



March 8, 2022

Dear Governor Reynolds and Director Lebo,

ADMINISTRATION

- Shannon Bisgard, Superintendent
- Nathan Wear, Associate Superintendent & Chief Academic Officer
- Bob Read, Associate Superintendent & Online Learning Principal
- JT Anderson, Chief Financial Officer & Chief Operating Officer
- Karla Christian, Chief Officer of HR & Executive Director of Public Relations
- Leisa Breitfelder, Executive Director of Student Services
- Jeri Ramos, Executive Director of Technology Services
- Brittania Morey, School Board President

DISTRICT SCHOOLS

- Bowman Woods, PreK-4
Tina March, Principal
- Echo Hill, PreK-4
CJ McDonald, Principal
- Indian Creek, K-4
Kelly Kretschmar, Principal
- Linn Grove, PreK-4
Lori Manley, Principal
- Novak, JrK/K-4
Carol O'Donnell, Principal
- Westfield, K-4
Ed Rogers, Principal
- Wilkins, PreK-4
Amanda Potter, Principal
- Boulder Peak, 5-6
Dan Ludwig, Principal
- Hazel Point, 5-6
Chad Buchholz, Principal
- Excelsior, 7-8
John Christian, Principal
- Oak Ridge, 7-8
Travis Axeen, Principal
- High School, 9-12
Jeff Gustason, Principal
- Compass Alternative Center
Steve Goodall, Principal

First, we would like to thank you for acknowledging the need for intervention regarding the retention of teachers and putting through the bonuses for teachers who have worked tirelessly to meet the needs of students through unprecedented circumstances. We do, truly, appreciate this effort.

We are writing today to request the retention bonus program be extended to everyone working in education. The school counselors, teacher librarians, nurses, associates, para-educators, bus drivers, and support staff have all worked just as tirelessly to keep students focused and learning over the past two years.

Every member of PK-12 education has gone above and beyond and stepped up in ways not considered prior to the pandemic. Through teacher and sub shortages, unprecedented mental health concerns, and the stress and anxiety of each day's new unknown variables; educators have come together, supported one another, and supported students to keep things moving forward. Excluding these other educators from the retention bonus for the same work that all education staff completed tirelessly for the past two years is discriminatory and unacceptable. Each and every one of our team members deserves to be recognized equitably, regardless of their titles.

The Linn-Mar district has a saying, *We Are Linn-Mar*. This simple phrase is used to show that together we are stronger and that together we are able to accomplish great things. It has never been truer than through the pandemic. What makes Linn-Mar successful is our team; every person that works for the district is dedicated to the success of the students. We believe this is the case across Iowa, and that every person working in education should be equally recognized for their contributions in keeping students engaged and successful each day of this unprecedented pandemic.

The Linn-Mar district ESSER funds have been used to hire staff to address academic gaps and mental health needs, as well as address technology needs for families. The cost for the district to fill the gap between those who qualify under the current retention bonus program and the remainder of our staff would be approximately \$750,000; which we simply do not have in our budget or in our spending authority.

We ask you to take a second look at providing the retention bonus to all educators and use some of the State's surplus to acknowledge the need for all members of educational teams across the state.

We need to retain all members of the Linn-Mar educational team and believe that every staff member of our district deserves recognition for their contributions and their dedication to students.

Respectfully,
The Linn-Mar CSD Board of Education
Brittania Morey, School Board President
Clark Weaver, School Board Vice President
Barry Buchholz, Board Member
Sondra Nelson, Board Member
Matt Rollinger, Board Member
Melissa Walker, Board Member
Rachel Wall, Board Member