

## MEMORANDUM

To: All APS Employees

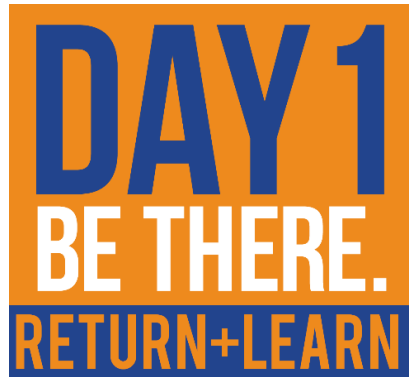
From: Dr. Lisa Herring, Superintendent

Date: July 24, 2020

Subject: Staff Town Hall Meetings, Hero Pay, Telework and Other Updates

Dear Colleagues:

### Day One 2020 Return + Learn



We are pressing forward toward our virtual reopening, Day One 2020 Return + Learn on August 24. The Day One Runway period in the weeks leading up to August 24 will be an important time for us as APS employees as we get prepared and help our students and families get ready for a strong start on Day One.

I encourage you to [view the presentation](#) we shared with the Atlanta Board of Education at its July 13th meeting, regarding our recommendation to reopen virtually. You can also watch that meeting on the [Board's Facebook page](#).

While reopening virtually is a decision that rests with the administration, the Board must vote on the school calendar change (moving Day One from August 10 to August 24, reducing the number of instructional days to 170 for the school year). That vote is expected at the Board's August 3 meeting.

In the weeks leading up to Day One, will be working together to complete such tasks as:

- Instructional planning and staff professional development
- Distributing or refreshing technology devices for virtual learning
- Distributing instructional materials and personal protective equipment to students and staff
- Ensuring we have current contact information for our students and families
- Addressing the social and emotional well-being of our students and staff
- Providing windows of time for in-person, small-group engagement between teachers and students in preparation for online learning, and
- Assessing the academic readiness of students through the use of diagnostic assessments, and conducting wellness and social/emotional check-ins with students.

### **Virtual Town Hall Meetings for Staff on July 29 and August 4 on Workplace**

Please join us for our virtual town hall meetings just for staff on Wednesday, July 29, and Tuesday, August 4 at 12 p.m. on Workplace (<https://aps.workplace.com/>). The focus of these meetings is the district's reopening plan. I, along with other district leaders, will engage with you in open dialogue and share the latest information as we all work collaboratively toward a successful reopening. We look forward to your questions and comments.

You are also invited to join our virtual town hall meetings for APS parents and the community which will be held on Wednesday, July 29 at 6 p.m. and Tuesday, August 4 at 6 p.m. on the district's [Facebook page](#) (@AtlantaPublicSchools). Spread the word and see you there!

### **Communicating with Families and Staff about our Instructional Model**

It's important to me that APS families and staff are provided with consistent and timely updates on our ongoing review of public health data and whether our instructional model will change.

We continue to monitor the public health data daily on the spread of COVID-19 in our community. Our decisions throughout the school year about whether to remain virtual or move to a hybrid or to a traditional face to face instructional model will rely heavily on that health data.

Here is a schedule of when you can expect to hear from us regarding any changes to our instructional model:

| <b>Instructional Period</b>                                     | <b>Communications to Families and Staff</b> |
|---|---|
| Phase 1: 1st Nine-Week Period<br>August 24 - October 23, 2020   | September 8, 2020<br>October 5, 2020        |
| Phase 2: 2nd Nine-Week Period<br>October 26 - December 18, 2020 | November 2, 2020<br>December 7, 2020        |
| Phase 3: 3rd Nine-Week Period<br>January 4 - March 12, 2021     | January 4, 2021<br>February 1, 2021         |
| Phase 4: 4th Nine-Week Period<br>March 15 - May 26, 2021        | March 1, 2021                               |

### **Return to Work and Hero Pay**

As we all prepare for Day One, we know that accessing our schools and buildings is important. APS has worked diligently to assess health conditions, listen to employees, and research safety protocols. With many months to plan, the District has purchased additional protective equipment, implemented social distancing and sanitization procedures, and posted signage throughout work sites.

Employees who have been designated for remote work will be able to come to buildings to work in person with their supervisor's approval. Some employees will be required to report to work in person due to the nature of their job duties. All employees are expected to follow social

distancing guidelines and wear their assigned personal protective equipment at all times. Staff safety remains a top priority and we are in a much better place of preparedness than we were when we first closed in March.

Starting August 3, we are confident that we will be able to welcome employees to our schools and district offices in a safe way. Therefore, the District will also be ending Hero Pay on Friday, July 31, 2020, as we welcome staff back for the new school year.

### **Process to Request Telework Status**

As we prepare for what is a completely new way of starting the new school year, the District has reviewed the job duties and role of each position as it relates to tasks of preparing for the first day of school. Some positions have been designated to report to work in person one or more days per week on or before Monday, August 3 based upon the nature of the work performed and equipment required to do the job. These employees will be notified of their status by Friday, July 31. We are also supportive of and sensitive to personal life situations.

If you are designated to report to work, but are unable to do so for a COVID-related reason, you will not be penalized, and your job will remain in place with the District. You should notify your supervisor if you are unable to report in person at your assigned work site for any reason. The duties of some positions are eligible for a telework arrangement according to administrative regulation EBB-R2, depending on the reason for requesting telework.

Alternatively, employees may also be eligible for emergency paid leave through the Families First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA), use of sick or personal leave, and/or paid leave days from the District's time share sick leave bank. Some employees may be eligible for a workplace accommodation according to the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). Please contact [leaverequests@atlanta.k12.ga.us](mailto:leaverequests@atlanta.k12.ga.us) if you have any questions about paid leave options.

### **Celebrating the Lives and Impact of John Lewis and Rev. C.T. Vivian**

As you are aware, Congressman and civil rights icon John Lewis and civil rights leader Rev. C.T. Vivian both passed away on Friday, July 17, 2020. Private memorial services in honor of Rev. Vivian were held yesterday, and the family of Congressman Lewis has announced a series of upcoming ceremonies to celebrate his life in Alabama, Atlanta, and Washington, D. C.

Both men will be sorely missed. But what I know to be true is that their impact shines brightly and burns fiercely in the hearts and lives of all of us. We must continue to carry the torch of freedom, justice, and equality they both held and use it to illuminate those dark places they fought tirelessly to eradicate from our society.

I invite you to [read my full blog post](#) honoring these leaders and their legacy and the impact they both had on APS, this country, and indeed the world.

Thank you for your hard work and excitement about the school year ahead. We will continue to keep you updated on an ongoing basis as we get ready for Day One. Have a great weekend!

Yours in service,

Lisa