



Mrs. Ramona Tyson, Interim Superintendent

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## MEMORANDUM

To: DeKalb County School District Families

From: Ramona Tyson, Interim Superintendent

Date: March 20, 2020

Subject: COVID-19 Update

Thank you for your patience as we navigate these first-time experiences and this period of uncertainty for all Georgia school districts. Know that we do not take the opportunity and the responsibility to serve our families lightly. As we continue to collaborate with our neighboring school districts, local, state and national health partners, the Governor's Office, and the Georgia Department of Education (GADOE), we want to provide updates for you. Detailed below is the most recent information we are able to provide on the re-opening of school, graduation ceremonies, graduation requirements, testing, digital learning, facilities, and meal service plans.

**Re-opening of School:** We will continue to collaborate with and follow the guidance of the Department of Public Health (DPH), the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the DeKalb County Board of Health (DBOH) to inform our decision making in regards to the re-opening of school. The school district will remain closed until further notice. We anticipate that the District will continue digital learning and teleworking through at least March 31<sup>st</sup> given the announcement from Governor Kemp on March 16, 2020 and potentially through Spring Break (April 6-10, 2020). A final decision for a re-opening date has not been determined and will be fully communicated once decided.

**Graduation Ceremonies:** A final decision about graduation ceremonies is pending. Know that our team is being proactive and has already begun discussions about alternate plans. Again, a final decision has not been made. We will keep you updated as decisions are made.

**Graduation Requirements:** The GADOE will provide guidance soon as to local school district authority regarding required student credits for graduation.

**GA Milestone Testing:** The GADOE has cancelled Georgia Milestone testing for the 2019-2020 school year. This includes End of Grade Testing (EOG), Georgia Alternative Assessments (GAA) and End Of course Testing (EOC) for high school students. We are awaiting a final decision about waiver of 20% rule for EOC courses.

**SAT/ACT Testing:** Due to concern about people congregating in large groups due to COVID-19, the College Board and ACT have suspended all upcoming ACT and SAT testing dates indefinitely. To deal with this problem, the Chancellor of the University System of Georgia has approved a temporary adjustment to admissions criteria that allows institutions to approve students for admission if they do not have ACT or SAT scores. High School principals will be sending additional communication with more details on this matter.

**Digital Learning Days:** We will continue with our Digital Learning Days. Students, parents, and staff who need assistance may contact our Help Desk at 678-676-1188. Staff are able to help with questions about Verge and chrome book repair. Again, this service is available to students and staff. Parents are encouraged to reach out to the teacher/case manager for concerns regarding individual student support. In the event students are not able to access instructional tasks through the varied learning modes **to the greatest extent possible**, IEP and 504 teams will be prepared to convene when normal school activities resume to discuss individual student needs and next steps. We will continue to review federal and state guidance as it is updated to ensure that we continue providing the required services **to the greatest extent possible** to meet individualized needs - for students with an IEP or 504 plan. We will continue to provide additional information as it becomes available.

**Building Facilities:** The building custodians and staff within the Facilities and Operations Department have been working to ensure that all buildings are cleaned and sanitized. Cleaning supplies are being re-stocked in all facilities. Likewise, all buses have been cleaned and sanitized too. Buses used for meal delivery will be sanitized daily.

**Meal Service Plan:** We will continue to provide 'grab and go' meal service at our 21 school sites and nine DeKalb County Government Recreation Center sites. Beginning Monday, March 23, 2020, we will add bus delivery meal service to

neighborhoods and communities. Additionally, the Atlanta Community Food Bank will begin on March 23<sup>rd</sup> providing staple food items for our families on a weekly basis at the following school sites:

- Sequoyah Middle School
- Jolly Elementary
- Idlewood Elementary
- Chapel Hill Middle
- Early Learning Center at Terry Mill

Continue to check the DCSD website, <https://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/> for updates. Again, we thank you for your continued support of the DeKalb County School District.