

Novak News

April 2018



Important Dates

4/19 - 5th grade LEO field trip
4/19 - Little Lions Special Olympics Play Day 9:00-11:30 am
4/20 - Schoolwide BINGO for PBIS celebration
4/20 - PTO Family Fun Night
4/23 - 5th Grade to Hancher 8:30-2:00
4/25 - 4th Gr. Band Recruiting at EX 9:45 - 11:00
4/27 - 4th Grade State Fest Interviews at LRC, am
4/30 - NO SCHOOL - PD Day
4/30 - 4th Grade Band Parent Meeting HS - 6:00 pm

Yellow Emergency Forms

Yellow emergency forms for the 18-19 school year will be coming home with your child. Please complete the form and send back to school. These are necessary so that we have current information for every student. In August, all families are required to update information on PowerSchool so that field trip permissions, addresses, phone numbers, etc. are current.

Spring

News from Mrs. O'Donnell

Families,

Even though it still looks and feels like winter, we are in the middle of our usual spring activities. This includes assessments, field trips, Family Fun Night, and planning for next year.

In regard to assessments, students in third through fifth grade just finished the Iowa Assessments (formerly called Iowa Tests of Basic Skills). Now we are working on NWEA. These are reading and math tests taken by second through fifth graders. These computer tests are individualized and untimed. Also during the months of April and May, all students aged five through fifth grade will be taking the FAST reading screener. This is the state-required timed reading test. As a screener, it tells us which kids might be at risk for needing some reading support. This test is administered three times each school year.

Soon we will start working on teacher assignments for next year. We work hard to look at the needs of all children to find a good match with the teacher and the classmates. As we begin to make class lists, they are looked at by many sets of eyes including current teachers, next year's teachers, the counselor, and myself. While we do not take requests for specific teachers, if you have a question or concern about a class assignment, you are welcome to contact Cris Southwood, the counselor, or me before Move Up Day.

Move Up Day is May 23rd. On this day, children meet their teacher for the 2018-19 school year. Towards the end of the day, everyone moves into the classroom of next year's teacher for a short activity. During this time fifth graders get an extra recess.

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Kindergarten Camp – New Format

Kindergarten Camp is an opportunity for incoming kindergartners and their teachers to get to know each other a little. It is also a chance for parents to hear a little more about what kindergarten is like. In the past, this has taken place in June. This year, we are trying something new. We would like to have Kindergarten Camp on May 22nd in the early evening before families are off on vacation. More information will be sent to families that are registered for kindergarten for the 2018-2019 School Year.

Communication Survey

In the August and February newsletters was a link for a communication survey. We requested feedback from families about what is currently working and what can we do better, especially in regard to newsletters and Seesaw.

The number of people responding to the survey doubled from August to February, from 35 people to 70. The survey will go out again in the May newsletter and we hope to more than double that number again. We would really like to hear from a greater share of our families.

For the question: **How would you rate communication from Novak Elementary?** 89% of the respondents rated it high to excellent, compared to 66% in the fall.

For the question: **How would you rate communication from the teachers?** 84% rated it high to excellent, compared to 70% in the fall.

96% of the people that responded have a Seesaw account.

For the question: **What suggestions do you have for us to improve communication with your family?** Although most of the comments were positive, we are always interested in improving. Here were some of your suggestions.

Suggestion: Consistency. Whatever method you choose, keep it consistent.

Response: This year I have sent a newsletter as issues arise. Next year I will make a consistent day each month.

Suggestion: Although we love Seesaw, we would still like information about what children are learning in specific subjects, which used to be in a newsletter.

Response: Teachers will be encouraged to include this.

Suggestion: Would like weekly information on just my child's progress. I feel bad being the one always asking the teacher for this.

Response: Teachers are happy to provide this upon request. For teachers to create this on every child every week would take time away from other things, when this may not be what all parents need. Also, there might not be new information to share on every child each week.

Suggestion: Would like to know more about your strategic goals.

Response: Every grade level creates a reading and math goal based on data from the previous year. Generally, we take the percent proficient from the previous year and increase it by 10%. We also write a building goal for social and behavior. For example, we look at the number of office referrals from the previous year and set a goal to decrease it by 10%. We also write goals around OCM (anti-bullying program) to increase the number of students each year that like school and feel safe.

