

Ludlow Public Schools

The Mission of the Ludlow Public Schools is to provide a quality education for every student by working in partnership with parents and community to assist each student in reaching his/her full potential.

Ludlow Public Schools Remote Learning Plan

March 28, 2020

Dear Ludlow Parents and Community:

Thank you so much for your support and understanding these past two weeks as we've worked to adjust to this new reality facing our nation. This is a challenging time for everyone and we recognize the difficulties faced by many of our families.

As this crisis has evolved we have attempted to provide educational resources for students and parents. We began by providing a document of resources and activities that parents could utilize to keep students connected with learning. We then transitioned at the end of last week into the second phase of our educational program with teachers reaching out to students and families providing them with more specific resources and enrichment activities targeted toward their own students and their content.

With the Governor's announcement that schools will now remain closed through at least **May 4, 2020**, we enter the third and longest phase of our educational planning. Thus, we wanted to provide parents with a more detailed Ludlow Public Schools remote learning plan that will afford us some structure as we move forward with the delivery of educational services for our students.

The purpose of this plan is not to outline or try to anticipate every eventuality or possible scenario, but rather is an attempt to balance the needs of all the people who belong to our school community: students, staff and families.

Administration and teachers have been meeting virtually throughout the past two weeks to organize learning in their grades and content areas. We have learned not only from our professional experiences, but also from our personal experiences as we struggled with the new challenge facing us as parents as we try to facilitate the learning of our own children with materials and resources provided by their schools. We have looked beyond the borders of our Town and consulted with professionals from across the state, drawing from that collective wisdom, ideas and strategies that can serve our kids here in Ludlow.

This remote learning plan is not meant to take the place of the learning plans put together by the teachers and principals for the children in their schools. Rather, it is intended to serve as an overarching framework of expectations for that work and those more specific plans.

Initially, at the direction of the Massachusetts' Department of Education, teachers were limited to "review and enrichment", however, with the period of closure being extended until May 4th, we are relaxing that limitation. Teachers may use their professional judgement to determine what standards/content the activities should cover, recognizing that any "new" content must be such that students will be able to grasp and apply it with the limited support that our new reality dictates.

This plan for remote learning is designed to be a system that provides for a manageable, meaningful, and sustainable learning experience and has been created with students, staff, and families in mind. Health care experts are uncertain as to when exactly social distancing practices, which include the closing of our schools, will no longer be needed. For now that date has been extended until May 4, 2020, but it could very well go longer. This system we have put in place will help carry us through this uncertain time and recognizes the importance to our students of maintaining a connection with learning as our country marshals its resources to fight this virus and heal.

On **Monday, March 30, 2020**, we will begin the next phase of remote learning in the Ludlow Public Schools (LPS). *Please anticipate that there will be a transition period this first week as schools and teachers adjust their planning for these changes in the remote learning expectations.* As before, if you have any questions or need support, I would encourage you to please direct your questions about resources and assignments to your children's *teacher*. If your questions are about non-academic concerns, the building *principal* of your child's school will be in the best position to field those inquiries and assist you. During this time, *email is going to be the best way to communicate with the schools.* We will do all we can to support our families and remain connected as a community.

In closing I would like to take a moment to express my appreciation for you, the families and members of our Ludlow Community. Your messages of support and understanding have made all the difference as we've sought to respond to this unprecedented crisis. We continue to be inspired by your resilience in the face of adversity. We are amazed at your creativity in staying connected through social media while maintaining your physical separation. We applaud and recognize your generosity and compassion in assisting those members of our community who need help.

Unfortunately, I believe this situation will get worse before it gets better, but it **WILL** get better. All of us in the schools miss our students enormously and wish nothing more than for life to return to normal. Meanwhile, we remain dedicated to serving the community of Ludlow. We wish you health, safety and wellbeing and are here to support you if you need anything during this trying time.

Stay safe and be well.

Todd H. Gazda, Ed.D., JD
Superintendent
Ludlow Public Schools.

