



Upper Mississippi Academy Distance Learning Plan

Objective: To provide equitable distance learning for all students during periods of school closure.

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) has outlined a set of expectations that will constitute a school district's plan for providing instruction to all students in the event that school is closed for a long period of time. A plan is to be developed and posted on a school's website by March 30th, 2020. Below are the components of the plan required by the MDE.

Part A: Instructional Expectations

Distance Learning defined: Students engaging in distance learning will have access to appropriate educational materials and receive *daily interaction* with their licensed teacher(s). It is important to note that distance learning will not always mean e-learning or online learning. It is critical with distance learning that learning occurs in a format that can be equitably accessed by all students.

General Requirements:

Provide a general summary of the teaching and learning structures and platforms to be utilized during distance learning. Include how the school ensures that all students will have equal access to the learning and required materials to successfully receive credit in their class, including technology. Include voluntary prekindergarten or school readiness plus programs, if applicable.

- Upper Mississippi Academy will largely rely on Schoology (UMA's learning management system, or LMS) to house information and lessons tied to the school day. Teachers will post necessary information at the start of the school day so that students are able to access main lessons for their classes by 9:20 am. The main structure of distance learning allows for the following:
 - Daily relationship check in
 - Daily goal for learning
 - Direct instruction related to goal
 - Student creation task(s) or work related to goal

If you are using an online learning system, outline the steps the school will take to ensure it can effectively support the district's unique learning and teaching needs.

- Upper Mississippi Academy has conducted a survey of student needs regarding access to the internet and to a device. Based on the survey results, the school has provided each student who identified a tech need with either a hotspot, a device, or both.
- Teachers will establish daily check-ins in the morning during advisory periods. The advisory check-in may occur via video, email, phone call, or other format.
- Lessons may occur both synchronously and asynchronously. *Emphasis will be placed on student needs and flexibility.* The expectation will be that students submit evidence of work by midnight or later as arranged by the teacher.
- Teachers will be available during their regularly scheduled classes to provide assistance as needed.
- General Education teachers will be required to follow all 504 and IEP accommodations and/or modifications. General Education teachers will be expected to participate in IEP and evaluation meetings.
- General Education teachers, Special Education teachers, and paras will be required to collaborate to design individualized lessons and/or assignments based on student needs.
- Staff will collaborate with course-alike and/ or grade-alike colleagues to plan and deliver Distance Learning.

How will student learning and progress be: measured, monitored, and communicated to students and parent(s)/guardian(s)?

- Teachers will assess submitted assignments to check for learning and progress.
- Teachers will provide feedback.
- Student progress, grades, and comments will continue to be recorded in Schoology (Upper Mississippi Academy's LMS).
- Staff will share specific emails should a student's individual progress falter.
- Both students and parents have access to Schoology information and may also check independently.

Describe programming options for school nurses, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, paraprofessionals, other school specialists and cultural liaisons.

- Individual services, specifically Occupational Therapy, Speech/Language, adaptive phy ed (DAPE) and School Social Work will be delivered via telephone, or pandemic HIPAA compliant platform such as Google Hangout or Zoom. Pull out special education classes will also be delivered through these platforms and email communication.
- 504 accommodations such as organization checks will be delivered via telephone, email communication, google docs or pandemic HIPAA compliant platform such as Google Hangout or Zoom.
- Special Education Paraprofessionals will be scheduled to support students per their IEP and will be available to assist using telephone, email communication, google docs or pandemic HIPAA compliant platforms such as Google Hangout or Zoom.

- Any programming options for other service providers are still being developed.??? Update

All schools and districts that are required under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to consult with Tribal Nations must also collaborate with the Tribal Nations Education Committee (TNEC) members regarding the formulation of their distance learning plans. If applicable,

- N/A

Outline how attendance of students and staff will be tracked and how these expectations will be communicated to students, parents, and staff. Note: the school board attendance policy must accommodate the implementation of this distance learning model for attendance. If not, the board should consider revising the policy.

- Student attendance for the day will be based on student check in for advisory or with their Advisor. If a student is marked absent the family will be contacted by either email or phone call.
- Student attendance protocol will be posted on UMA's website and will also be communicated via US mail or email. Teachers and advisors will reiterate attendance procedures.
- Staff attendance will be based on an electronic response from all staff by 9:10 am everyday.

Outline the school's plan for training staff, students and parents to ensure that your distance learning program can effectively be implemented.

- Upper Mississippi Academy staff have created various tutorials for staff, students, and families in regards to implementation of Schoology and other online resources. These resources will be shared with families through school communications and will be found on our website. Additionally, staff will do check-ins with specific students when evidence of work is not submitted or other indications show that the student is encountering difficulties.

Describe how your distance learning model is secure and will not allow for the release of protected student or staff information.

- To protect student data and confidentiality when using the Distance Learning lesson plan/landing page. Student names should NOT be used on the Distance Learning lesson plan or any documents linked there since this can be seen by all (including parents & guardians of all students).
- We will make every effort to safeguard student's private data during distance learning just as we do during normal school operations. Individual services, specifically Occupational Therapy, Speech/Language, adaptive phy ed (DAPE) and School Social Work will be delivered via

telephone, or pandemic HIPAA compliant platform such as Google Hangout or Zoom. Pull out special education classes will also be delivered through these platforms and email communication.

