

August 4, 2020

Dear Brilliant Benteen Families,

I hope this letter finds you doing well, staying safe, and adjusting to our new reality. I miss you all greatly and I can't wait until we see each other again.

As you have probably heard by now Dr. Lisa Herring, our new superintendent, submitted a plan for reopening school for the 2020 – 2021 school year. The board had their first read of the plan and for the calendar adjustment. Dr. Herring proposed to open the school year virtually and to move the start date back until August 24, 2020. The board voted on the calendar adjustment at their August 3rd meeting. I want to provide some clarity around how this fall semester's virtual experience will differ from our spring semester experience. I have provided a bulleted list to help provide clarity around some specifics.

Benteen Virtual School

- Teachers will still report to work, primarily virtually, on August 3rd to prepare for our virtual launch.
- Between August 3rd – August 21st
 - There will be a number of opportunities for teachers to reach out to new families and their new students for the 2020-2021 school year
 - Face to Face registration opportunities for new students and families
 - Determine electronic needs for instruction
 - Virtual Open House/drive thru meet and greet opportunities
 - Conduct some preliminary diagnostic assessments to determine the best place to start instruction on August 24th
 - More information is forthcoming.
- Classes start August 24th
 - Proposed decrease in the number of instructional days from 180 to 170 days.
 - Virtual instruction will occur 5 days/week with daily maximums by grade band. A master schedule is forthcoming. The virtual instructional model will last at least for the first 9 weeks/end of the 1st quarter (mid to late October). A decision for the remainder of the semester will be made by the district as the first quarter progresses based on health data.
 - There will be SEL lessons for all students and access to the counselor for students who may need some additional support.
 - The district and DLI principals are working to ensure continuity of the DLI experience for our DLI families. More information and a FAQ document are forthcoming.
 - Enrichment classes (Art, Music, Spanish, PE, & Media) will be a part of the virtual experience in the fall.

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- Students who receive ESOL, SWD, Gifted, or EIP services will receive their services/supports virtually.
- There will be streamlined resources/fewer logins.
 - Zoom will be the live instructional delivery platform.
 - Google Classroom will be the platform for posting assignments and receiving information for zoom.
 - The school purchased iReady for Reading and Math assessments.
 - The school and the district will host parent workshops to help parents learn how to navigate the various platforms.
 - The district will provide access to Freckle and a few other digital resources.
- APS will begin providing student meals starting Monday, August 10th. More information coming soon via the district website.
- Anyone entering the building for any reason must wear a mask or PPE. Upon our return/whenever we return back to the building, the district will provide PPE for students and staff.

Atlanta Virtual Academy Jr.

- Families can also choose to enroll their students in Atlanta Virtual Academy Jr (AVA Jr). AVA has been around for several years, but primarily for secondary students.
- Students enrolled in AVA are not taught by Benteen teachers but by AVA Jr. teachers.

As I learn more, I will update you. Thank you for willingness and patience as you assumed the role of parent/teacher during the spring semester virtual experience. We ARE Benteen and I miss you all and love you all so much! Please don't hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns at ajlovet@atlanta.k12.ga.us.

Sincerely,

Dr. Andrew Lovett