Ludlow Public Schools Remote Learning Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The purpose of remote learning is that all schools should provide students with **alternate academic learning opportunities so that they can maintain academic readiness and a connection with learning.**
- This remote learning plan is not meant to take the place of the learning plans put together by the teachers and principals for the children in their schools. Rather, it is intended to serve as an overarching framework of expectations for that work and those more specific plans. ***Expect that more detailed plans tailored to your child's school will be provided to you by the building principal over the next couple of days.***
- Initially, teachers were limited to “review and enrichment”, however, with the period of closure being extended until May 4th, we are relaxing that limitation. Teachers may use their professional judgement to determine what standards/content the activities should cover, **recognizing that any “new” content must be such that students will be able to grasp and apply it with the limited support** that our new reality dictates.
- **Assignments will not be graded in the traditional sense, but credit will be given for completion.** This will look slightly different at each grade level and you should receive more specific information from the building principals.
- Assignments/activities should be given on a regular schedule, but ***new assignments do not need to be given every day.***
- Time wise, only plan for about half (***at most***) of what we would expect students to do if they were in class.
- On **Monday, March 30, 2020**, we will begin the transition to the next phase of remote learning in the Ludlow Public Schools (LPS). ***Please anticipate that there will be a transition period this first week as schools and teachers adjust their planning for these changes in the remote learning expectations.*** As with anything new, there WILL be problems and challenges to address and we thank you in advance for your patience and understanding as we work with you to address any concerns.

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***** Acknowledgement: The Ludlow Public Schools would like to acknowledge the Lexington Public Schools for sharing the framework of their remote learning plan. The framework provided an outline by which this plan was created, customized and developed for the Ludlow Public Schools. *****

I. Plan for Long-Term School Closure

As we settle into our new normal, we continue to prepare and refine how we operate during an extended school closure. Currently, **our return to school date is May 4, 2020**. If school closures are extended beyond May 4, the Superintendent of Schools will let you know how the Ludlow Public Schools (LPS) will proceed beyond the current period of school closure.

A. Governor Baker's 03-23-2020 "Essential Services and Revised Gatherings Order"

On Monday, March 23, Governor Charlie Baker issued an "[Essential Services and Revised Gatherings Order](#)" that all non-essential businesses cease in-person operation and that directs the Department of Public Health to issue a stay-at-home advisory for at least the next two weeks. This order does not impact the limited in-person dates listed below for activities such as distribution of resources (food, medication, technology, etc.). The order includes a list of [COVID-19 Essential Services](#), and K-12 schools are listed as "other community-based essential functions and government operations." As we engage in any in-person activities, we will take every safety precaution possible. Additional details for any in-person engagement are provided below.

II. LPS Remote Learning

A. The Purpose of Remote Learning

In the past week, Ludlow and many other districts have been working in collaboration. Curriculum leaders, special education directors, union presidents, and superintendents participated in virtual discussions in an effort to thoughtfully prepare and carry out a remote learning plan. Ludlow has refined and defined its approach to remote learning through this process and we have outlined it within this document.

The purpose of remote learning is that all schools should provide students with **alternate academic learning opportunities so that they can maintain academic readiness and a connection with learning**. Teachers will facilitate remote learning opportunities in the Ludlow Public Schools to engage students in deeper exploration of the class content.

Initially, teachers were limited to "review and enrichment", however, with the period of closure being extended until May 4th, we are relaxing that limitation. Teachers may use their professional judgement to determine what standards/content the activities should cover, **recognizing that any "new" content must be such that students will be able to grasp and apply it with the limited support** that our new reality dictates. The main purpose of these academic activities is to provide students with deeper learning opportunities and **not** to try and reproduce the school day in an online format.

Teachers will endeavor to provide families with lessons and activities that students can access to facilitate alternative learning opportunities and enrichment experiences during this closure. Ludlow is not attempting to replicate the school day. **Assignments will not be graded in the traditional sense, but credit will be given for completion**. This will look slightly different at each grade level and you should receive more specific information from the building principals.

State Commissioner of Education, Jeffrey Riley, in his March 10, 2020 memo, announced, “The longest that any school district will be required to go [to school] is its scheduled 185th day. No schools will be required to be in session after June 30, 2020.” The Commissioner’s decision effectively changes the “time on learning requirement” for all public schools in the State. These are non-school days. LPS students and staff will need to make up three additional days in June to reach the recently mandated 185 school days per the Commissioner. Therefore, the last day of school in Ludlow will be Friday, June 19, 2020.

