

MEMORANDUM

To: All APS Staff

From: Dr. Lisa Herring, Superintendent

Date: April 23, 2021

Subject: Social Justice Conversations, Compensation Updates, Vaccination Raffle Results, End-of-Year Reminders, Howard Middle School Award, and Other Updates

As I wrote in [my message to the APS family and on my blog](#) earlier this week, following the verdict in the Derek Chauvin trial, we must continue to create spaces for conversation and peaceful protest about social justice matters facing our nation. Thanks to the work of Tauheedah F. Baker Jones, our Chief Equity and Social Justice Officer, and members of both her team and our Social Emotional Learning team, we have compiled [a bank of resources](#) to help with the discussion. We must recognize that social justice can take on different meanings for different segments of our communities and strive to find agreement among disagreement.

Compensation Updates

As a reminder, we are proud to be able to extend the state's retention bonus beyond their list of eligible employees so that all full-time staff will receive \$1,000 and all part-time (hourly) staff and permanent substitutes will receive \$500 next week on April 30th. This is just one of many ways that the district shows appreciation for staff and supports their physical, emotional, and financial well-being. Another way is the 2% increase to the pay scales that was effective April 16th and will start being included in paychecks on May 15th (or May 28th for some staff). Full-time employees will receive notification of their pay change from the compensation department in the coming weeks. For more information, refer to [these FAQs](#) that I sent out last week.

But we don't plan to stop there... The proposed budget for next fiscal year, which starts July 1, 2021, contains tentative pay increases to recognize and reward our hardworking staff, including but not limited to:

- Step raises for all eligible employees on a pay grade/step (ranges from 1% to 1.7%),
- \$15 minimum wage increase for all hourly employees,
- Daily rate increase for substitute employees,
- Additional market increases for the teacher pay scale, resulting in 2% to 9% pay raises, depending on years of experience,
- Increase the number of steps on the instructional support payscale from 24 to 28 and the doctorate degree stipend from \$2,000 to \$4,000,
- \$3,000 retention stipends for special education teachers,
- \$500 - \$2,000 retention stipends for all staff in high poverty schools (with >65% direct certification),
- Converting some hourly special education paraprofessionals to full time with benefits, and

- Market adjustments for specific employee groups, including the police department, graduation coaches, HVAC technicians, and coaches of new sports.

It is our hope that the financial outlook stays strong over the next few months and we are able to provide these pay adjustments next year. The Board will consider the budget for tentative adoption at their monthly meeting on May 3, 2021, and for final adoption on June 7, 2021. More information regarding details of the compensation recommendations for next year is posted on the [Board's Budget Commission's website](https://atlanta.k12.ga.us/board/budget-commission). For questions, please contact compensation@atlanta.k12.ga.us.

Winners of our Vaccination Raffle!

I want to thank everyone for the participation in the district's vaccination efforts, particularly the mass event at Mercedes-Benz Stadium. The APS Office of Partnerships and Development is proud to have been able to offer raffle rewards for those who attended the events. We are pleased to announce these winners of special prizes who were selected by random draw:

- Seven-night accommodations at a resort—Doris Fox, Miles Elementary
- Seven-night accommodations at a resort—Jerry Woodfork, Cleveland Avenue Elementary
- Seven-night accommodations at a resort—Natia McCants, APS Student Services
- Seven-night accommodations at a resort—Christen McClain, Grady High School
- Seven-night accommodations at a resort—Mariale Dunbar, Fickett Elementary
- Seven-night accommodations at a resort—Khadijah Williams, Hope Hill Elementary
- Seven-night accommodations at a resort—Shytavia Jewsome, Bunche Middle School
- Seven-night accommodations at a resort—Beverly Pickett, Young Middle School
- \$500 Delta Gift Card—Temicia Cook, Cascade Elementary
- \$100 Amazon Gift Card—Charles P. Everett, Fickett Elementary
- Botanical Gardens Gift Package—CeZanne Grant, KIPP Woodson Park
- Jiffy Lube Gift Card—Kennedy Benjamin, Burgess Peterson Elementary
- 72 inch TV—Oluwafunmilayo Evans, APS IT

To make arrangements to claim your prize, please contact Ms. Stephanie Callier at 404-802-2845 or stcallier@apsk12.org. Congratulations to all of our winners, and thanks to everyone for helping make our community safer!

Accolades for Howard Middle Renovation

I want to share some exciting news involving Operations and recent renovations of our schools. The *Atlanta Business Chronicle*, as part of its annual [Best in Atlanta Real Estate Awards](#), has cited the work on David T. Howard Middle School as the area's top Revitalization / Renovation Deal of the Year ([see page 12B](#)).

In awarding Howard, the newspaper cited the district's intense effort to respect the history of the building and the Old Fourth Ward neighborhood and the Operations Department's efforts to work with school alumni. It also noted that while the school preserved numerous historic efforts – partly by referring to the use of a 90-year-old design for an addition from plans stored in the district's archives – it has become a model for 21st-century education.

[KIPP Woodson Park Academy](#) (see page 13B), with a campus that includes a YMCA Early Learning Center and a community health facility run by Whitefoord Inc., was one of two APS projects out of three finalists for the award.

End-of-Year Reminders

Finally, as a reminder, we will provide both face-to-face and virtual instruction on Wednesday, May 26, which is the last day of this school year. While Wednesdays have served as asynchronous (independent learning) days this semester, we will shift to synchronous learning (live instruction) on the last day of school. The last workday for teachers and other 10-month staff is May 27th. All school-based staff, whether working in person or on telework, should complete their end-of-year close-out tasks by that date. All approved telework arrangements will expire at the end of this school year.

These are our updates for this week. Thanks as always for your service and dedication! Please maintain your high level of engagement, stay healthy, and be well.

Yours in Service,

Lisa Herring