Drills

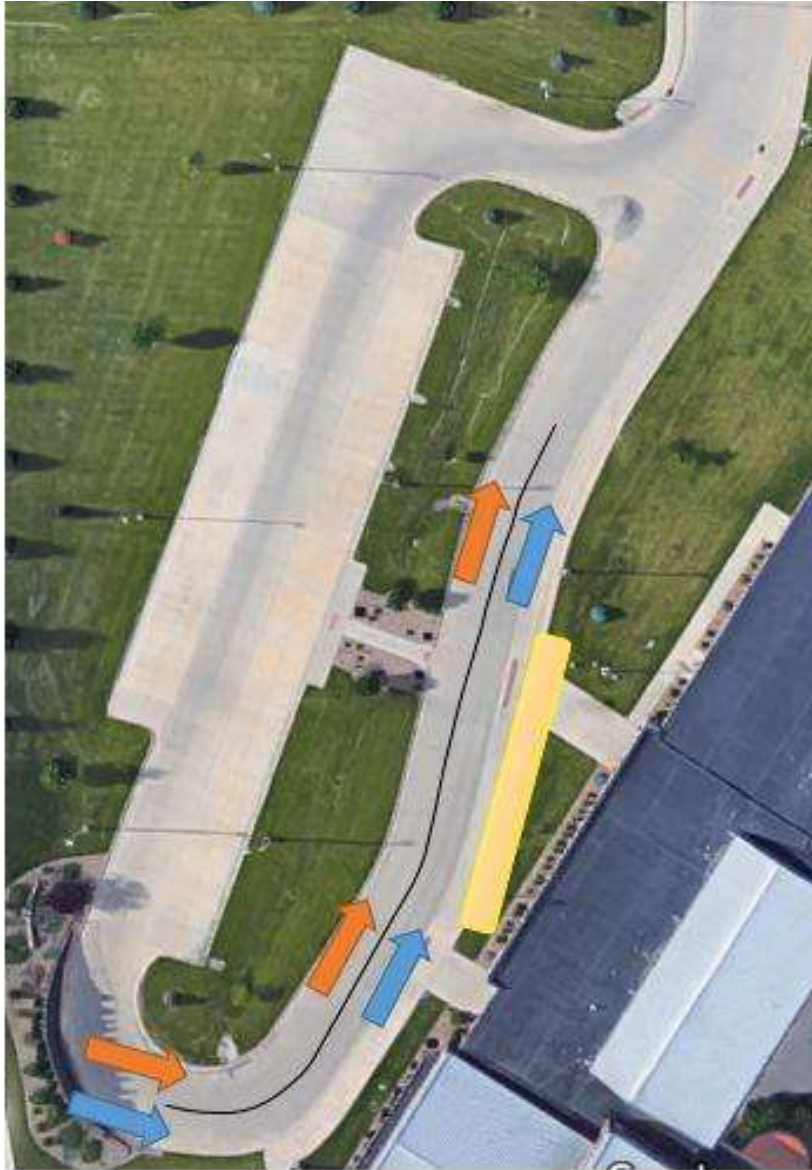
Recently we completed a tornado drill and a barricade drill. Coming up, we will have a fire drill. While you are familiar with tornado drills and fire drills, you may not be as familiar with the barricade drill. This is part of ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate). As you may remember, we are using the book, I'm Not Scared, I'm Prepared by Julia Cook, with the students. (The link for this book is below.) Last year we practiced the evacuation drill, and will do another one in May. Recently we practiced a barricade drill with the students. During this time, we helped the students understand what to do if we would need to keep an intruder from entering the classroom. We define an intruder as someone that comes into the building, doesn't follow the rules, and wants to cause harm.

If you have questions about ALICE please feel free to contact me.

Julia Cook has many wonderful books, including the one I mentioned. <http://www.juliacookonline.com/book/im-not-scared-im-prepared/>



Beginning Monday, April 23, we will be implementing a new drop-off and pick-up plan. Please see the images below to view these changes. Thank you!



Morning Drop-Off Update:

Starting next week (4/23)

we will be using cones to designate two separate lanes during morning drop-off.