Learning remains vitally important, but there are different ways of acquiring new knowledge. An article from *Education Week*, “[Remember, Online Learning Isn’t the Only Way to Learn Remotely](#),” by Kate Ehrenfeld Gardoqui highlights this idea. The author points out, “This time of school closure provides a magnificent opportunity for us to envision the kind of learning that is different from what happens in classrooms.” Now is as good a time as any to try out new ideas, [new resources](#), and new ways of thinking!

B. Remote Learning Guidance

We recognize that the level of instruction for remote learning will not be equivalent to what is taught in the traditional classroom setting. We need to be more sensitive than ever to the needs of our students and families. We recognize that parents and guardians will be in charge of their children’s learning, and they will likely have less familiarity with content and instructional practices; thus, students will have less explicit structure, support, and time for learning than they would receive in a typical school day in our buildings.

To that end, we have shared the following factors for our staff to keep in mind as they engage in this new model of education:

- Students will be participating in self-directed learning in alternative educational settings with less structure, no teacher, and lots of other things happening in their lives.
- Parents/Guardians cannot be expected to take the place of our instructors; they may not know the content and even if they know the content, they may not know the appropriate instructional practices. For example, the elementary math we now teach is 100% different than the elementary math many of us learned.
- Parents/Guardians also may be juggling work or working from home, taking care of younger children or family members, or dealing with illnesses.
- Learning time will be significantly shorter, and we can expect that it will be reduced by at least half each day and week.
- We encourage educators to work together in teams and be mindful of the amount of work that is given to students and families.
- As educators plan and we navigate the new learning environment, we have stressed how critical it is that they keep in mind their most vulnerable populations. Consider the needs of our students with disabilities, students for whom English is a second language, students with emotional needs, students who live outside of Ludlow, students in single parent homes, students in families where both parents work outside the home, families with multiple siblings and limited devices, families with limited resources, etc. (Families in need of additional support in these types of circumstances should see the [Student and Family Supports](#) section below.)

We have shared the following **expectations** for staff as we begin our new phase of remote learning:

1. Learning activities should support deeper learning and enrichment opportunities for previously explored content. **Any “new” content be such that students will be able to grasp and apply it with the limited support** now available. Activities will be shared with students digitally and may include online resources. We recognize the importance of limiting our students’ screen time and strive for a balanced learning approach.
2. Activities should engage the **independent** learning level, and **students should be able to work on activities with minimal support from parents and caregivers.**
3. No summative assessments should be administered.
4. Time wise, only plan for about half (**at most**) of what we would expect students to do if they were in class.
5. Parents should only be expected to provide the same level of support they would provide for homework and no more.
6. Elaborate projects or materials (including devices, printers, apps, etc.) should not be required.
7. Assignments/activities should be given on a regular schedule, but **new assignments do not need to be given every day.** Some examples include:
 - a. Staff could post assignments every Monday morning with the expectation that students work on them a little bit every day that week, including explicit suggestions for how students can break large tasks into manageable daily sections.
 - b. Staff could give students a menu of options of possible activities and suggest they complete a certain number of tasks each week.
8. Work will not be graded in the traditional sense, but feedback can and should be given for any submitted student work. ([For more information on grading, see below.](#))
9. Regular communication with students will help maintain a sense of classroom community and is strongly encouraged. Communication can take many forms including group emails or posts to Google classroom, written feedback on students work, or check-ins with students using a video chat platform (with parent/caregiver consent if 13 or younger).

The most important outcome is for students to feel cared for and supported by their teachers, and to be meaningfully engaged in learning activities for some portion of each day. We want teachers to stay in touch with students and their families during this difficult time, providing guidance, support and encouragement along the way.

To achieve these ends, we have provided the following **suggestions** for staff:

1. Co-plan and crowdsource activities with your colleagues (e.g., general education, special education, teachers of English Language Learners, counselors, nurses, librarians, math interventionists, and literacy specialists).
2. Staff are free to experiment and the Office of Curriculum has provided ideas, suggestions, [links](#) and templates for staff to use, as well.
3. Employ reusable or iterative activities when possible (e.g. flash cards, 10% summaries, games).
4. Staff do not need to develop traditional lessons from scratch every day. They can make use of on-line resources and direct students to those.
5. Engage students’ imaginations and problem-solving skill sets and let them work on projects with

their siblings. Click [here](#) for examples of what this can look like.

