications unless physician and health office approved. Contact the Health Office (447-3080) for questions.

Medication Drop-Off:

Health services is offering a curbside medication drop off day on Friday, September 11, from 7:30-3:30 p.m. Parents are asked to drive up and drop off medications, including insulin and epi-pens, to the nurse outside of Door #3 (North entrance). Medication permission forms will available. If you need an alternate day, please call health services at 447-3080 to arrange another time.

REMINDER: Per Iowa immunization law, all 12th grade students are required to provide proof of having the Meningococcal vaccine *after age 16*, or a Certificate of Exemption, before the first day of school in August.

G. Teacher/Staff Pre-School Workdays

Teachers are now in professional learning sessions/workshops and preparation through Friday, September 11.

2. 9th Grade First Day of High School

With the change to 'A' and 'B' hybrid schooling for 1st Quarter, **9th Grade-only first day will actually be two days this year.** 9th Grade students in group 'A' (Last names A-K) will have school on **Monday, September 14**, beginning at 9:00 a.m. 9th Grade students in group 'B' (Last names L-Z) will have school on **Tuesday, September 15**, beginning at 9:00 a.m. 9th Grade students will receive their school-issued computers on their first day of high school. Each day will go from 9:00-3:55 p.m.

9th Grade-only 1st Days (September 14 and September 15)

8:25 a.m.	Doors open – Students will report to Homerooms (these will be in multiple rooms)
9:00 a.m.	Homeroom
10:00 a.m.	1 st Period/1 st Block
10:30 a.m.	2 nd Period/1 st Block
11:00 a.m.	3 rd Period/2 nd Block
11:30 a.m.	4 th Period/2 nd Block
12:00 p.m.	Homeroom/Lunch
2:00 p.m.	5 th Period/3 rd Block
2:30 p.m.	6 th Period/3 rd Block
3:00 p.m.	7 th Period/4 th Block
3:30 p.m.	8 th Period/4 th Block

The 9th Grade-only 1st Day Schedule is unique to September 14 and 15 as it includes two Homeroom segments during the day. We will help all 9th Grade students find Homeroom when they arrive as well as their classes during the day. We have different activities and topics scheduled to help 9th Grade students have a successful start to high school during the Homeroom and class times. **9th Grade students with non-class campus release will NOT leave the building during 9th Grade-only first day.**

A short, informational video on 9th Grade-only 1st Day is being completed and the link will be sent when the video is ready. The intention is to help 9th Grade students know what to do when arriving for 9th Grade-only 1st Day. This will also include information for 'online-only' 9th Grade students regarding when, and how, to pick up school-issued computers, school IDs, and course materials. We also plan to have a photographer take individual photos for the 9th Grade class picture. Our plan is that this will take place at the LM Stadium entrance. Again, this will take place on September 14 (A-K) and 15 (L-Z) at designated times for 'online-only' 9th Grade students.

We are also planning to have a Q & A Zoom session for 9th Grade parents on Thursday, September 10, at 6:30 p.m. The link will be made available prior to the session. This is entirely optional, but we do want 9th Grade parents to have the opportunity to ask any questions they may have to Principal Jeff Gustason, Associate Principal Kim Buelt, Student Dean Abbie Parker, and a school counselor before the school year begins the next week.

3. First Day of High School with 9th-12th Grades

The first day of high school for 10th, 11th, and 12th Grades will be **Wednesday, September 16**, beginning at 9:00 a.m. Group 'A' students (Last names A-K) will be meeting in classes on-site while Group 'B' students (Last names L-Z) will be logging on remotely for classes. The schedule for on-site and remote students is the same and is planned to be released in the next week. As stated earlier, 9th Grade students will be having on-site 1st days on Monday, September 14 (Group 'A'), and Tuesday, September 15 (Group 'B').

We are planning to send out a few, short, informational videos for 10th, 11th and 12th Grades students and parents that discuss and clarify changes in response to COVID-19 and our return to school. This will include the LMHS Hybrid 1st Quarter Schedule. These videos will be sent in the next two weeks. 12th Grade will also have specific information regarding graduation and post-secondary planning. This may be in video and/or in a class meeting format using Zoom or Teams. We will finalize and relay date/time in the next week.

4. Parking

A reminder that while the LMHS Hybrid 1st Quarter Schedule is being used all student drivers are eligible for a parking tag. All vehicles parking on campus **must be registered and have a LMHS Parking Tag at all times during any school day (9:00-4:00 p.m.)**. During the LMHS Hybrid 1st Quarter Schedule, there is no cost for a parking tag.

Students may return LMHS Parking Tag forms and pick up a parking tag in the **South Commons from 9:00-2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday during each of the next three weeks**. Parking tags will also be available in the 11th-12th Grades Office beginning on September 16.

