

MEMORANDUM

To: All APS Employees

From: Dr. Lisa Herring, Superintendent

Date: September 4, 2020

Subject: Employee Well-being, Health Data Checkpoint, GO Team Elections, and Other Updates

Dear Colleagues:

Happy Friday, team! We're at the end of another great week in APS, and I want to thank you for all your hard work. Launching a successful start to our 2020-2021 school year was no easy feat, and I want you to know that I see you and I appreciate you! I want to acknowledge the stress we've all felt working up to and through these first two weeks of school. The anxiety is real, but our students are worth it!

Please remember to take care of yourself and to use this time over the Labor Day weekend to rest, relax, and recharge. Labor Day, the first Monday in September, is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of all American workers. It's our national tribute to workers and their contributions to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of our country. With regard to that, I want to shine a spotlight on everything our APS workers are doing to make this school system strong, dynamic, and effective in educating our precious student scholars. I sincerely thank you for all that you do.

Resources for Employee Well-being

I also want to encourage you to take advantage of our employee resources if ever you feel stressed and in need of support. We are fortunate to work for an organization that cares about employees and provides many resources that are free to employees or financially subsidized by the District. Deer Oaks is our EAP provider offering three free counseling sessions along with financial, legal, and other support services to all employees. Deer Oaks can be reached by calling 1-888-993-7650. You can also visit their website at www.deeroakseap.com (the username and password are both aps in lowercase).

Telemedicine/teletherapy are great health benefits that are available to APS employees who participate in the State Health Benefit Plan through Anthem Blue Cross & Blue Shield, Kaiser Permanente, or United Healthcare. One-on-one, confidential sessions with a therapist will help you explore and understand your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and how you can take proactive steps to feel better. Group therapy is also available. You will be able to see and/or talk to a participating provider from your mobile device, tablet, or computer with a webcam while at home, work, or on the go. For Telemedicine/virtual visits, please contact your healthcare provider listed below:

- Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield: www.anthem.com/shbp or 855.641.4862
- Kaiser www.my.kp.org/shbp or 404.365.0966
- United Healthcare www.welcometouhc.com/shbp or 888.364.6352

In addition, our partners at Whitefoord Health Clinics are open for routine and urgent health needs (located near Toomer Elementary). They have a dedicated team of highly qualified licensed clinical staff members providing behavioral and mental health services. Information is available on their website at <https://www.whitefoord.org/healthcare-programs>.

Public Health Data Checkpoint

As a reminder, our first health data checkpoint for our current instructional model is Tuesday, September 8th during our Board of Education meeting beginning at 2:30 p.m. I encourage you to watch that meeting live or on-demand on the Board's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/apsboard>. During the meeting, we will review the current health data trends as it relates to the spread of COVID-19 and discuss how this could impact our decision to continue a virtual instructional model, move to an in-person model, or to a hybrid of both.

COVID-19 Testing Sites and other Health Updates

The District has updated the guidance for employees returning to work from quarantine to reflect the latest updates from the Georgia Department of Health. Those updates and more can be found in the latest version of the [Human Resources Frequently Asked Questions document](#).

Additionally, for employees looking for assistance finding COVID-19 testing sites, there are a number of sites available in our area.

- Fulton County Board of Health provides a list of testing locations on their [website](#). You may contact the Fulton County Board of Health Hotline (404) 613-8150 and schedule an appointment. The call center is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and on Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- You may also access the following website for a list of the Department of Public Health COVID-testing sites by Health District: <https://dph.georgia.gov/covidtesting>.
- Whitefoord Health clinics have established a hotline number, (470) 427-2634 ext. 123, to assist patients and members of the community with respiratory symptoms, and testing for COVID-19 and flu. Information is also available on their website at <https://www.whitefoord.org/covid19>.

Student Login Rates

I'm pleased to share that despite the nationwide Zoom outage on Day One, APS achieved a district-wide student login rate of 90.2% during the first week of school! This represents a significant increase of 21.6% over our average login rate last spring (average was 68.6% during the period March 2020 to May 2020). Our average daily participation was also about 79.5%, meaning that four out of every five students logged in every day last week.

Here are a few key highlights:

- All schools (with the exception of Forrest Hills) exceeded 70% login rates by their students.
- All grade levels 1 to 12 exceeded 80% login rates.

- All grade levels 3 to 12 exceeded 90% login rates.
- Except for the first day of school (when we had the nationwide ‘Zoom outage’) our daily student login rate hovered around 80% (79.5% average).

The data may not accurately reflect the participation rates by Pre-K and K grade levels, due to the various ways in which these students log in to attend their virtual classrooms. The data sources for this information include several instructional and technology tools and platforms designed to track student login and activity. These platforms include Active Directory, Google Classroom, Google Drive, Google Console, Cylance, MyBackpack, Seesaw (*Toomer & Garden Hills only*), and Securly. Please continue to encourage our students to remain connected and engaged in virtual learning.

GO Team Elections Begin September 8

Strong schools start with you, and the success of our schools starts with every member of our community doing what’s best for students every day. I encourage you to get involved in our GO Team elections. Voting runs from Tuesday, September 8th, through Sunday, September 20th. We had planned to hold these elections last Spring but had to delay them until now because of the pandemic.

GO Teams are nine-member governance teams comprised of parents, teachers, and members of our community at every school that work collaboratively with the school principal on school improvement efforts, a strategic plan, and the school’s budget.

APS has 66 schools with two parent/guardian and two instructional staff seats up for election at each school. For this election, 356 candidates have qualified for those seats – 194 parents/guardians and 162 instructional staff. Candidate profiles and additional information are available at www.apsstrongschools.com. If you need assistance or have questions, please e-mail goteam@apsk12.org or call 404-802-2885. For assistance in Spanish, call 404-802-7580.

Census 2020

If you haven’t completed your 2020 census, there’s still time, but all counting efforts end on September 30! You can shape the future for yourself, your family, and your community for the next 10 years by [clicking here to respond to the Census](#). Data collected in the 2020 Census will inform the distribution of more than \$675 billion in federal funds for more than 100 programs, including school lunches and education, to states and communities each year. If you have any questions, contact the Atlanta Regional Census Center at 470-889-6800.

Thank you again for your commitment to our students and the mission of APS. Have a great Labor Day holiday and be well.

Yours in service,

Dr. Lisa Herring