6. Not all assignments need to culminate in a tangible product of some kind.
7. Design units to offer cross-curricular applications.
8. Incorporate problem-solving and inquiry-based activities.
9. Facilitate student-led questioning and discussions.
10. Incorporate real-world problem-solving activities.
11. Meet diverse learning preferences by allowing students to make choices for how to demonstrate their skill mastery of previously learned material.
12. Explore current events and foster critical thinking by integrating media, reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills into multifaceted lessons.
13. Stimulate creativity by incorporating graphic, visual, auditory, media, and print resources and experiences.

III. Getting Started: Here's What You Need to Know

The traditional school day as we once knew it has completely changed, and this is no longer business as usual. Each day brings new learnings, improvement and understanding on how we navigate this new frontier. We recognize that you must balance your children's educational needs with your family's other demands. The expectations that follow have been developed for students, staff, and families with these uncertainties in mind.

A. LPS Remote Learning—A Paradigm Shift

A fundamental job for educators in the Ludlow Public Schools during this paradigm shift is self-care. We are in the midst of a global health crisis, necessitating a shift in our teaching and learning priorities. We cannot possibly replicate the school day under these circumstances, nor can we expect parents to take on the role of their child's teachers. None of us knows what the future holds, and we recognize that there may be times when other circumstances may take precedence over remote learning. With this in mind, we have encouraged staff to provide students with fun, interesting, interdisciplinary weekly challenges. Likewise, educators should develop consistent ways for students to stay connected to them, to their peers, and to their learning community. Staff are not expected to teach a daily lesson. We want to avoid adding to the anxiety being experienced right now and strive to make life easier for our students and families during what may be one of the most stressful times in their lives.

We have suggested staff think creatively and find ways to enrich students' lives through deeper learning. They should reach out to students and families to let them know they care. LPS remote learning is not intended to replicate the traditional learning environment or the number of hours in a school day. We aim to focus on activities that students and families can do outside (while practicing safe social distancing) and try to avoid assignments that always require a device. Students can write in journals, observe nature, tour historical sites online and share their learning (either in a Google Hangout meeting or in writing)—the possibilities are endless. *Remote learning in the Ludlow Public Schools is not intended to replace the academic day, so none of us should feel pressure to replicate what was once accomplished in the classroom.*

Support staff, including counselors, social workers, therapists, and nurses who typically deliver services to students during the school day will be making efforts to connect with the families of their students.

This check-in is intended to support families during the student's time away from school and for many students offer reassurance around the changes in routine students are managing.

We are all about to embark on quite an adventure together. Like any adventure we may have some butterflies or fears of the unknown, but it is exciting to think of exploring new vistas together and new routes to get there! Staff have been given the freedom to plan lessons and activities that let us and our students get off the highway and take some detours; to use resources that allow us travel in ways different from what we typically do, and to arrive at our destinations at a pace of our choosing. And most importantly, like all good adventures, we will not go it alone, we will do this together!

Staff have already been thoughtfully planning the start of our remote learning experience; as they do so, they will keep the following in mind:

- **Support student choice/student agency.** Design lessons and activities to include options for students, for example, a menu of choices, a variety of materials and resources to choose from, different lengths of activities, and tapping into different learning styles and modalities.
- **Differentiate.** Consistently consider the process, product, pacing, and resources in lessons and activities to ensure all students can partake in some way.
- **Focus on deeper dives into learning.** Engage and challenge students in new ways. Now is the time to try that thing we've always wanted to do that we know will excite students and bring joy to learning.
- **Collaborate.** Rely on each other and the host of resources out there to support students. Plan together. Share resources and ideas.
- **Communicate, communicate, communicate.** With students, with parents and with each other. This can take the form of email, Google docs, via Google Classroom if you are using that already, video conferencing, and phone just to name a few. Teachers should use whatever means they feel most comfortable with to connect with their students. Reach out and support one another. Sustaining relationships is a key objective, and it will get us through the hard times.
- **Student feedback.** Communication also includes feedback on student learning. We are taking the emphasis off traditional grading and encouraging feedback on student work instead.

