

## MEMORANDUM

To: All APS Families

From: Dr. Meria Joel Carstarphen, Superintendent

Date: March 16, 2020

Subject: Important Updates on APS' Response to COVID-19

Today marks the first day of teleschooling and teleworking for Atlanta Public Schools (APS) during our closure to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We anticipate that the District will remain closed for teleschooling and teleworking through at least March 31 — given the announcement today from Governor Kemp — and potentially through Spring Break (April 6 – 10) and beyond. Our teachers and school administrators worked collaboratively to ensure that we supplied our students with the virtual learning materials they will need during our closure. Teachers will continue to monitor those assignments and add to them as needed.

This memo provides a number of important updates regarding COVID-19 and our approach to supporting our children and families during the closure.

### **COVID-19 Update**

To date, there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in APS. The District's COVID-19 Task Force remains in daily contact with local, state, and federal health officials, receiving the latest updates on the spread of COVID-19. We continue to follow the guidance from health officials to ensure that APS is doing its part to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by enacting a districtwide closure for teleschooling and teleworking. As of today, there are 27 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Fulton County and 121 confirmed cases in Georgia with one confirmed death.

It is important that you continue to practice preventative measures everyday as provided by health officials:

- Practice social distancing.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

## **Social Distancing**

Additional preventative measures recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) include social distancing. The CDC describes social distancing as remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others when possible. The CDC currently recommends that organizers (whether groups or individuals) cancel or postpone in-person events that consist of 50 people or more throughout the United States. Congregate settings include crowded public places where close contact with others may occur, such as shopping centers, movie theaters, and stadiums.

## **More Food Distribution Sites and Busing of Food for Children 18 Years Old or Younger**

To receive food at our distribution sites, we encourage families to pull up with their children in a drive-thru style for service. If at all possible, try not to get out of the car. However, walk-ups are welcome. Remember, our meals are only available to children 18 years old or younger, and children must be present to receive the meal and be counted for required state and federal recordkeeping.

We began providing emergency student meals today at five APS anchor sites for children 18 years of age or younger. At the anchor sites, we are offering three food service supports:

1. breakfast and lunch grab-and-go bags
2. Fresh produce provide by local nonprofit Goodr
3. Shelf-stable foods provided by the Atlanta Community Food Bank (i.e. nonperishables)

Food distribution is from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Monday through Friday at these five anchor sites:

- 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

Further, APS has received approval to open more sites for distribution of emergency student meals and to run some food routes using our buses. I'm excited to share that beginning Wednesday, March 18, the District will open the following five additional food distribution sites that will provide service from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Monday through Friday:

- Booker T. Washington High School - 45 Whitehouse Dr. SW, Atlanta, GA 30314
- Hope-Hill Elementary School - 112 Boulevard NE, Atlanta, GA 30312
- King Middle School - 545 Hill St SE, Atlanta, GA 30312
- Thomasville Heights Elementary School - 1820 Henry Thomas Dr. SE, Atlanta, GA 30315
- Young Middle School - 3116 Benjamin E Mays Dr. SW, Atlanta, GA 30311

In addition to more sites, we will begin food distribution on all middle school bus routes on Wednesday, March 18, in the following clusters: Therrell, South Atlanta, Washington, Jackson,

Mays, Douglass and Carver Cluster. Our bus schedule is still being finalized and will be posted on our website on Tuesday, March 16 at [www.atlantapublicschools.us/coronavirus](http://www.atlantapublicschools.us/coronavirus). At the end of each bus route and site distribution, our non-profit partners will take any extra food and deliver it to our communities. As a reminder, we can serve tens of thousands of meals each day. We just need you to come and get it at a school site or a bus stop.

Thanks to our partner, the Atlanta Community Food Bank, beginning March 23, all children and their families throughout the community can also receive shelf-stable groceries at the five APS anchor sites: Bunche Middle School, Cleveland Avenue Elementary School, Douglass High School, Phoenix Academy (formerly Alonzo Crim High School) and Sylvan Hills Middle School.

In addition, the Atlanta Community Food Bank has more than 50 sites for food distribution. (As a reminder, APS does not manage the hours or service at these food distribution sites. Contact the food distribution sites directly for information about their hours, service, and any other requirements for food). [Click here to see the full list](#) of food distribution sites through the Atlanta Community Food Bank. We will continue to assess our food distribution strategy over the coming days, including participation and capacity to determine the most effective strategy moving forward.

### **Whitefoord Health Clinics to Remain Open during District Closure**

Whitefoord health clinics will remain open to serve the community with medical, dental, and behavioral health services during the District's closure. Below is the Whitefoord Clinic Schedule for the Week of March 16 through March 20, 2020:

- Whitefoord Clinic at Whitefoord Early Learning Academy  
35 Whitefoord Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30317. Open Monday-Thursday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., closed 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. each day. Also closed on Wednesday from 1:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Extended hours until 6:30 p.m. on Monday. Open Friday 8:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Services: Medical, behavioral health, and dental. Use the entrance at the corner of Whitefoord and George Brumley Way.
- Whitefoord Clinic at King Middle School  
545 Hill Street, Atlanta, GA, 30312. Open Monday 10 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.; closed from 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Open Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.; closed from 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Open Wednesday 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Services: Medical and behavioral health. Use the entrance in the school parking lot.
- Whitefoord Family Medical Center  
30 Warren Street, Atlanta, GA 30317. Open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.; closed from 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Extended hours until 6:30 p.m. on Thursday. Closed Wednesday 12:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Services: Medical and behavioral health
- Whitefoord Appointment Line: 404-373-6614
- Website: <https://www.whitefoord.org/healthcare-programs>

- Whitefoord is a Federally Qualified Community Health Center that serves all patients, and offers a sliding fee scale. We accept self-pay patients and most major insurances, including Medicaid.

### **Free Wifi and Hot Spots through Comcast and Xfinity**

- Comcast has announced that beginning today, March 16, they will offer 60 days of free internet through their Internet Essentials service to help low-income students and families get and stay connected to the internet during the impacts of COVID-19. Low-income families who live in a Comcast service area can sign up as new customers to receive 60 days of free Internet. According to Comcast, to qualify, applicants must be eligible for public-assistance programs such as the National School Lunch Program, Housing Assistance, Medicaid, SNAP, or SSI. Visit [www.internetessentials.com](http://www.internetessentials.com) to enroll or call (855) 846-8376 for English or 855-765-6995 for Spanish. In addition, Xfinity Wifi hotspots across the country are available to anyone who needs them for free, including non-Xfinity internet subscribers. [Click here to learn more.](#)

### **Digital Learning in APS**

- To provide more tools and resources to our students and families on digital learning in APS, we have created a webpage with a video tutorial, explaining how to access and use myBackpack. [Click here to watch that tutorial.](#) Remember that all assignments for Distance Learning Days can be accessed by logging into your Google Classroom or Microsoft Teams, located in myBackpack. Parents, if you have any questions about distance learning for your students, please contact your child's teacher.

### **Daily Routine for Students**

- Please remember that it is important to establish a daily routine in your household for students. That routine could be as simple as waking up your children at a certain time each morning or identifying a designated spot for reading and schoolwork.

Thank you for your support and cooperation in helping to keep our students and schools healthy and safe. If you have APS-related questions or comments, please contact us through our *Let's Talk* portal available on our website at <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us>. For more information about the District's response to COVID-19, visit <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/coronavirus>.