The inside lane (nearest the grassy island) will be only for those driving through and leaving the Novak lot. The

outside lane (nearest Novak) will serve only as the drop-off lane. Please see the diagram.

Please remember that once in drop-off lane there is no leaving the vehicle, no passing and your

student needs to exit anytime your car is in the designated drop-off zone.

Key:



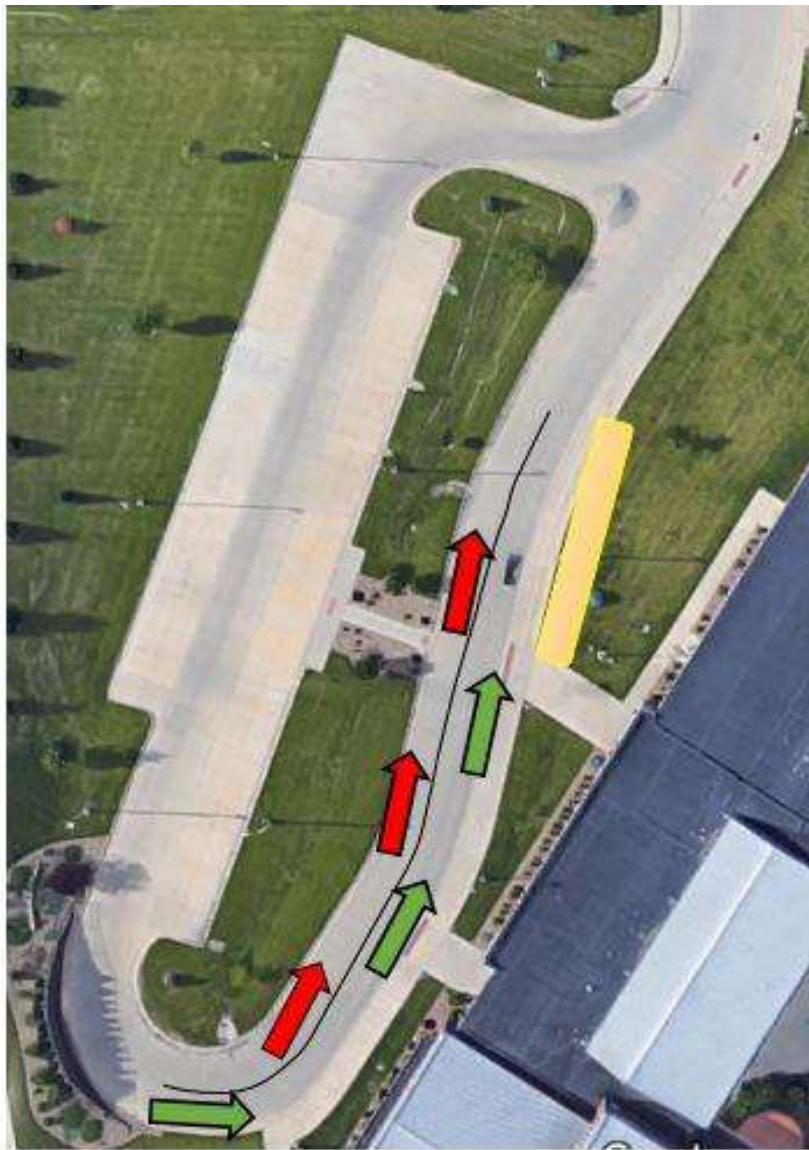
Exit Lane Only (No dropping off of students)



Drop-off Lane Only (please stay in line, do not exit your vehicle and no passing)



Drop-off Zone (once your car is alongside this highlighted area, students exit)



Afternoon Pick-Up Update:

Plan ahead – for student safety starting next week (4/23) we will be closing the middle lane during afternoon pick-up. This will limit traffic driving through the center lane. We understand this may delay your departure but feel it is necessary to ensure the safety of our students. Please remember that you should not park or exit your vehicle at any time during afternoon pick-up – our staff are present to help assist your student in getting into the vehicle.