When we return to the Regular Daily Schedule with all students reporting for classes on-site, the parking lottery for 10th Grade drivers will take place. Any 10th Grade student who is 'online-only' or will not have their school permit or license until later in 1st Quarter will then be able to participate in the parking lottery.

9th Grade students will no longer be able to park on campus when we return to the Regular Daily Schedule. We still anticipate all 11th and 12th Grades students who are driving to school and request a parking tag receiving one when we return to the LMHS Regular Daily Schedule. A prorated Parking Tag fee will be applied at this time. Can students signed up for 'online only' receive a parking tag?

Students taking classes during 1st Quarter (or for as long as we are using the LMHS Hybrid 1st Quarter Schedule) will **not** be issued parking tags until prior to starting the LMHS Regular Daily Schedule.

For 10th Grade students, the parking lottery will not be held until just before we return to the LMHS Regular Daily Schedule, so any 10th Grade student who is 'online-only' at this time will have the opportunity to enter the parking lottery before it may occur.

5. 1st Quarter

A. Academic Letter Assemblies

Due to restrictions regarding gathering of large groups at this time, **the Academic Letter Assemblies will not be held this year**. We will publicize the names of all 10th-12th Grades students receiving academic letters for the 2019-20 school year. Academic letters and certificates will also be distributed to receiving students during the first two weeks of the school year. Students with a cumulative grade point average of 3.33 for both semesters in 2019-20 are eligible to receive an Academic Letter. Students with a cumulative grade point average of 3.75-3.99 for both semesters in 2019-20 receive an Academic Letter *with Honors*. Students with a cumulative grade point average of 4.00 and above for both semesters in 2019-20 receive an Academic Letter with Distinction.

Congratulations to all of our Academic Letter recipients for the 2019-20 school year!

6. College and Career Center Information

PSAT Date Has Been Changed for LMHS:

We are changing the date of the PSAT administered for Linn-Mar High School student to **Tuesday, January 26, 2021**. This change is being offered by the College Board due to the global pandemic. We believe this will be most advantageous to our students so that they can have the best opportunity to compete for National Merit Scholarships and Recognition. Sign-up information for 11th and interested 10th and 9th Grade students will start in November. Only 11th Grade students are eligible for National Merit Scholarships and Recognition.

Job Shadows:

Job Shadow applications have opened. Students in grades 10-12 may do a job shadow this year. For more information on job shadows available in-person or virtually go to <https://www.kirkwood.edu/wlc/jobshadows>.

College Admission Visits:

All admissions counselors will be scheduling virtual visits at Linn-Mar this year due to the restrictions on outside visitors. Appointments will be made from noon-1:00 or 2:00-4:00. To find a current listing of college admission visits and the virtual meeting link go to <https://sites.google.com/a/linnmar.k12.ia.us/linn-mar-high-school-counseling/career>.

7. Information from School, Student Assistance and Academic Assistance Counselors

The Linn-Mar High School Counseling website has changed. Check out <https://sites.google.com/a/linnmar.k12.ia.us/linn-mar-high-school-counseling/home> to see the new site!

8. Activities

A. For any spectator allowed event, facemasks will be required for entry and movement and during an event at all times.

B. *Athletics:*

Fall athletic competitions have started. Attendance will be limited for all 10th/Varsity Football games and Girls Swimming meets. At this time, a ticket allotment will be made available to each participant. For home 10th/Varsity Football games this will include Football, Cheer, Poms, and Marching Band. For 'home' 10th/Varsity football games, the lower area of the home bleachers will be reserved for approximately 214 12th Grade students. All tickets for football and Girls Swimming will be pre-sale. Varsity Volleyball will use bleachers on both sides of the Main Gym this year. **Masks must be worn at all times at any home and away competition this fall.**

C. *Fine Arts:*

The Marching Lions will not have a competition show this fall but will be playing at the first varsity home football game this Friday night, September 4.

D. *Clubs/Organizations:*

LMHS Clubs and Organizations will continue to meet as is possible, including virtually. The Welcome Back Dance will not be able to be held this year. The Homecoming Parade will not happen this year. We will not be able to get a permit at this time. The Homecoming Dance will not be able to be held at this time, nor will the Powder Puff game.

9. Other Information

On Student Schedules, you will see 'Hybrid Afternoon Study Table' with the name of the grade level Student Dean. This was added for Grade Level Office attendance purposes and is not something that any student should be concerned or worried about on their schedule. Hybrid Afternoon Study Table is available for students and may be required by teachers on specific class days including those students who are struggling in a course or have incomplete course work.

The next *LMHS 2020-21 Before School Year Student and Parent Communication* will be sent on **Friday, September 4**. This will be sent in the afternoon. Announcements and Updates for LMHS Students and Parents will be sent on Tuesday and Friday of each week from **now through the end of 1st Quarter**.