

Make Up Days and E-Learning

At Lake Central, the safety of our students, staff and families remains our top priority. We will always act out of an abundance of caution to protect everyone's health and wellbeing. This message is being sent out to answer some of the questions we have received recently.

Our main source of guidance is the Center for Disease Control and the documents they have distributed over the past couple of weeks. We want to reiterate that the purpose of our communication is to make our community aware of the advice from the CDC and to emphasize that we are paying close attention to this very fluid situation.

Over the past couple of days, several colleges and universities have made the decision to temporarily suspend class lectures and laboratory experiences. For schools who are educating adults, this decision, while not easy, doesn't take into account several factors that would impact k-12 school districts like ours.

First of all, the students they serve are able to be left alone during the day. Many of our k-12 students need some type of child care during the day. If we choose to close schools or call for delays, our decision has an immediate impact on many of our families. The students that colleges serve have already demonstrated significant growth and the ability to work independently while many of our students struggle without the support and guidance of our knowledgeable and dedicated faculty and staff.

As to how the current situation affects LC students, many answers depend on yet to be determined events. We have been informed by the Indiana State Department of Health that the County Departments of Health will make decisions regarding the closing of schools. We have not seen criteria regarding how many cases of illness would dictate such a decision. Historically, when the decision is ours to make, we have based school closure on a criteria of absentee rates exceeding 20%. At that point, it would be unfair to move on with such a large percentage of our students unable to benefit from our programs. Teacher absentee rates could also weigh heavily on this decision.

The key decision for us will be how to make up days should our schools close for an extended period of time. Of course, that will depend on some vital information that we do not yet have from authorities. We need to have an estimate of the length of the closure. Also, we need to know if the Indiana Department of Education will require every day be made up or just a portion. We intend to be flexible in our response to making up school days should the need arise.

Two of the important questions we will need to answer are: how much of June are we comfortable using as makeup time, and how can we effectively blend e-learning with face to face instruction? A group of administrators including principals from all developmental levels met this morning to begin mapping out a contingency plan for our response to any potential school closure.

We believe face to face instruction with a highly qualified instructor yields the best learning outcomes for our students. When our kids are able to come to school early for tutoring or are able to ask for an alternative explanation during class and receive immediate feedback, it greatly enhances their learning. It is for these reasons that we have in the past chosen to make up days with a traditional school day in lieu of distance learning. However, given the current situation, a blended response to making up days

seems prudent. We will need to balance our core belief of quality time with their teacher against our number one goal of keeping our students and staff safe.

We will continue to post updated information on our website and send information through our email system in the coming days.

Sincerely,
Dr. Veracco