Key:



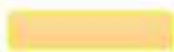
Lane #1



Lane #2



Dividing Cones



Student Loading Zone

News from the Linn-Mar Foundation

Dine Out For Our Schools ***Thursday, April 19th***



Skip the kitchen and join us for a community-wide Dine Out For Our Schools event on **Thursday, April 19th**. The event is all day (for most locations) and includes dine-in, takeout and delivery! We currently have 17 area restaurant partners to choose from with a few additional being added soon. 10% - 20% of your total bill will be donated back to the schools. Proceeds will be directed to the Linn-Mar School Foundation which benefits K-12 students in all ten of our Linn-Mar Schools. Visit www.linnmarfoundation.org for more information.

Fun opportunities for swag for those who tag us on Facebook & Twitter with #DineOutLinnMar

All restaurants require patrons to mention the event to your server or present our Dine Out flyer to qualify. If you are dining at Buffalo Wild Wings, you must show them your BWW Home Team Advantage card which is available on the Foundation website and Facebook event.

Look forward to seeing you on April 19th for Dine Out!

Learn more about recent Foundation funding here (linked to <https://youtu.be/rN1Ld73fCG0>)

University of Iowa Community Credit Union Give & Grow Program **April 1st - 30th**



The University of Iowa Community Credit Union (UICCU) offers a great member program each April which is a huge win for area school foundations. UICCU members (new & existing) can make a donation through UICCU's Give & Grow program, from \$25 up to \$500.00 per household, and designate the Linn-Mar School Foundation. UICCU will generously match the donation of the member to the Linn-Mar School Foundation up to \$15,000!

You can even further match your Give & Grow gift through your employers matching gift program. Learn about Double the Donation here. (linked to <https://www.linnmarfoundation.org/matching-gifts/>)

These gifts make an important and timely impact in our Linn-Mar K-12 classrooms.

To make a gift through UICCU's Give & Grow program click here (linked to <https://www.uiccu.org/uiccu-give-and-grow-initiative>)

Hills Bank Celebrates 10 years of Stories Alive! at Linn-Mar

We would like to send a BIG thank you out to Hills Bank & Trust for their 10th year of supporting the Stories Alive! visiting author program in our district. The Stories Alive! program, now 27 years at Linn-Mar, hosts a national author/illustrator to visit each of our elementary buildings to share their journey to becoming an author with our young readers and writers.

This year, Katherine Hannigan visited seven Linn-Mar schools in the last week of March to talk about how she became a children's author at 40! Katherine encouraged our students to "follow the fun" in their writing, don't worry about it being perfect, read, read, read and don't forget to believe in yourself as a great writer.

Thank you Hills Bank & Trust for believing in our students and supporting literacy in our schools.



Orchestra News

Upcoming Orchestra Events this Spring:

- 5th Grade Orchestra Spring Concert - Monday, May 7th @ 6:00 PM in the Excelsior Gym
- Orchestra Recital/Talent Show - Wednesday, May 9th & Thursday, May 10th during rehearsal ☺
- Last day of Orchestra - Wednesday, May 16th
- Summer Orchestra Program - Classes and individual lessons will be held during the month of June in the High School Orchestra Room. Students may visit the High School Orchestra website and register online: <https://sites.google.com/site/linnmarorchestra/>

Attention 4th Graders and Parents:

The Band & Orchestra presentations will be held later this month to demonstrate each of the instrument families for students. If your child has any interest in some day playing the violin, viola, cello, or bass, then your child is in for a treat!!! Students will receive a packet of information on how to join the orchestra program during the presentation. If your child misses the presentation or if you would like further information on our program, please attend the parent meetings described below.

Beginning Orchestra - Informational Meetings

4th and 5th grade students interested in starting a string instrument should attend one of the orchestra informational meetings with their parents. There are two meeting times scheduled for **Tuesday, May 1st**. The meetings will be held at 4:30 and 7:30 p.m. in the Oak Ridge Auxiliary Gym and will cover information about the Linn-Mar Orchestra Program as well as the *Summer Beginning Strings Program*. The meetings will last about 45 minutes. Representatives from local music stores will also be there with suggestions for renting or purchasing instruments!

**** 5th grade students** wishing to learn to play a string instrument should attend the information meetings described above with their parents. Students are encouraged to take private lessons with a string teacher in the area or may sign up for the Linn-Mar summer beginning strings program in order to become a member of the 6th grade orchestra next fall. Questions: contact Mrs. Vieth at kvieth@linnmar.k12.ia.us or (319) 447-3219



BAND NEWS

HEY 4th GRADERS - THE BAND IS COMING!!!