B. LPS Remote Learning Start Date

On **Monday, March 30, 2020**, we will begin the transition to the next phase of remote learning in the Ludlow Public Schools (LPS). *Please anticipate that there will be a transition period this first week as teachers adjust their planning for these changes in the remote learning expectations.* You should have already received correspondence from your teachers this week, and you should feel free to share your thoughts about how this new environment will impact your child. If you have not received correspondence, please email your child's classroom teacher directly. As educators develop specific learning activities and go "online" families will move from the use of the District's shared learning [activities](#) to those specific learning activities defined by our teachers.

C. Length of Day

School as we knew it March 13th ago has completely changed. Our teachers' work days will be flexible, customizable, and pared down considerably, as many of them are juggling the same responsibilities as our LPS families. They are not expected to hold traditional school hours, nor are they expected to adhere to the traditional curriculum and pacing. Staff are expected to communicate with students and families can connect via Google Hangout, Google Meet, email or talk by phone depending upon which means they feel most comfortable using. Educators' primary role will be one of providing some structure and support for students and families as they explore topics in more depth and navigate changes in their day-to-day lives.

D. Grading — Modified Standards or Pass/Fail

With the shift in academic expectations, current grading methods will be modified during our period of remote learning. At our elementary schools, students will continue to be assessed using a modification of our current standards-based report cards. At the middle and high school levels, no additional grades will be issued for the third quarter (third quarter close on April 1, 2020). Teachers are asked to record a Pass/Fail grade based on the work that was completed through our last day of school on Friday, March 13, 2020. No letter grades will be issued on report cards for the third quarter at the middle and high school level. All remote learning work that is completed in the last marking term will be graded on a credit or no credit basis for all schools.

E. Students with Medication at School

On **Monday, March 16, 2020**, our District Health Coordinator reached out to all student's families who had controlled prescription medication at school and arranged a pick-up of the medications by the parent or caregiver. If for some reason you are in need of prescribed medication that may still be at school, please contact our Health Coordinator, Ms. Kristen Buntten directly at k_buntten@ludlowps.org. She will discuss with you if pick-up is an option. At this time, you will not be allowed to enter the building due to cleaning and sanitization protocols and COVID-19 concerns. If possible, the Health Coordinator will provide you with your child's medication at the front door. Please practice social distancing and stand 6-12 feet away from others.

F. Students with Disabilities

On March 17, 2020, Russell Johnston, Senior Associate Commissioner and State Director of Special Education, held a webinar with Special Education Directors across the state. He encouraged holding virtual IEP meetings, and he acknowledged that districts need further guidance on timelines, possible flexibility with Team meeting membership, and confidentiality. State Director of Special Education Johnston will be updating Directors again the week of March 23. Given this guidance, the Ludlow Public Schools' Special Education Department has begun the process of reaching out to families and staff in order to organize already scheduled Annual Reviews via a virtual, online platform. This effort will help the district in maintaining some of the legally required timelines for reviews. Three year evaluations and

new evaluations and the procedures for hosting these meetings remains undefined. We hope to have more information regarding hosting these meetings in the near future.

On March 21, 2020, the U.S. Secretary of Education released [new information](#) clarifying that federal law should not be used to prevent schools from offering remote learning opportunities to all students, including students with disabilities. This new resource from the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) explains that as a school district takes necessary steps to address the health, safety, and well-being of all its students and staff, educators can use remote learning opportunities to serve all students. (Excerpt from Supplemental Fact Sheet—COVID-19 and Serving Children with Disabilities; *U.S. Department of Education sent this bulletin at 03/21/2020 07:26 PM EDT*).

Federal guidance on serving children with disabilities changed recently, and we are still left with many unanswered questions on how best to serve our students with disabilities. The previously referenced March 21, 2020 federal Supplemental Fact Sheet offers the following advice: “Many disability-related modifications and services may be effectively provided online. These may include, for instance, extensions of time for assignments, videos with accurate captioning or embedded sign language interpreting, accessible reading materials, and many speech or language services through video conferencing.”

G. High School Seniors at Risk of Not Graduating

The Superintendent of Schools has participated in a number of conference calls with Commissioner Jeffrey Riley and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) staff. High school seniors at risk of not graduating is a concern for all public schools. DESE is aware of the issue and more guidance is forthcoming. The global pandemic presents challenges for us all, and now more than ever we need to provide additional opportunities for students to succeed. We plan to use the Pass/Fail system as previously outlined and develop ways for high school seniors in danger of not passing.

