



Inspire Learning. **Unlock Potential. Empower Achievement.**

April 13, 2020

Jeffrey M. Gustason, Ph.D.
Principal

Kimberly Buelt
9/10 Associate Principal

Abbie Parker
9/10 Dean of Students

Sheryl Cline
9/10 School Counselor

Greg Hall
9/10 School Counselor

Pete Martin
9/10 School Counselor

Joe Nietert
11/12 Associate Principal

Chris Robertson
11/12 Dean of Students

David Kennedy
11/12 School Counselor

Elizabeth Kreher
11/12 School Counselor

Jennifer Thurston
11/12 School Counselor

Steve Goodall
LRC Associate Principal

Tony Nicol
Academic Success Counselor

Danielle Patterson
Academic Success Counselor

David Brown
Athletic Director

Tonya Moe
Associate A.D.

Kevin McCauley
Student Assistance Counselor

Lisa Mooney
Student Assistance Counselor

Janessa Walters
Student Assistance Counselor

Dear Linn-Mar Class of 2020 Students (and Parents),

Today is the first day of 4th Quarter and your last term prior to graduation from Linn-Mar High School. I certainly wish all of us were in the building today for classes. I am sorry we are not able to have school as normal right now.

As it is the first day of 4th Quarter, I want to reach out to you, and also your parents, regarding a few important items as you begin this final term of your high school career. First, and foremost, I hope that all of you and your loved ones are doing well and are safe at this time. I know you are missing many highlight activities, events, moments, and just being able to see your classmates and friends as we enter the final chapter of your Senior year. I feel heart-broken about this for all of you and powerless to change this circumstance for you as well. I also wish that I could tell you that we will all be back at school by at least the end of the school year, but that is still very much an unknown too.

The one thing that does provide me with some dissonance reduction at this time is the hope that you are all still healthy and safe, and that I know your futures, whether planned or just a vague thought at this time, are still in front of each one of you. You are an outstanding class of young people who have set a tone within our building this year that provides concern for the well-being of all students and staff, and you have shown our other classes how to focus and do hard work in order to create opportunities and success both within and following high school. No matter what may happen in the next few weeks, I want to thank each of you for the part you have played in the 2019-20 school year as a member of the Linn-Mar High School Class of 2020.

I do have a few items I want to ensure all of you in the LMHS Class of 2020 hear accurately. First, while contingency planning is taking place, no changes have been made to your last class day, currently scheduled for Wednesday, May 20, whether we are actually in the school building or still holding school online. Also, Commencement is still on Sunday, May 24, at 1:00 p.m. in the U.S. Cellular Center (Cedar Rapids). As has been stated in the updates to students and parents, any information regarding your last class day or Commencement that you do not hear from either Board President Sondra Nelson, Superintendent Shannon Bisgard, or me, should be considered inaccurate.

The same is true of any information regarding graduation requirements. These requirements are set by our district and do include all state requirements as well as our Linn-Mar High School diploma requirements. Your current graduation requirement of 250 credits, including specific, required subject area credits, as listed in the *LMHS Program of Studies* and *LMHS Student Handbook* has not changed. Our Governor has provided more discretion for school boards by waiving the state requirements for graduation as a situation warrants doing so. This provides our district with needed latitude when working with individual students who are incapable of completing all credits due to their individual situations right now. Again, your graduation requirements have not been changed for the LMHS Class of 2020.

You have been handed a unique circumstance as you finish high school. No other LMHS graduating class can claim to be an equal with you in this regard. You may have moments of anguish, frustration, and even anger about this circumstance. I do hope that you are each able to work through such individual moments and collectively continue to define your class through your spirit and determination to make the most of the last quarter of your Senior year in your own, unique way. Be well and finish the year strong, 2020.

Sincerely yours,

Jeffrey M. Gustason
Principal