

## MEMORANDUM

To: All APS Staff

From: Dr. Lisa Herring, Superintendent

Date: March 26, 2021

Subject: Updated CDC Guidelines, Post-Spring Break Plans, Hiring Incentives, and Other Updates

As we continue our mass vaccination event at Mercedes-Benz Stadium this week, I want to not only thank the Fulton County Board of Health, Fulton County Government, and Mercedes-Benz Stadium for its partnership but the nearly 1,600 teachers and other staff members who are participating.

I want to encourage everyone to get vaccinated! Anyone not able to attend APS' mass vaccination event can schedule an appointment at CVS, Walgreens, or one of the Georgia Emergency Management Agency's (GEMA) mass vaccination sites. To find a vaccination location or to schedule an appointment, log on to [dph.ga.gov/covid-vaccine](https://dph.ga.gov/covid-vaccine) or visit [myvaccinegeorgia.com](https://myvaccinegeorgia.com).

Just as important is our continued participation in weekly surveillance testing at our schools and other buildings. Along with social distancing, mask-wearing, and vaccinations, these tests are a critical part of our layered approach to our overall health and safety mitigation efforts across the district.

### **Updated CDC Guidelines on Social Distancing in Schools**

Recently, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) updated its guidance on social distancing in schools, which would relax distancing requirements from six feet to three feet in some cases. We are reviewing these guidelines, but because we are already in the last nine-week quarter of this school year, we do not plan to make any district-wide changes to social distancing in schools.

We have not excluded any students from returning to face-to-face instruction if their families selected that option. For the final nine weeks, 40% of our students are participating in face-to-face instruction, and we have made accommodations for all of them. You can find [school-level data here](#).

Throughout our reopening process, we have consistently used guidance from the CDC in combination with other health and mitigation strategies in our schools and buildings. We will continue to take this layered approach in keeping our students and staff safe as we look to our 2021-2022 school year.

## **Return to Five Days of In-person Instruction in 2021-2022 School Year**

As part of our planning for the upcoming school year, I want all staff to be aware that we intend to return to five days of in-person instruction each week for the 2021-2022 school year. We do not plan to have asynchronous Wednesdays or simultaneous teaching. We will provide virtual instruction as an option for families. We look forward to engaging with staff and sharing more information in the coming weeks. This topic will also be discussed during the April 12 Board of Education meeting, which is streamed live on the Board's [Facebook page](#). Stay tuned for more details.

## **After Spring Break**

I also want to remind everyone that due to expected high volumes of travel during Spring Break, we are taking the precautionary step of transitioning to virtual instruction for the week of April 12-16. This move will help maintain low rates of COVID-19 spread in our schools and buildings. All students will participate in classes virtually, and most staff will work remotely that week. Check with your supervisor for any questions about your work location for the week of April 12th.

Again, in alignment with CDC guidelines, we ask that you follow these steps:

- Get tested with a viral test 3-5 days after travel AND stay home and self-quarantine for a full 7 days after travel.
- Even if you test negative, stay home and self-quarantine for the full 7 days.
- If your test is positive, isolate yourself to protect others from getting infected.
- If you don't get tested, you are encouraged to stay home and self-quarantine for 10 days after travel.
- Avoid being around people who are at increased risk for severe illness for 14 days, whether you get tested or not.

This means that APS staff who travel over spring break should self-quarantine and take a COVID test during the week of April 12th. Location services in Kronos will be used as needed to verify the coordinates of anyone clocking in using the mobile app. Upon returning to face-to-face work and instruction the week of April 19th, employees will need to pass the worksite health screening questionnaire and are strongly encouraged to participate in surveillance testing at their worksite.

## **APS Hiring Incentives**

Do you know someone who wants to join the best team in public education? If you do, please share with them that as part of our planning for the 2021-22 school year, the Human Resources team is providing a series of hiring incentives to encourage qualified teachers and substitutes to join Atlanta Public Schools. The three incentives are:

- \$500 for 50 in-person, newly hired substitutes
- \$800 or \$1,000 for teachers hired for Turnaround Schools
- \$3,000 Early Hiring Incentive for special education teachers, career and technical education (CTE) teachers, and dual-language immersion (DLI) teachers hired before June 1, 2021

Anyone interested in joining APS should visit [apscareers.org](https://apscareers.org) to apply for available positions.

Thanks as always for your service and dedication! I also want to thank you for the extra levels of engagement, especially as we held Cluster Conversations across the district this month. The dialogue will inform our efforts for the future of our schools and our work to “Reimagine Atlanta Public Schools.” If you missed it, you can re-visit the Cluster Conversations at [www.atlantapublicschools.us/2021ClusterConversations](https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/2021ClusterConversations).

Please stay healthy and be well.

Yours in Service,

Lisa Herring