H. No Formal Parent/Teacher Conferences

Due to the COVID-19 school closures, Ludlow Public Schools (LPS) staff will work with families and establish a plan for how best to stay in touch during this time. They may contact you by phone, Google Hangouts, Zoom, or FaceTime. Staff will do their best to make proper accommodations if you do not have access to certain modes of communication. Specialists (e.g., teachers of English Language Learners, special educators, literacy/math specialists, counselors), should contact parents and caregivers directly and schedule a time to talk. We know that all staff will do their best to offer ongoing feedback and support to our students and families.

I. Federal Government Announces State Waivers on Standardized Tests

On March 20, 2020, U.S. Secretary of Education announced in a [press release](#) that students impacted by school closures due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic can bypass standardized testing for the 2019-2020 school year. Upon a proper request, the Department will grant a waiver to any state that is unable to assess its students due to the ongoing national emergency, providing relief from federally mandated testing requirements for this school year. Additional legislative action by the State of

Massachusetts and a formal request by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is required to take advantage of this waiver.

At this current time, we recognize that the Grade 10 MCAS ELA and the MCAS ALT Assessment window has been impacted by the current school closure and we are awaiting guidance as to how we will proceed with these assessments. The Grade 3-8 MCAS window is within and beyond our current school closure window. Again, we are awaiting guidance as to how we will proceed. You can access the State's MCAS testing information via this [link](#). It is our understanding that the State is carefully considering the next steps particularly for tests that impact graduation requirements.

J. SATs and Advanced Placement Tests: Update from College Board

The [College Board](#), the organization that oversees assessments such as the SATs and Advanced Placement (AP) exams continues to update test dates and availability for students who have been or were planning to schedule an assessment.

In response to coronavirus (COVID-19), the College Board is cancelling the May 2, 2020 SAT administration. Make-up exams for March 14 (scheduled for March 28) are also cancelled. Please visit the link provided for continued updates.

There has been a great deal of uncertainty regarding what will happen with Advanced Placement (AP) tests. The College Board provided the following update as of March 23, 2020:

- Traditional face-to-face exam administrations will not take place. Students will take a 45-minute online free-response exam at home.
- Some students may want to take the exam sooner rather than later, while the content is still fresh. Other students may want more time to practice. For each AP subject, there will be 2 different testing dates. As of today, the College Board has not released the dates.
- AP curricula are locally developed and we defer to local decisions on how best to help students complete coursework. To be fair to all students, some of whom have lost more instructional time than others, the exam will only include topics and skills most AP teachers and students have already covered in class by early March.
- The College Board will allow any student already registered for an exam to cancel.

K. LPS and Town of Ludlow COVID-19 Information and Updates

Knowledge is important, but *where* you get your knowledge is just as important. Local COVID-19 information and previous communications can be found at the following sites: [Town of Ludlow](#) and [Ludlow Public Schools](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me, your building principal, or Kristen Bunten, our Health Care Coordinator at k_bunten@ludlowps.org. We will continue to include other credible resources and information in our LPS communications.

L. Verifying Family Contact Information

Given increased reliance on email and other forms of communication during this time, we would like to remind families to periodically review and update their contact information, found in the [Aspen Family Portal](#). Here families can view and update current email addresses. Last week, principals and their office staff looked over current contact information and made efforts to update invalid email addresses to the extent possible. If for some reason, you are not receiving contact from LPS, please reach out to your building principal. Also, messages have been and will continue to be sent via our K12 Alert System. Again, if you are not receiving communications via K12 Alert from LPS, please contact your building principal. Lastly, keep in mind that students have LPS issued email addresses. Teacher communication regarding assignments will be sent directly to students via their LPS issued email account to ensure that the district maintains the Children's Internet Protection Act ([CIPA](#)) and Children's Online Privacy and Protection Act ([COPPA](#)) complaint. The only exception to this is maybe for our youngest students in preschool and kindergarten where direct communication with parents is needed.

If you need to make contact information or address changes, a workflow needs to be requested, completed and submitted to the school's office. Please contact the school principal and they will direct your request to the appropriate office staff member for processing. Please note, this request or workflow does not make the changes automatic or immediate. All changes are reviewed and updated by school personnel. **You will receive a confirmation email when changes have been reviewed and processed.** During times of high volume and or limited staffing, updates are made in the order they are received.

