



Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan (“Plan”) Application Template

As a result of COVID-19 and the closing of school buildings for the 2019-2020 School Year, school districts must submit a Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan (“Plan”) in order to continue to receive state aid for operations. Although schools are closed and not providing in-person instruction, teaching and learning must continue. Michigan educators have been called to provide our students with continued learning.

There are varied states of readiness to provide continuity in learning among districts. Even within districts of multiple school sites, there are varied states of readiness. It is expected that schools will provide instruction at a distance using a variety of methods that meet local needs, including printed materials, phone contact, email, virtual learning, or a combination to meet student needs. We should avoid assuming that continuity in learning can only occur through online means.

While many educators have been providing distance learning opportunities, the Governor’s Executive Order ([EO 2020-35](#)) requires all schools to begin providing learning opportunities for all students no later than April 28, 2020. Districts who are able to begin their plans earlier are encouraged to do so.

Each District shall submit a single completed Assurance Document, Budget Outline, and Continuity of Learning Plan to its Intermediate School District. Each Public School Academy shall submit a completed Assurance Document, Budget Outline, and Continuity of Learning Plan to its Authorizer. A single Application should be filed for the district rather than multiple applications for individual schools within a district. The following items are required for the application, which may be submitted beginning April 8, 2020, through Epicenter:

1. Assurances Document
2. Continuity of Learning Plan
3. Budget Outline

Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan (“Plan”) Guiding Principles

As Districts and Public School Academies complete the Assurances and Continuity of Learning Plans, they should consider utilizing the following principles to guide their work:

Keep Students at the Center

Intentional outreach to continue building relationships and maintain connections.

Help students feel safe and valued. At minimum, plan to do the following:

- **Plan for Student Learning:** Build on each student’s strengths, interests, and needs and use this knowledge to positively affect learning.
- **Develop a Weekly Plan and Schedule:** Offer routines and structures for consistency and for the balancing of think time, work time, and play time for health and well-being.
- **Contact Families:** Partner to support student learning through ongoing communication and collaboration. This will not look the same for every student and family—safety remains the priority. Provide translations as necessary.

Design Learning for Equity and Access

Plan and deliver content in multiple ways so all students can access learning.

- **Teach Content:** Set goals using knowledge of each student, content area standards, and of Michigan Merit Curriculum.
- **Deliver Flexible Instruction:** Consider how to deliver content depending on tools and resources accessible to each student.
Alternative modes of instruction may include use of online learning, telephone communications, email, virtual instruction, videos, slideshows, project-based learning, use of instructional packets, or a combination to meet diverse student needs.
- **Engage Families:** Communicate with families about engagement strategies to support students as they access the learning. Families are critical partners. Provide translations as necessary.

Assess Student Learning

Manage and monitor student learning and plan what’s next for learning including the potential need for summer and supplemental learning.

- **Check Student Learning:** Use a variety of strategies to monitor, assess, and provide feedback to students about their learning.
- **Make Instructional Adjustments:** Use formative assessment results to guide educators’ reflection on effectiveness of instruction and to determine next steps for student learning.
- **Engage Families:** Communicate with families about assessment results in order to inform next steps and the potential for supplemental summer learning. Provide translations as necessary.

**Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan (“Plan”)
Assurances**

Date Submitted: 4/6/2020

Name of District: Merritt Academy

Address of District: 59900 Havenridge, New Haven 48048

District Code Number: 50906

Email Address of the District: nseiferlein@merritt-academy.org

Name of Intermediate School District: Macomb Intermediate School District

Name of Authorizing Body (if applicable): Saginaw Valley State University

This Assurance document needs to be returned to your Intermediate School District or, for Public School Academies, your Authorizing Body with your Continuity of Learning Plan and Budget Outline beginning April 8, 2020 to indicate that the District will adopt a plan to ensure continuous learning for all students through the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year.

Districts should submit a single district plan that relates to all of their schools.

