

## MEMORANDUM

To: All APS Families

From: Dr. Meria Joel Carstarphen, Superintendent

Date: March 31, 2020

Subject: Important COVID-19 Updates for APS Families

Thank you for hanging in there with us over these past two weeks. As you know, given Governor Kemp's recent executive order, Atlanta Public Schools (APS) will remain closed through Friday, April 24. This week begins our third full week of teleschooling and teleworking, and I have to give a huge shout out to the thousands of you — parents, students, and staff — who joined us on Facebook Live this past Thursday for our virtual District Town Hall. It was so refreshing to connect and engage with all of you in this age of social distancing, quarantines, and isolation.

Our Town Hall video has now been viewed over 14,500 times (and counting!), and it's still available on our Facebook page (@AtlantaPublicSchools) in case you missed it. I answered a number of your questions in real time during the Town Hall, and we've compiled those questions and answers into an FAQ which is now available at [www.atlantapublicschools.us/coronavirus](http://www.atlantapublicschools.us/coronavirus).

### **COVID-19 Update**

As I shared with you in my memo on [March 27](#), we now have three confirmed cases of COVID-19 in APS. However, because APS has been closed for two weeks, the three employees' contact with others in APS was minimal. According to the Fulton County Board of Health (BOH), COVID-19 has now reached widespread community transmission in Georgia, meaning individuals are susceptible to the same level of exposure anywhere in the community at any time. It is imperative that you continue to practice the preventative measures provided by health officials to stop the spread of COVID-19. That information and other resources are available on our [coronavirus webpage](#).

### **Upcoming Changes in Food Distribution Schedule for Our Students and Families**

Over the past two weeks, the district prepared and distributed over 160,000 meals for breakfast and lunch to our families. We also provided thousands of bags of shelf-stable groceries and produce to families at 10 APS school sites around the District (please check the website for those sites <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/62032>) and on 622 middle school bus routes in these clusters: Carver, Douglass, Jackson, Mays, South Atlanta, Therrell, and Washington (with additional supports from ride share type services that provide thousands of meals to our families in the Grady and North Atlanta cluster in high need areas).

I especially want to thank all of our community partners who have made our food distribution to families possible by also extending our capacity to address more of the unique needs of our

families. We couldn't do any of this without the generous support and volunteer help from other APS staff members, [Atlanta Community Food Bank](#), [Goodr](#), [Hands on Atlanta](#), [Zifty](#), and [Uber](#).

Because APS will be closed for Spring Break, April 6-10, there will be no food distribution for our families during that time. However, we have arranged for families to pick up a weekly supply of shelf-stable groceries this Saturday, April 4 from 9 a.m. to Noon, while supplies last, at our five anchor sites. Come prepared to transport around four bags of heavy food items:

- Bunche Middle School - 1925 Niskey Lake Rd., SW, Atlanta, GA 30331
- Cleveland Avenue Elementary School - 2672 Old Hapeville Rd., SW, Atlanta, GA 30315
- Douglass High School - 225 Hamilton E Holmes Dr., NW, Atlanta, GA 30318
- Phoenix Academy (formerly Alonzo Crim High School) - 256 Clifton St., SE, Atlanta, GA 30317
- Sylvan Hills Middle School - 1461 Sylvan Rd., SW, Atlanta, GA 30310

After Spring Break, beginning Monday, April 13, we will be streamlining our meal distribution from providing meals five days a week to providing meals one day a week each Monday from 10 a.m. to Noon via drive thru, but it will still provide the same amount of food as the daily service did. Remember that at any of these sites, you can pull up for drive-thru service or you can walk up for service. We will offer a two-part food distribution service:

- First, students will be provided with five-day meal bags, containing five breakfast meals and five lunch meals each Monday. Those meals will be available at our 10 school sites via drive thru and walk up. In addition, those five-day breakfast and lunch meals will be delivered through our bus delivery service on only the Monday using the same route schedule (please check the website <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/62031> for exact times).
- Second, a bag of weekly groceries will also be available to families at our five anchor sites (Bunche Middle School, Cleveland Avenue Elementary School, Douglass High School, Phoenix Academy, and Sylvan Hills Middle School).

Finally, if you would like to volunteer at any of our food distribution sites, [please click here to use our sign up genius](#).

### **Sustained Distance Learning**

The start of this third week of teleschooling marks what we are calling the start of Sustained Distance Learning. During our Virtual Town Hall last week, a number of parents had questions about the volume of student assignments being given and the amount of time it was taking students to complete those assignments. We have developed the following guidelines for schools, and it's important that I share this information with parents as well:

<b>Grade Band</b>	<b>Guidance for Interactive Virtual Instruction</b>	<b>Recommendations for Independent Practice/Assignments</b>
K-5	Not to exceed 3 hours daily	Not to exceed 40 minutes daily
6-8	Not to exceed 4 hours daily	Not to exceed 60 minutes daily

9-12	Not to exceed 5 hours daily*	Not to exceed 90 minutes daily
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*\*Due to course requirements and required student support, daily interactive virtual instruction may reach five hours*

As a reminder, our goal in this virtual learning environment is not to duplicate the classroom, but to provide engaging, appropriate home-learning activities for our students.

Thank you for staying engaged with APS. We are doing the best we can in this new teleworking and teleschooling environment, and I truly do appreciate your patience. Reach out to us through *Let's Talk* on our website at <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us>, and, as always, please stay healthy and safe!

Air hugs to you all!

Meria