

## MEMORANDUM

To: All APS Employees

From: Dr. Lisa Herring, Superintendent

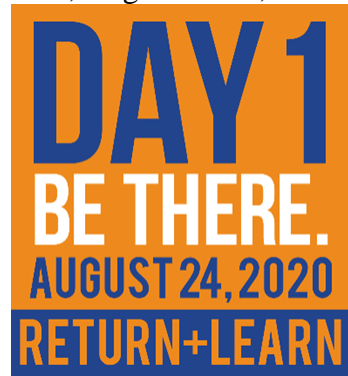
Date: August 17, 2020

Subject: Return to Work Guidance, Customer Service, and Other Updates

Dear Colleagues:

### Day One 2020 Return + Learn

Happy Monday, everyone! It's Runway Week and the countdown is on to Day One! During this time, August 17-21, we are paying close attention to student wellness and preparation and to staff professional development to prepare everyone for virtual teaching and learning.



Most of our activities across the District will be virtual this week, but some may be in person and in small groups for parents to pick up needed supplies and materials from their schools.

In this week's staff memo, I have included information on this week's Digital Bash, customer service, our return to work requirements, and employee assistance.

### Digital Bash

Don't forget to join us on [Facebook Live](https://www.facebook.com/AtlantaPublicSchools) (<https://www.facebook.com/AtlantaPublicSchools>) this evening at 6 p.m. for the kick-off of our Digital Bash! I'll be joined by a few special guests, and we will showcase video messages from our friends and partners from around the city who are helping us celebrate Back to School! We will also answer questions from parents.

In addition, pop-up bash experiences will take place at schools throughout this week, where students will visit their campus for important information and resources to start the school year. The Digital Bash celebration is happening all week long. Get all the details on our Bash page here: <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/63407>. Backpacks were also delivered to schools this week for students who registered for them. If you have additional students who need them, please contact the Office of Partnerships and Development at 404-802-2812.

## **High-Quality Customer Service**

High-quality customer service is important now more than ever in this season where most of our interaction with the public is virtual. Even in a mostly virtual environment, our goal is to provide a high level of service to our students and families. For Central Office staff, now that we're back for the new school year and because we are all working in-person and/or are teleworking, it is important that all out-of-office messages are removed from your email and voicemail unless you are truly out of office. Calls and emails should be returned within 24 to 48 hours, and remember to be kind and patient with everyone.

Our ability to continue to provide remote work options depends on all employees being responsive to internal and external inquiries via phone, email, and Let's Talk. Central Office departments and schools should ensure someone is answering the main phone line during business hours. At least one administrator and a second employee should work in person at schools each day and Central Office departments should be appropriately staffed as well. The office area (phone/door buzzer) should have one or more staff present during the school's normal office hours.

District office buildings are following the same guidelines as schools and are using staggered schedules. Appropriate scheduling and social distancing measures must be followed and no more than fifty percent of the entire staff should work in person at one time.

Professionalism matters! Please follow the appropriate dress code and be on time for virtual meetings and virtual classes. Let's maintain a high bar for excellence in customer service and professionalism all year long.

## **Employee Return to Work Procedures**

The [procedures for employees](#) returning to work from a variety of COVID-19 related situations have been updated to match recently revised guidance from the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH). Please review these procedures in their entirety by [clicking here](#).

Where attendance at the physical work site is necessary, employees who have confirmed COVID-19 via testing, diagnosed COVID-19 without testing, suspected COVID-19 due to symptoms displayed on the job, or exposure to someone with a confirmed or diagnosed case of COVID-19 must follow the [reentry requirements](#) based on their circumstances. If obtaining any of the required testing is difficult, APS' health services department, [Valencia.Hildreth@atlanta.k12.ga.us](mailto:Valencia.Hildreth@atlanta.k12.ga.us), can provide guidance to employees on how to proceed.

For the purposes of this staff memo, I have provided a summary of two of the return to work requirements. [Please click here to review all return to work requirements in their entirety](#) and contact your supervisor should you have any questions:

- For employees with confirmed a COVID-19 diagnosis, the employee may return to telework status if available and whenever he/she feels recovered enough to work. The employee may return to the physical worksite:
  - Who had [mild or moderate illness](#)\* and are not severely immunocompromised† can return to work after:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, AND;
  - At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, AND
  - Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved, AND
  - The employee has received written confirmation of a negative COVID-19 test.
- Who had [severe to critical illness](#) (if they were hospitalized for shortness of breath, pneumonia, low oxygen levels, respiratory failure, septic shock, and/or multiple organ failure) \* or who are severely immunocompromised† can return to work after:
    - At least 20 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, AND
    - At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, AND
    - Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved, AND
    - The employee has received written confirmation of a negative COVID-19 test.

These requirements are subject to change as new guidance and research are developed. [Click here](#) to review all of the return to work requirements. You can also check for updates on the district's [health alerts page](#).

### **Employee Assistance**

If you are designated to report to work but are unable to due to a COVID-related reason (like being recommended by a doctor to stay home or child care is closed), you will not be penalized, and your job will remain in place with the District. You should notify your supervisor immediately. The duties of some positions are eligible for a telework arrangement according to administrative regulation EBB-R2, depending on the type of job duties performed and 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 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 Disabilities Act (ADA). Please contact [leaverequests@atlanta.k12.ga.us](mailto:leaverequests@atlanta.k12.ga.us) if you have any questions about paid leave or telework options.

Have a great Runway Week! As always, be safe and stay well!

Yours in service,

Dr. Lisa Herring