The applicant hereby provides assurance it will follow the requirements for a Plan for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year:

1. Applicant assures that all student learning will take place under the direction of a teacher of record for each student enrolled in the district.
2. Applicant assures that it will continue to pay school employees during the balance of the 2019-2020 school year under the same terms and conditions established prior to the school closure order period.
3. Applicant assures that the Plan was developed in collaboration with district administrators, school board members, teachers, and local bargaining units.
4. Applicant assures that food distribution has been arranged for or provided for eligible students.
5. Applicant assures coordination between applicant and Intermediate School District in which the District/PSA is located to mobilize disaster relief child care centers.
6. Applicant assures that to the extent practicable the District/PSA will in good faith provide students with IEPs/Section 504 Plans the opportunity to participate in learning consistent with existing plans.
7. Applicant assures that Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan, Assurance Document, and Budget Outline will be posted immediately following approval to the District’s/PSA’s website.

Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan (“Plan”)

The goal of a Continuity of Learning Plan and COVID-19 Response Plan is to ensure that each District or Public School Academy is providing, to the best of its ability, each student with alternative modes of instruction to help them stay on pace in their learning. This application recognizes that there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution; multiple means of engaging students and supporting families may be necessary that may vary by grade level, school building, or student population served.

For the purposes of the Plan, “district” refers to school districts and public school academies.

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In accordance with Executive Order 2020-35 a Plan must include all of the following parts:

1. Please describe the methods the district will use to provide alternative modes of instruction other than in-person instruction and a summary of materials each pupil and the pupil’s parents or guardians will need to access meaningfully the alternative modes of instruction included in the Plan. If the Plan relies on electronic instruction, the Plan must ensure to the extent feasible that pupils have access to a connected device capable of accessing the electronic instruction and must not penalize a pupil for the pupil’s inability to fully participate.

“Alternative modes of instruction” means modes of pupil instruction, other than in-person instruction, that may include, without limitation, partnerships with other districts or intermediate districts or community colleges or institutions of higher education, use of vendors, use of online learning, telephone communications, email, virtual instruction, videos, slideshows, project-based learning, use of instructional packets, or a hybrid of multiple modes of learning that still promote recommended practices for social distancing to mitigate the spread of COVID-CD.

District/ PSA Response:

Merritt Academy started supplying on-line learning resources to parents on March 13, 2020. Families that did not have on-line access were provided paper resources the week of March 16, 2020 through the mail. Teachers have also been conducting Zoom meetings starting the week

of March 23, 2020.

Merritt Academy plans continue to use a hybrid model of instruction using hard copy instructional packets and online learning platforms. Both elementary and secondary level education will use online learning resources and platforms as the primary mode of support and instruction. However, for those students that have internet access, but don't have a device, devices will be made available to the extent that is practicable and feasible. Students without internet access will have access to instructional materials through a bi-weekly instructional packet. All students will need access to materials such as paper, pencils, and crayons, which will be made available to families that don't have them. All students will have access to grade-level/course resources (textbooks and/or other materials) as needed to complete their work.

Students with 504 plans will be receiving accommodations through Google classroom assignments. Our 504 coordinator will oversee the implementation of accommodations as he does during the school year.

Students with IEPs will receive accommodations and supports through Google classroom and zoom. The resource room teachers will be co-teachers with the general education teachers. They will be able to monitor student accommodation and progress in the general education setting. In addition, resource room teachers will be having zoom calls with their students to work on teaching concepts relating to their IEP goals. There will be a section in Google classroom where the resource room teacher can add tasks that allow for practice of skills relating to lesson taught and IEP goals.

Both the speech teacher and social worker will have their own Goggle class to work with students that have goals written into an IEP. They will also be using zoom to communicate with their students.

Families are being engaged in the plan through parental access to Google classroom. They will be able to monitor if students are completing work and how they are performing. In addition, they will be able to communicate with the teacher on student progress. For students that will be using packets, the teacher will speak with the parent on the weekly call to update them on student progress and see if the parent has any concerns about their child's progress.

2. Please describe the methods the district will use to keep pupils at the center of educational activities, including outreach to continue building relationships and maintain connections, and to help pupils feel safe and valued.

