

MEMORANDUM

To: All APS Staff

From: Dr. Lisa Herring, Superintendent

Date: February 19, 2021

Subject: COVID-19 Vaccinations, Gallup Employee Survey, Intent to Return Declaration, and Other Updates

Phase 1B of COVID-19 Vaccinations

I want to thank every staff member who participated in this week's Learning Session regarding our comprehensive COVID-19 testing strategy. As we mentioned in the session, APS is actively preparing for Phase 1B of COVID-19 vaccinations—the phase that includes eligibility for educators. We know that vaccinating as many staff members as possible will be critical for continuing to open our schools safely. As such, our district is working with the Fulton County Board of Health on future vaccination events for APS employees once Phase 1B is launched.

We have asked our health officials to make our educators and staff a priority within Phase 1B, so we want to be ready at a moment's notice to help get you and others in our community vaccinated.

Each of you should have received an individualized email from covidvaccine@atlanta.k12.ga.us with the subject "Opt In or Out of APS-Fulton County COVID Vaccination Partnership." With that email, you will be directed to a brief survey to opt in or out of receiving a COVID-19 vaccine through our partnership with the Fulton County Board of Health.

It's very important that you take two minutes to complete this survey — even if you've already taken the vaccine or you don't plan on taking it, we need to hear from everyone so that no one is missed. We're asking you to complete this survey by 5 p.m. on Friday, February 26.

We need this information to ensure that the Board of Health reserves the adequate number of vaccines needed for our APS staff. Additionally, vaccinating as many staff members as possible will be critical for continuing to open our schools safely.

Employee Check-in Survey

We continue to maintain our focus on employee well-being. While the challenges of a pandemic preclude us from deploying our annual employee engagement survey at this time, Gallup is assisting us in providing a similar survey. With this survey, APS staff gets an opportunity to provide valuable feedback and comments about what's important to them. Staff responses will enable us to create a more supportive work environment for you.

The brief, 11-question survey will launch on Monday, February 22, 2021, and remain open through March 5, 2021. Responses will be completely confidential. Look for an email next week. Please

note that APS will resume the annual employee engagement survey next school year in the fall. Thank you in advance for providing this valuable feedback.

Reminder of Student Intent to Return Declaration

Our latest Intent to Return Declaration period for students opened on Wednesday, February 17, allowing our families to choose a learning option through the final nine-week quarter. If they don't complete the form by Monday, March 8, their student(s) will remain in their current instructional learning model. Please share this information with our APS families and point them to the [Declaration Form page](#).

Telework Requests

As we move further into the second semester, I wanted to remind you that with the expiration of the Families First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA) at the end of 2020, we have been following an updated set of guidelines for telework. Until further notice, the District will continue to handle telework and leave as follows:

- New telework requests will only be accepted for positive COVID testing or direct exposure with documentation, and newly diagnosed personal high-risk health conditions with a doctor's note that includes the date employee was diagnosed/informed. Visit www.atlantapublicschools.us/teleworking for more information.
- Employees who do not qualify for telework may want to consider family medical leave (FMLA) to care for themselves or a household member with a serious health condition. Contact leaverequests@atlanta.k12.ga.us for more information. Some employees who would like a workplace accommodation due to a disability, such as a change in physical workspace or arrival or departure time, may contact OffEmpRelations@atlanta.k12.ga.us.
- Employees who are too ill to telework or whose job is not eligible for telework (i.e. custodians, bus drivers, skilled trades workers) and request time off due to COVID testing or exposure will be eligible to use any sick or personal leave accrued.
- Employees who are directed to stay home from work by the District's health services or human resources department as a result of contact tracing in the workplace by APS will receive up to 10 paid days from the District's timeshare sick leave bank and then be able to use any sick or personal leave accrued.
- Employees who do not qualify for telework or leave and do not report to work will be offered a two-week period (10 workdays) of unpaid, job-protected emergency leave to take care of their personal situation so that they can return to work. Employees may receive a one-time extension of unpaid emergency leave for an additional two weeks (10 workdays) for a total potential leave period of four weeks (20 workdays). Employees may resign without penalty at any time during the unpaid leave period. Upon expiration of emergency paid leave, employees may receive disciplinary action if they do not report to work.

Random Acts of Kindness

After nearly a year of teaching and learning amid a global pandemic, Random Acts of Kindness Week finally came around the calendar again to remind us: People need kindness, they crave kindness, and they DESERVE kindness.

As superintendent and a former school counselor, I am thrilled that [the week has become a tradition for APS](#), where social emotional learning has become not only a district priority but a model for other school districts. We also joined the authors and illustrator of *Mirror Face: A Book on Self Love* for the launch of a global social media movement they are calling #MirrorFaceChallenge. ([You can watch the program launch on our Facebook page!](#)) I am hopeful that the random acts of kindness continue week after week.

Thanks as always for your service and dedication! Please stay healthy and be well.

Yours in Service,

Lisa Herring