Should you need assistance with email account information, or should you have any other ASPEN questions, you can email lpsportal@ludlowps.org.

IV. Student and Family Supports

The period of school closure may create a variety of challenges in our community, as everything changed practically overnight with COVID-19 in our society and in our public schools. People with higher levels of cognitive flexibility and adaptability are able to adjust better to the changes around us. Now, more than ever, there is a need to explicitly teach the skills that build resilience in our students. Whether your child and your family is part of a population with a dedicated support staff, such as Special Education, and English Learner Education programs, or your unique circumstances require different resources and opportunities than the typical family, we want to provide all LPS children what they need to succeed.

In this uncertain time, the Ludlow Public Schools remain steady in our mission, particularly in the importance of how supportive relationships impact student wellness and achievement. Respect, trust, and understanding are the foundation of our relationships within our learning community whether in the school house or online. As educators, we know that our students' basic needs must be met, and they must have the proper tools before they can learn. As we engage in online learning opportunities, we have asked all staff to be observant of students and families who have not communicated regularly during this period of school closure. Staff are encouraged to reach out to you—to our families. These

check-in's are opportunities to ensure our students and families remain connected and engaged in learning, but also to stay attuned to your needs. Families are encouraged to share with staff any challenges they are currently facing that will make it difficult for their child to engage fully with their remote learning. Support staff, especially members of the Counseling, English Learner Education, and Special Education departments, continue to remain available to you in "virtual" but personalized ways.

Beyond our dedicated school staff, we are fortunate that the larger Ludlow community has ample resources and volunteers to help families with a variety of needs, including access to food, internet access, and much more. As part of this process, we have reached out to families in need of access to school breakfast and lunch services and have established assistance. We encourage any family in need to contact either Food Service Director, Kelley McGregor at k_mcgregor@ludlowps.org or the McKinney Vento Liaison, Erica Faginski-Stark at e_faginski-stark@ludlowps.org to arrange assistance with this program. Families are also welcome to contact Director of Special Education, Eva Tillotson at e_tillotson@ludlowps.org to inquire about accessing community resources.

A. Special Education Supports

Special education teachers can have particularly close connections with their students; therefore, communication with families and a continued connection with school during this challenging time is of paramount importance to us. Many of our special education teachers have already been in contact with parents and caregivers. In some cases students have reached out and connected with their teacher during this time. If they haven't already, special educators will be reaching out to all families and caregivers next week to check in and discuss times for continued communication. They will be collaborating with related service providers, general educators, and others who support your student to ensure that recommendations for activities are appropriate and accessible. The collaboration will continue during this period of school closure. As always, please do not hesitate to contact your Educational Team Leader (ETL) with any questions or concerns: Teresa Poteat (grades 6-12) at t_poteat@ludlowps.org, Maria Costa (grades K-5) at m_costa@ludlowps.org, or Alison Morgan (Preschool) a_morgan@ludlowps.org. We are here for you, and we want to support you.

B. English Language Learner Supports

English Language Learner (ELL) teachers have reached out to their LPS families in our program to discuss their plan to offer remote learning and to provide support to students and their families. Please let us know if we can assist in any way by sending an email to to your child's ELL teacher, the ELL Coordinator, Jessica Gonzalez at j_gonzalez@ludlowps.org or the Director of ELL, Erica Faginski-Stark at e_faginski-stark@ludlowps.org.

C. Other Supports & Resources

We recognize that the landscape of our lives are changing daily with society's response to COVID-19. These rapid changes place stress on our families and homes, but most especially, our own emotional well-being. You may have questions about COVID-19 and how to access community resources. Our District Health Care Coordinator, Kristen Bunten, k_bunten@ludlowps.org can provide assistance in answering questions. All staff should be familiar with the processes for providing additional support to

families in need, as outlined in the [Student and Families Support](#) section. In addition to those options, here is a list of resources that can be contacted for more information and support.

[Mass211.org](#)

Call center representatives assist residents across the state with questions and concerns about the COVID-19 virus. This is an informational and referral hotline and is operational 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All calls are free and confidential. Interpreter services are available in multiple languages.