District/ PSA Response:

Teachers will be expected to attempt to make contact with every student at least one time during the week. This may be done through the use of technology (for those that have access) such as Google Hangout/Zoom or other forms of virtual meeting or through weekly phone calls. For students with technology access teachers will also make sure to communicate each week through the instructional platform (Google Classroom), with an emphasis on continuing to build relationships and maintain connections. If students do not have access to technology, teachers will connect via phone or include notes to students in their instructional packet that focus on building relationships and maintaining connections. We are very sensitive to the fact that students and families may not have regular schedules and/or regular access to devices

during these uncertain times, and will be flexible in our approaches to connect with students.

3. Please describe the district's plans to deliver content in multiple ways so that all pupils can access learning.

District/ PSA Response:

For students without technology instructional packets will be mailed on a bi-weekly basis to families. These packets will be supplemented with phone conversations to support instruction.

For students with technology content will be delivered through the online platform, email, and other social media sites (Facebook, Remind, etc.). Teachers will offer accessible synchronous instruction two times per week and asynchronous instruction (using a variety of resources which may include pre-made videos, voice recordings, and other supplemental educational materials etc.) multiple times per week. Content delivery will be intentional; with clear expectations, simple instructions and an appropriate amount of work required so as to not overwhelm students.

Elementary teachers will have two content based Zoom meetings a week for a minimum of 30 minutes. In addition, they will have one Zoom meeting a week to build relationships.

Middle school teachers will have one content based Zoom meeting a week for a minimum of 30 minutes. In addition, they will have a 30-minute Zoom meeting scheduled as office hours where students can log in to ask questions and get assistance. Finally, there will be one Zoom meeting scheduled for each section to focus on relationship building.

High school teachers will have one content based Zoom meeting a week for a minimum of 30 minutes. In addition, they will have a 30-minute Zoom meeting scheduled as office hours where students can log in to ask questions and get assistance. Finally, there will be one Zoom meeting scheduled for each section to focus on relationship building.

4. Please describe the district's plans to manage and monitor learning by pupils.

District/ PSA Response:

Connecting with and caring for our students is our first priority. It will be important to monitor the engagement and learning of our students in order to continue to provide support for both socio-emotional and academic needs. For students without technology access, learning packets will be collected via mail or sending a picture through email or other social platform such as Dojo to the teacher. Teachers will review the learning packet and provide feedback during their weekly phone call. The feedback will be positive and encouraging and may include examples to support further student learning. In the event a learning packet is not returned, teachers will work to connect with students on a personal level.

For students with technology, teachers will monitor student access and assignment completion within the instructional platform. Teachers will provide formative feedback to students on

assignments through the instructional platform. The feedback will be positive and encouraging and may include examples to support further student learning. Again, realizing that individual students may have unique needs due to their circumstances, feedback will be given in multiple formats; potentially including brief comments on assignments submitted electronically, comments shared in online bulletin boards or comments shared during remote connect sessions.

Please note: For high school students GPA will be calculated through the end of the first semester of the 2019-20 school year. Students will not receive formal grades for work assigned and submitted for the remainder of the 2019-20 school, but will receive formative feedback.

5. Please attach a budget outline estimating additional expenditures associated with the Plan and sources of revenue to pay for those expenditures.

District/ PSA Response:

The school will be loaning technology to students that require access. Our general budget will support any of the costs related to hybrid program being implemented. Anticipated cost include \$300-\$400 in postage to mail packets to students and supplying pre-postage envelopes for students to return completed work. In addition, \$200-\$400 is being allocated for any materials (paper, pencils etc) the school may have to purchase for students at home. All students are having their personal supplies returned to them to assist with assignments at home. The technology devices being prepped for student use is covered under our current contract with the technology company.

6. Please describe the manner in which district administrators, board members, teachers, and any representatives of teachers collaborated in development of the Plan.

District/ PSA Response:

The development of the plan was a collaborative process, providing an opportunity for key stakeholders to provide feedback and/or review the draft plan. Building administrators met with their building lead teachers for initial input. The lead teachers worked with their grade level teachers to get their feedback. Building administrators brought this information back to district level administrators to collaborate.

