

## MEMORANDUM

To: All APS Families

From: Dr. Lisa Herring, Superintendent

Date: February 12, 2021

Subject: Intent to Return Form, Pop-Up Meals, Surveillance Testing and Other Updates

### **Intent to Return Declaration Opens February 17 and Closes March 8**

As we look forward to the rest of the school year, we will be launching a new Intent to Return declaration period on Wednesday, February 17. With this latest Intent to Return declaration, you are choosing a learning option through the final nine-week quarter. If you don't complete the form by Monday, March 8, your student(s) will remain in their current instructional learning model. The form and details will be available on the [Declaration Form page](#) beginning February 17.

### **Seven-Day Pop-Up Meals Available to Children on Saturdays**

In addition to Wednesday meal distribution and curbside meal pickup, our APS Nutrition Department is distributing seven-day pop-up meal kits to children ages 1-18 in the city of Atlanta on Saturdays. Meal kits, which contain 7 breakfasts and 7 lunches, will be available this Saturday, February 13<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 a.m. to Noon at Hightower Station Shopping Center parking lot at 2636 Martin Luther King Dr. SW. Meal distribution will take place from an APS school bus. All meal kits will be limited to one per child.

### **Upcoming Virtual Engagement Sessions – Live on Facebook**

I want to make you aware of a couple of upcoming virtual engagement sessions that will be held live on the District's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/atlantapublicschools](https://www.facebook.com/atlantapublicschools). We look forward to connecting with you and answering your questions:

February 17<sup>th</sup>

#### 12 p.m. - Celebrate Self-Love!

Self-acceptance and self-love are some of the greater gifts we can give our children. Anchored around Valentine's Day, APS's Media Services and Social Emotional Learning departments have partnered with the authors of *MIRROR FACE*, a picture book that teaches children to love themselves independently of the opinion of others and build their inner confidence. The partnership will culminate in a special event on our Facebook page for all APS caregivers, parents, and students. It will feature remarks from Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms and APS Superintendent Dr. Lisa Herring, and it will launch the #MirrorFaceChallenge.

Thanks to this partnership, 30,000 APS students (pre-k through 5th grade) received free digital copies of the book alongside a robust social emotional learning curriculum led by school media specialists.

**6 p.m. - APS Conversations: COVID-19 and the Vaccine**

Learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine and how you can help reduce the spread of the virus. Join us live on the Atlanta Board of Education's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/apsboard](https://www.facebook.com/apsboard) or APS's Facebook page. Session panelists include:

- Dr. Lisa Herring, Superintendent of Atlanta Public Schools
- Dr. Katika D. Lovett, Assistant Superintendent of the Office of Student Services
- Dr. Carlos del Rio, Emory School of Medicine and Grady Health Center
- Dr. Jodie Guest, Rollins School of Public Health

Facilitated by Atlanta Board of Education Chairman Jason Esteves with video remarks by Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms.

**February 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6 p.m. - The High School Road to Recovery**

Please join Dr. Dan A. Sims, our Associate Superintendent of Schools and the Office of High Schools, for a discussion on high school credit accrual and the importance of acting now about the performance of your student. Based on current data, recovery will be a necessity for many students between now and graduation. This meeting will ensure you are aware of how to know where your student stands, empower you with tools to keep up with your student's progress and engage you more meaningfully all the way to graduation. Go to: [www.facebook.com/atlantapublicschools](https://www.facebook.com/atlantapublicschools).

**COVID-19 Surveillance Testing Enrollment**

As we expand our COVID-19 surveillance testing program across the District, I encourage you to sign your child/children up for testing. We just need your signed consent. Students are only required to provide consent once to participate in the weekly surveillance testing. I'm excited to share that as part of our soft launch of the initiative last week, 500 students and staff got tested at Barack and Michelle Obama Academy, Brandon, Burgess Peterson, Cleveland, Humphries, Hutchinson, M. Agnes Jones, and Sarah Smith. Our program continues to expand across the District. Learn more by reviewing our [frequently asked questions](#) and download the consent form and privacy notice on our website at [www.atlantapublicschools.us/COVID-testing](https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/COVID-testing).

**Return of Grades 6-12 on February 16 and Adherence to Safety Protocols**

We look forward to welcoming our students in Grades 6-12 who opted for in-person learning back to our buildings on Tuesday, February 16! This will complete the second phase of our Return+Learn plan. It is critical that you remind your child/children of the importance of adhering to the District's health and safety guidelines, which include screening measures and temperature assessments upon entry to our buildings, the use of masks and face shields, social distancing, and other hygiene and cleaning procedures. The district has distributed personal protective equipment for our students and employees to use when inside our buildings. Please review our mitigation strategies and protocols at [www.atlantapublicschools.us/APSprotects](https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/APSprotects).

**Thank You, Zep!**

Finally, I am always thankful for the numerous companies that partner with us in support of our students and staff. I want to share that Zep, Inc., a leading innovator of home and workplace maintenance and cleaning solutions based right here in Atlanta, is supplying hand sanitizer to all APS classrooms. Zep will also roll out in-classroom awareness and education tips to some of our schools next week, including Maynard Jackson High, Hutchinson Elementary, Long Middle, King Middle, and F.L. Stanton Elementary. Additionally, APS families who pick up CEP meal kits at Ralph J. Bunche Middle School on Wednesday, February 17 will receive free bottles of Zep hand sanitizer (as long as an adult parent or guardian is present).

As part of Zep's long-standing relationship with our district, Zep experts will help teach proper hand hygiene, which according to the Centers for Disease Control is known to reduce transmission of respiratory illnesses, like colds, in the general population by up to 21%. These schools will also be provided with back-to-school safety kits, including reusable face masks, tote bags, and a postcard highlighting best practices for hand hygiene. Thanks to everyone at Zep for helping make our Return+Learn efforts a success!

As always, thank you for your engagement and support! Please stay healthy and be well.

Yours in Service,

Dr. Lisa Herring