

MEMORANDUM

To: All APS Staff

From: Dr. Lisa Herring, Superintendent

Date: May 7, 2021

Subject: Telework, Work Calendar, and Compensation Updates; Delta Honorees; Equity Champions and Survey; Val/Sal/STAR Awards; School Day Extensions; and Other Updates

I remain humbled and inspired by the hundreds and hundreds of teachers we celebrated this National Teacher Appreciation Week. As I review the week, I want to provide important updates about teleworking, the work calendar, and compensation.

Here are some important dates ahead for APS staff:

May 15, 2021 – The voluntary transfer period for certified staff ended on April 30; however, the transfer deadline is being extended until May 15 to interview for transfers to positions at Atlanta Virtual Academy only. Virtual positions, some of which include remote work options, are posted on our [careers website](#). Please apply as soon as possible before May 15 if you are interested. (Applying does not guarantee an interview or a transfer.)

May 27, 2021 – The last workday for this school year for 201- and 202-day staff is Thursday, May 27. All school-based staff, whether working in person or on telework, should complete their end-of-year close-out tasks by that date. For the last day of work for all other work schedules, visit the [compensation website](#).

May 31, 2021 – Emergency regulations EBB-R(2) and EBB-R(3), which were activated as part of the crisis response when the district closed in March 2020, will be deactivated on May 31, 2021. The district will return to regular sick leave procedures, and approved telework arrangements will end on the same date. Working remotely will not be an option for school-based staff in the 2021-2022 school year. Employees who work in the summer and are interested in requesting work accommodations for a qualifying disability should contact the Office of Employee Relations at OffEmpRel@atlanta.k12.ga.us.

June 1, 2021 – The deadline for all staff with an employment contract to submit a resignation without penalty is Tuesday, June 1. After this date, requests for release of contract will only be approved by Human Resources for documented medical reasons, promotions, and spouse relocations for work. For questions, contact staffing@atlanta.k12.ga.us.

June 7, 2021 – Atlanta Public Schools will operate on a modified schedule for six weeks during the summer from June 7–July 16. Twelve-month employees will work at least four days onsite

(in person) and will have the ability to choose one of three workweek options. Visit the [summer hours website](#) for more information and consult your supervisor for questions.

Also on June 7, the Atlanta Board of Education will consider the final FY2022 budget of \$905 million for adoption, which includes more dollars to improve student outcomes and experiences. This includes funds for academic recovery, interventions, and summer learning and enrichment.

The proposed budget also includes a \$15 minimum wage for hourly employees, daily rate increases for substitute employees, stipends for special education teachers, stipends for staff in high poverty schools, additional percentage increases to the teacher and instructional support pay scales for market competitiveness, and step raises for eligible full-time employees, ranging from 1% to 1.7%. I want to make sure everyone knows where to look to see what their pay could be next year after the budget is adopted. Proposed salary schedules for next year are posted [here](#). Locate your pay scale and look one step higher than you are this year.

Delta Airlines Honors Teachers

This week, I was excited to join with representatives from Delta Airlines at Benjamin E. Mays High School as they recognized nine of our deserving teachers with a special gift: Round trip tickets and a hotel stay for them and their families at any location where Delta flies in the United States, Mexico, or the Caribbean!

What a gigantic, thoughtful, and fun way to honor our teachers.

At Mays, we surprised Sonja Lewis, a special education teacher who has 41 years of service in APS. Mrs. Lewis could have retired years ago, but she always says she is “on assignment” and sees her continued service as a gift to others.

Other teachers recognized by Delta include:

- Larry Alford, the culinary arts instructor for Washington High
- Emily Backus, a music teacher at Mary Lin Elementary
- Bevin Carpenter, a behavior specialist at King Middle
- David Galban, bilingual parent liaison at North Atlanta High
- DaShunda Gates, 5th grade teacher at Deerwood Academy
- Cheryl Jamison, ELA and Social Studies teacher at Coretta Scott King Young Women’s Leadership Academy
- Nathan Stone, an 8th grade math teacher at Long Middle
- Melissa Vaillant, 8th grade math teacher at Sylvan Hills Middle

Equity Office Launches Annual Equity in Action Awards

As part of our appreciation this week for teachers, our new Center for Equity and Social Justice, led by Dr. Tauheedah Baker-Jones, traveled across the district this week, surprising our first cohort of Equity Champions! Ten educators were recognized and awarded a \$1,500 stipend to launch equity initiatives in their schools and classrooms.

These educators were nominated by their peers and selected because they have earned the reputation of catering to the individual cultures, identities, abilities, and languages of every student. They challenge the status quo to remove barriers to success and work hard to ensure that every child receives the necessary opportunities and resources to meet their unique needs and aspirations.

They are:

- Teruko Dobashi-Taylor, assistant principal of Toomer Elementary
- Ursula Gordon, math teacher at South Atlanta High
- Benita Grant, principal of Fickett Elementary
- Larry Guilford, assistant principal of B.E.S.T. Academy
- Shiron Jelks, teacher at Cascade Elementary
- Marsha Leverette, special education lead teacher at Brown Middle
- Kevin Maxwell, principal of Howard Middle
- D'Andra McPhail, teacher at North Atlanta High
- Dione Simon, principal of Harper Archer Elementary
- Victoria Weaver, science teacher at King Middle

Congratulations to all of these educators! Although the week comes to a close, it's never too late to #ThankAPSTeachers!

Staff Survey on Equity

On the subject of equity, our new Center for Equity and Social Justice wants to hear from you about how APS helps ensure ALL students and staff feel affirmed and supported. To effectively refine our support plans for each student and staff member's unique needs and to identify your communication preferences, our Center staff needs your help. Please take a moment to fill out this [Staff Survey](#). The survey will close on Wednesday, May 12.

Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and STAR Student and Teacher Awards Ceremony

This week, we also celebrated students; more specifically, 37 valedictorians, salutatorians, and STAR students, plus 14 STAR teachers, from 15 high schools during a beautiful luncheon sponsored by Georgia Power at Zoo Atlanta. We honored them for their academic achievements and saluted them for their perseverance during pandemic and protest.

We will forever remember the Class of 2021 as the fighters, the survivors, the winners. I invite you to learn more about them at talkupaps.com! We are so proud of them!

Bell Schedules for SY2021-2022

Due to the pandemic, we know that our students experienced unfinished learning last school year and some levels of learning loss over the course of this school year. Research, however, suggests that extended learning time can exponentially help to address learning gaps and levels of learning loss.

Our Academic Recovery Plan includes the implementation of school-based intervention. To ensure that all elementary schools have time and can effectively implement these interventions, we are extending the elementary school day by 30 minutes for the next three school years.

Working with our Operations and Transportation team, we have reviewed our bell schedule to accommodate the needs of our tiered transportation schedule. For the 2021-2022 school year, the student bell schedule will be as follows:

- Elementary 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (changed from 8 a.m. to 2:40 p.m.)
- Middle School 9:05 a.m. – 4:05 a.m. (no change)
- High School 7:45 a.m. – 2:40 p.m. (changed from 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.)

We will provide additional updates, including transportation pick-up and drop-off schedules soon. Schools will communicate any corresponding changes to staff work schedules.

These are our updates for this week. Don't forget to cast your vote for your school's GO Team. Elections continue through Sunday, May 16. Candidate profiles and more information can be found at www.apsstrongschools.com.

Thanks as always for your service and dedication! Please maintain your high level of engagement, stay healthy, and be well.

Yours in Service,

Dr. Lisa Herring