7. Please describe the methods the district will use to notify pupils and parents or guardians of the Plan.

District/ PSA Response:

Merritt Academy will send out a school wide email blast to notify all parents of the educational plan moving forward. In addition, the plan will be placed on the school's Facebook page. Middle and high school teachers will be able to forward the email blast directly to the students through their school email accounts. In addition, the plan will be posed on the school website. Translation services are not needed at this time. Families that have indicated they do not have access to internet will be mailed a hard copy of the plan with the first student packet.

8. Please provide an estimate of the date on which the district will begin implementation of the Plan, which must be no later than April 28, 2020.

District/ PSA Response:

An estimated date to begin implementing this plan is April 13, 2020.

9. Please describe the assistance, to the extent feasible, to pupils enrolled in any postsecondary dual enrollment courses under Public Act 160 of 1996, as amended, MCL 388.511 to 388.524, and Career and Technical Preparation Act, 258 PA 2000, as amended, MCL 388.1901 to 388.1913, in completing the courses during the 2019-2020 school year.

District/ PSA Response:

For our students in dual enrollment courses we will be working with the provider (Macomb Community College) to determine next steps. We will ensure that students have the appropriate materials and support to complete those courses. These students will be given the option to convert their grade to credit or no-credit.

For students in CTE programs we will work with the Pankow Center to coordinate communication and instruction to students. Pankow will be providing instruction to students who are currently enrolled in their programs.

10. Please describe how the district will continue to provide or arrange for continuation of food distribution to eligible pupils.

District/ PSA Response:

All Merritt Academy families were provided information on local districts that were providing food services starting back in March. This will be the same moving forward for the remainder of the year.

11. Please confirm that the district will continue to pay school employees while redeploying staff to provide meaningful work in the context of the Plan, subject to any applicable requirements of a collective bargaining agreement.

District/ PSA Response:

The district will continue to pay school employees. Staff will be redeployed as necessary to support the implementation of this plan and support students and families. These duties may include, but are not limited to:

1. Making calls to students and families to build connections and maintain relationships
2. Making calls to students and families to provide additional learning support
3. Assisting with copying and distributing packets
4. Assisting with maintaining district communication protocols and the sharing of resources

12. Please describe how the district will evaluate the participation of pupils in the Plan.

District/ PSA Response:

Connecting with and caring for our students is our first priority. Teachers will document communications with students and parents. If a student does not have access to technology, teachers will keep track of which students are completing the instructional packets. If a student has access to technology, teachers will use the instructional platform to monitor student wellness, engagement, and completion of assignments. If concerns are raised due to lack of engagement, inconsistent completion and/or communication of needs from a parent or student, teachers will communicate with the administration, counselor and/or school social worker to develop a plan to connect with the student and family. When appropriate, community resources will be shared with the family. Community support agencies also may be sought to make these connections (DHHS, Behavioral Health, etc.) and support our families.

13. Please describe how the district will provide mental health supports to pupils affected by a state of emergency or state of disaster prompted by COVID-19.

District/ PSA Response:

While teachers are making weekly contacts they will check in with students and families. If a need or concern is presented/shared the teacher will elevate that need to the administration to make the necessary follow-up. Based on those results the administration (31n, SSW, counselor, principal, etc.) will reach out to individual students and families to determine what they may need. The administration may help connect the family to outside agencies to help meet their needs. The administration will hold weekly meetings with teachers to identify any additional students or families in need.

14. Please describe how the district will support the efforts of the intermediate district in which the district is located to mobilize disaster relief child care centers as described in Executive Order 2020-16 or any executive order that follow it.

District/ PSA Response:

Merritt Academy has communicated with the Macomb Intermediate School District in regards to our building being able to be used if needed to mobilize a disaster relief childcare center.

Optional question:

15. Does the District to adopt a balanced calendar instructional program for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year? Does the District plan to adopt a balanced calendar instructional program for the 2020-2021 school year?

District/ PSA Response:

Yes Merritt Academy is considering adopting a modified (early start) calendar for 2020-2021.

Name of District Leader Submitting Application: Nathan Seiferlein

Date Approved: _____

Name of ISD Superintendent/Authorizer Designee: _____

Date Submitted to Superintendent and State Treasurer: _____

Confirmation approved Plan is posted on District/PSA website: _____