

MEMORANDUM

To: All APS Staff

From: Dr. Lisa Herring, Superintendent

Date: February 12, 2021

Subject: Staff Learning Sessions, Surveillance Testing, Help Stop the Spread of COVID, and Other Updates

Staff Learning Sessions on COVID-19 Testing Strategy – February 18th and 23rd

As part of our commitment to keeping everyone informed, we are hosting two learning sessions on [Workplace](#) for staff. The sessions provide an opportunity for you to ask questions about our COVID-19 testing options, including surveillance testing.

Session panelists include Dr. Katika D. Lovett, Assistant Superintendent of the Office of Student Services, Dr. Valencia Hildreth, Comprehensive Health Services Manager, and Dr. Benjamin Lefkove and Ron Sanders, PA-C, Co-Founders of Viral Solutions, LLC., the company administering our surveillance tests. Skye Duckett, Chief Human Resources Officer, will also be available for Q&A, and the panel will be facilitated by Dr. Angela King Smith, Chief Strategy Officer. Please join us on <https://aps.workplace.com> for these informative sessions

- Thursday, February 18 at 4 p.m. - All Staff
- Tuesday, February 23 at Noon - District Office Building Staff

COVID-19 Vaccinations

We are partnering with the Fulton County Board of Health to provide COVID-19 vaccination opportunities when Georgia moves to Phase 1B (essential workers, including education). In the coming weeks, all APS employees and eligible contractors will receive emails asking you to opt in or out of taking the vaccine through this partnership. Supervisors will also be helping to ensure that every employee is contacted. Stay tuned for more details coming soon!

Help Stop the Spread of COVID-19

This is a reminder to wear your masks at all times. All employees are expected to adhere to the District's health and safety guidelines, which include screening measures and temperature assessments, use of masks and face shields, social distancing, and other hygiene and cleaning procedures. Employees should not report to work if they are sick or pending COVID-19 test results. The District has distributed personal protective equipment for our students and employees to use when inside our buildings. Remember, wearing a mask is still necessary to stop the spread of COVID-19! Our mitigation strategies and protocols are at www.atlantapublicschools.us/APSprotects.

COVID-19 Surveillance Testing Enrollment

I am excited to provide an update on the expansion of our COVID-19 surveillance testing. Last week, 500 students and staff took part in our soft launch at Barack and Michelle Obama Academy, Brandon, Burgess Peterson, Cleveland, Humphries, Hutchinson, M. Agnes Jones, and Sarah Smith. I am grateful to those who participated. Surveillance testing detects the presence of COVID-19 even in individuals who may be asymptomatic.

As we continue to expand the availability of the test districtwide, I strongly encourage you to participate. A signed consent form is required at the time of the first test; however, you only need to provide signed consent once to participate in weekly surveillance testing. Learn more at www.atlantapublicschools.us/COVID-testing.

Return of Grades 6-12 on February 16

Once again, I have to extend my admiration and appreciation to everyone for all of your hard work and dedication in safely welcoming students back to school for in-person learning. On Tuesday, February 16, our students who opted for in-person learning in Grades 6-12 will return, which will complete the implementation of the second phase of our Return+Learn plan. We look forward to welcoming them back!

Student Intent to Return Declaration Opens February 17

We will launch a new student Intent to Return declaration period on Wednesday, February 17. With this latest Intent to Return, our families will choose a learning option through the final nine-week quarter. If this form is not completed by Monday, March 8, students will remain in their current instructional learning models. The form and details will be available on the [Declaration Form page](#) beginning February 17.

Thank You, Zep!

Finally, I am always thankful for the numerous companies that partner with us in support of our students and staff. I want to share that Zep, Inc., a leading innovator of home and workplace maintenance and cleaning solutions based right here in Atlanta, is supplying hand sanitizer to all APS classrooms. Zep will also roll out in-classroom awareness and education tips to some of our schools next week, including Maynard Jackson High, Hutchinson Elementary, Long Middle, King Middle, and F.L. Stanton Elementary. Additionally, APS families who pick up CEP meal kits at Ralph J. Bunche Middle School on Wednesday, February 17 will receive free bottles of Zep hand sanitizer (as long as an adult parent or guardian is present).

As part of Zep's long-standing relationship with our district, Zep experts will help teach proper hand hygiene, which according to the Centers for Disease Control is known to reduce transmission of respiratory illnesses, like colds, in the general population by up to 21%. These schools will also be provided with back-to-school safety kits, including reusable face masks, tote bags, and a postcard highlighting best practices for hand hygiene. Thanks to everyone at Zep for helping make our Return+Learn efforts a success!

As always, thank you for your service and dedication! Please stay healthy and be well.

Yours in Service,

Lisa Herring