MA 211 is able to provide a wide range of information on the virus ranging from potential symptoms, advice on unemployment, how to support their families, and businesses asking if they should remain open. State Department of Public Health workers are on staff to answer specific medical questions regarding symptoms and potential exposure to the virus.

Wait times are on occasion lengthy. However the system will allow you to enter your contact information into an automated queue and you will receive a return call.

[Call2Talk](#)

A mental health, emotional support, and suicide prevention program run by Mass211. It operates 24/7 and provides confidential, compassionate listening to assist people. Residents can call 508-532-2255 or text C2T to 741741 to be connected to the Call2Talk line.

[Disaster Distress Helpline](#)

1-800-985-5990, is a 24/7, 365-day-a-year, national hotline dedicated to providing immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster, including disease outbreaks like COVID-19. This toll-free, multilingual, and confidential crisis support service is available to all residents in the United States and its territories

[Samaritans](#)

Operational 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. During this unprecedented time, it can feel overwhelming to receive constant messages about COVID-19. Call or text any time at 877-870-4673.

V. What You Need to Know about Technology

A. Technology Tools

Ludlow educators have access to the entire suite of Google tools. Because these tools are regularly used with students, many educators will likely use Google Classroom and other G Suite tools that are familiar. Additionally, for our younger students who may need families to share information with them, Google Sites or other website platforms that teachers have used are a great location to share activities and information for students and families.

Many of our staff are interested in learning about the most effective tools to communicate with students and families. At this time we have suggested they stick to the basics, and use technology tools and apps that are familiar to students and easy to use. Great tools that are available district-wide that meet Children's Internet Protection Act ([CIPA](#)) and Children's Online Privacy and Protection Act ([COPPA](#)) complaint compliance include: Google Hangouts Meet and Google Hangouts Chat. These tools have video conferencing available and are part of the G Suite communication tools that can help us all stay connected to one another. SeeSaw is another great tool that many preschool and special education teachers use to share student work. Google Hangouts Chat can be used to bring your classroom or team together to do work.

Here is a quick recap of the recommended tools for staff to use when engaging with your child. If you click on the link, you will learn more about each one:

- [Google Hangouts Meet](#)
- [Google Hangouts Chat](#)
- [SeeSaw](#)
- [Bloomz](#)

Please reach out to your child's teacher should you need assistance with these tools. If you need additional technological support, contact our Director of Information and Communication Technology, Michael Assaf at ipsportal@ludlowps.org.

B. Student Data Privacy

We understand families are seeing and hearing a lot of information about digital tools that are being used in other districts, and perhaps with friends or relatives. While we encourage the use of digital tools in remote learning, we need to take into account student safety and student data privacy. Many software companies offer "free" apps and software, but consumers should be wary and exercise caution. Student data can be used for marketing and other purposes and personally identifiable information about students may be revealed. Staff has been given clear guidance about the privacy of students, staff, and families. As noted previously, all online student engagement must be compliant with the Children's Internet Protection Act ([CIPA](#)) and Children's Online Privacy and Protection Act ([COPPA](#)). LPS has processes for determining what software and apps will be used for instruction and how to request the use of those software and apps, as we work to protect student data.

C. Deploying 1:1 Devices for Students

Since Friday, March 13, 2020, the Ludlow Public Schools have deployed 1:1 devices to all K-12 students and families who needed them. If you have not already communicated with your building principal, but your student is still in need of a device, please email your child's principal immediately. They will work with you to get a device for your child. Any scheduled pick-up will be completed in a "drive-up" style where the passenger window is down and the staff member meets the person curbside. This process adheres to the guidelines provided by Governor Baker related to his March 23, 2020 "[Essential Services and Revised Gatherings Order](#)."

Families who may need to gain internet access in their home during the school closure should contact the appropriate resources below to inquire about assistance.

Charter Free Internet Families w/Students
(Free 60 days, free installation) 1-844-488-8395
[News Release](#)

Charter Spectrum Internet Assistance Program (Free/Reduced Lunch)
[Internet Assist Homepage](#)

For LPS school choice students who may have Xfinity (Comcast) Internet Assistance Program
[1-800-934-6489](tel:1-800-934-6489)
<https://www.internetessentials.com/>