Beginning Band for Current 4th Graders

All Novak 4th graders will meet on April 20th to see a Band instrument demonstration and try out some instruments. On April 25th they will hear the 8th Grade Band and MS Chamber Orchestra perform. It is a very exciting time to be a 4th Grader and we look forward to having you in the Linn-Mar Band Program! Students will be bringing home information about the band program, instrument choices, and parent meetings at that time.

Informational meetings for Parents of 4th Graders who would like to start a band instrument are being scheduled for Monday, April 30th and Wednesday, May 2nd at 6:00 PM. Meetings will be held in the High School Little Theatre and last about one hour. Park in the HS lot by the digital sign and North of the LRC and enter Door #1 near the Auditorium. Parents only need to attend one meeting and your child does not need to attend. At the meeting parents will receive information about the 5th Grade Band program and our Summer Beginner lessons. Parents will also sign their child up for an individual 15 minute *Band Interview* to try out instruments (with parents in attendance). **NOTE: All beginner band students MUST interview to select an instrument.** Interviews will be held between May 15th – 23rd. Parents who are unable to attend either meeting can call/email for information and to sign up for an interview beginning May 3rd. Voice mail - 447-3310 or kmakinster@linnmar.k12.ia.us (email is preferred).

5th Grade Band News

The 5th Grade Band will give its Spring Concert on Tuesday, May 1st.

The concert will be held in the HS Auditorium and begin at 6:15 p.m. All band students should report to the HS Little Theatre between 5:45 - 6:00 p.m. The program will last about 30 minutes. Nice dress clothes should be worn for this MAJOR performance. In preparation for the Concert, we will be rehearsing together THAT MORNING at L-M HS. Please drop your student off at the HS Auditorium Main Entrance (circle drive) between 7:15 – 7:20 am for our 7:30 – 8:30 am rehearsal. Students will be bused to school after the rehearsal. Since this is our only chance to practice together before our concert it is very important that ALL Band students attend.

Current 5th Grade Band students are able to sign up for the Summer Band Program. They can participate in Program #2 - Private Band Lessons. Students receive a weekly, 15-minute individual lesson with a MS Band Director for 6 weeks. Program #2 will run from June 7th – July 17th. 5th Grade students can also participate in the 5th Grade Band Camp – Program 3.5. This is a Group Band experience directed by Mrs. Nuss that meets daily from 8:00 – 9:00 am Mon – Fri for 1 1/2 weeks beginning June 6th. This year all of the Summer Band Programs will be held at Oak Ridge MS. Sign up forms will be sent home with band students in late April and will be due by May 18th. If you don't see one before our May concert we will have extras available there...

Keep the kids working hard at home! Kevin Makinster and Amy Sams





Dear Parent/Guardian,

Linn-Mar Community School District is excited to inform you of a new partnership with Covenant Family Solutions (CFS). CFS will be providing school-based therapy services to Linn-Mar students. Located in Marion, CFS provides counseling and psychiatry/medication management services to adults, children, families, and couples. CFS therapists work with a variety of issues including; depression, anxiety, ADHD, trauma, substance abuse, and childhood behavioral issues, etc.

The purpose of this partnership is to increase access to important therapy services by removing several common barriers. Participating students will receive services on a Linn-Mar campus, eliminating the need to transport your child to an off-site office and reducing time spent out of the classroom. This arrangement can increase communication between school personnel and therapist, creating a more comprehensive treatment approach.

Covenant Family Solutions is able to bill most insurance companies for this service, all applicable copayments and coinsurance will apply.

If you are interested in your student receiving services, or would like more information, please contact:

Stacia Walker-Linn Grove, Novak Prevention Specialist K-5 Swalker@linnmar.k12.ia.us (319) 447-3337	Tamara Devries-Bowman Woods, Wilkins Prevention Specialist K-5 Tamara.devries@linnmar.k12.ia.us 319-447-3436	Lisa Mooney-High School Student Assistance Counselor lmooney@linnmar.k12.ia.us 319-447-3129
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