

MEMORANDUM

To: All APS Families

From: Dr. Lisa Herring, Superintendent

Date: November 13, 2020

Subject: Interventions Begin Next Week, Thanksgiving Giveaway, Proactive Water Testing, and More!

Thank you for working with Atlanta Public Schools (APS) this week in support of preparing our students to succeed in college, career, and life. We count on your involvement every day, especially in our virtual environment, to keep our students engaged and prepared to learn.

I want to thank you for all the emails, texts, and phone calls with well wishes and prayers for my speedy recovery from COVID-19. I truly do appreciate that many of you took the time to send encouraging words and offer support. I am feeling much better, and I look forward to a full recovery!

Here are a few updates on the District's programs and activities this week:

Honoring Our Veterans

I want to take a moment to honor our many veterans, some of whom are part of our APS family. The country celebrated Veterans Day this week on Wednesday, November 11. I want to thank our veterans for their selfless service to this great nation, their bravery, and untold sacrifices. We honor every one of you.

Feed a Billion – Thanksgiving Giveaway

APS is partnering with Feed a Billion to host a Thanksgiving giveaway for families. On a first-come, first-served basis, families can receive a food bag that includes a 10-12 pound turkey, a 10-pound bag of produce and fruit, a frozen apple pie, and a \$20 Publix gift card. The event will be held on Thursday, November 19 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. See this flyer for more details

<https://bit.ly/35oOTJW>.

Return+Learn Plan: Expanded Student Supports Begin Next Week

As a reminder, our schools will begin offering expanded interventions on Monday, November 16. Remember that the expansion of intervention services will allow for appropriate support and identification of need in preparation for the Return+Learn reopening plan. The implementation of interventions has been ongoing since the start of the school year. The effort to intensify interventions does not replace core instruction, and interventions will be scheduled around the instructional model. CARE teams will help to assess student referrals, assign appointments, and appropriate interventions.

Through in-person interventions, we will be working to address students' needs in the areas of academics, wellness, social-emotional learning, and positive behavior supports. I encourage you to learn more by [reading my latest blog post](#).

Pandemic – Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT)

Some of you may have received a P-EBT card in the mail recently. During the 2019-2020 school year, all APS schools participated in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program, therefore all APS students are eligible to receive P-EBT benefits. The P-EBT program is administered by the Georgia Department of Family Children Services (DFCS), and DFCS has issued P-EBT benefits for students who had not requested their benefit card during the initial P-EBT rollout beginning in July.

Parents are currently receiving P-EBT cards in the mail for their students for the reimbursement value for school meals missed during the spring months (March 2020 - May 2020) during the COVID-19 school shut down. According to DFCS, P-EBT benefits are non-transferable and cannot be shared with others that need assistance but were not eligible for P-EBT. DFCS also shared that families not interested in receiving P-EBT should destroy the P-EBT card. Please contact DFCS directly at 404-657-3433 if you have any questions.

Sanitizing and Cleaning our Buildings – Legionella Pneumophila Testing

Recently, our Facilities team began proactively conducting random water tests around the District for Legionella pneumophila, the bacteria that causes Legionnaires disease. Water was tested in a sample of our buildings since they have been unoccupied or under-occupied due to COVID-19 for several months and to test the effectiveness of our weekly water flushing program.

Legionella pneumophila can grow in stagnant or standing water or in water systems that are not consistently used. Of the 27 facilities tested, eight (Archer HS/Westside Charter, Brown, Crim/Phoenix Academy, Fickett, F.L. Stanton, Garden Hills, Heritage Academy, and Scott) have at least one water source that came back positive. Out of an abundance of caution and so that our Facilities team can disinfect, and retest water systems, we closed four school buildings today (Brown, Crim/Phoenix, Fickett, and F.L. Stanton) and will await updated test results. The other four school buildings are safe to occupy. Our Facilities team will continue proactive testing of water sources in all schools and buildings throughout the district.

Family Engagement Conference Begins Monday

Here's a reminder that our Office of Family Engagement will host its second annual Parent and Family Engagement Conference from November 16 through November 19 with the theme of "Together We Are One Family." During the week, APS will host sessions for grandparents and parents of special needs and young children, programs addressing grief and mindfulness, and even a virtual Family Game Night! Please visit the Office of Family Engagement website for details and a full list of session topics at www.atlantapublicschools.us/familyengagement.

Waiver of Community Service for Class of 2021

Due to the impact of COVID-19 in our community, our students will have limited opportunities for community involvement. As a result, the District will waive the 75 hours community service graduation requirement for the Class of 2021. If students have already met the 75 hours community service requirement, or if students find online community service opportunities they should submit that information to their school counselor.

I appreciate your engagement this week and ask for your continued support in our effort to help every student succeed. We enjoy hearing from you, and I encourage you to stay connected with us. Stay healthy and safe, have a great weekend, and please be well.

Yours in Service,

Dr. Lisa Herring