Special Education Requirements: State and Federal law requires a school to continue to meet the all requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Describe how the school will ensure supports identified on a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan are provided.

- Individual services, specifically Occupational Therapy, Speech/Language, adaptive phy ed (DAPE) and School Social Work will be delivered via telephone, or pandemic HIPAA compliant platform such as Google Hangout or Zoom. Pull out special education classes will also be delivered through these platforms and email communication.
- Special Education staff has been assigned to all classes to support student's needs and to deliver services.
- Teachers will continue to work with IEP case managers, school social workers and school counselor to provide accommodations and modifications found in IEP's or
- Special Education case managers and General Education teachers will collaborate to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to the same opportunities, including the provision of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

Outline the school's process for communicating with parents and guardians regarding their child's services, which should include discussion regarding amending IEP's to address how best to meet the student's needs in a flexible learning model. This includes direct specialized instruction, related services, and accommodations

- UMA will send Prior Written Notices and confidentiality agreements for students receiving group special education services to parents/guardians explaining how services will be delivered a variety of ways including via phone calls, emails and video conferencing. The PWN will cover delivery of services including direct specialized instruction, SSW, OT, DAPE and SP/L for the time that Distance Learning is in place. Once Distance Learning ends and regular school programming goes into effect, the services revert to the IEP that was in effect on March 13, 2020.
- All Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings will be held via phone or conducted virtually.
- Initial Evaluations and Re-Evaluations will be completed to the best of our abilities with the limitations that districts are required to follow. This may mean if there is a face-to-face

component REQUIRED to meet state special education criteria, the evaluation will be completed when students return to school.

- Progress Reports will continue to be completed and provided to families.

Describe the school's protocol to communicate with administration and staff to prepare and support them in meeting the needs of students eligible for special education, child find activities, evaluations/reevaluations, and IEP implementation.

- IEP and Evaluation planning and Evaluation outcome meetings will be held via conference call, Google Hangout or Zoom.
- Evaluations in process will be completed with the information that can be gathered remotely and through records review.
- All Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings will be held via phone or conducted virtually.
- Any new annual IEP's will clearly state what services, minutes and schedules are for Distance Learning and how the IEP will be implemented once Distance Learning is over and students return to school.
- Initial Evaluations and Re-Evaluations will be completed to the best of our abilities with the limitations that districts are required to follow. This may mean if there is a face-to-face component REQUIRED to meet state special education criteria, the evaluation will be completed when students return to school.
- Progress Reports will continue to be completed and provided to families.

English Language Learner Requirements

Describe how the school will fulfill Individual Learning Plans for English Language Learners. Include possible scaffolding methods available to support students in a distance learning environment.

- N/A

Describe the school's plan for communicating with families that do not use English as a primary language.

- The school will continue to rely on interpreters for phone calls when language barriers are known or identified.

Protections for Students Experiencing Homelessness or Housing Instability

Specify how the school will satisfy the Federal requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, to support homelessness students throughout this crisis and promote their full participation in their education throughout the duration of the distance learning period.

- There are currently no students identified as HHM. We will continue to check in with all support staff regarding changes in student status.
- If a student's status changes, we will work with the student to provide all necessary materials for distance learning.

How will the school monitor participation and engagement of homeless students in distance learning (e.g., including both attendance and performance.); potentially resulting in your school needing to change its staffing/support?

- Currently N/A

How will the school monitor the efficacy of distance learning plans and approaches for all students including homeless students, and be prepared to consider alternatives or additional support needs as part of that review.

- All students will be monitored by attendance, engagement and progress. Advisors, Special Education Casemanagers, School Social Workers and 504 support staff will work with students and parents/guardians to identify barriers to engagement and provide accommodations, modifications and resources for additional supports.

Describe how the school will maintain regular contact with local public health departments, county or Tribal human services departments, and Continuum of Care planning bodies on ongoing or emerging needs and to connect to resources that can assist students and families experiencing homelessness.

- Currently N/A

Part B: Supplemental Services Expectations

Describe the school's plan for providing meals to all children who need them. Include: how families access meals, staffing plan for preparing and distributing meals, and method of distribution that aligns with public health guidelines.

- All UMA student's will access meals through their resident districts.

Describe the school's plan for providing childcare for the elementary children of Tier 1 emergency and healthcare workers. Include: how families access childcare, a plan for staffing childcare, transportation of childcare participants, if you plan to include children of Tier 2 workers, and plans for following the CDC and Minnesota Department of Health's guidelines.

- No children of tier 1 or 2 workers have come forward asking for childcare. Various communications have been sent home.
- If status changes, UMA will provide transportation, meals (if needed), and staff for school care.

How will the school maintain an awareness of, and be prepared to cope with, the potential impact these closures will have on the mental health and wellbeing of students, staff, and families.

- UMA has created and posted a resource page for families that includes mental health resources, community resources, health care and access to meals. This is posted on our website and is updated frequently. Links to this are also sent out in our communications to families.
- Updates on school programming and Distance Learning are emailed and mailed home.
- The school will survey families around mental health, general well-being, and school programming.

Describe how the school will provide information related to 'how to talk to children' about what is happening to change their school day.

- UMA has included specific recommendations in regards to how to talk to children in its resources link.
- UMA will continuously communicate with families regarding the distance learning plan.
- UMA will also continuously update resources and share these resources via emails and it's website.