



--sent 1/29/21--

LPS Families,

It is hard to believe that we are already closing out the month of January. Now that we are several weeks into the second semester, we wanted to provide you with a brief District update.

Earlier today, we officially wrapped up *LPS All-Star Staff Appreciation Week*. This provided our district leaders, including members of our Board of Education and Liberty Education Foundation, with an opportunity to visit all buildings throughout the District and provide staff with small *tokens of appreciation* for all of their efforts in service to our students, families, and community. This goes without saying, but what our team has accomplished over the past eleven months has been inspiring. While we hope our staff found our tokens of gratitude impactful this week, we would encourage everyone to continue providing our entire team with support and encouragement as we near the one-year mark since the start of the pandemic. A positive email, text, or note can make a huge difference and can literally turn a difficult day completely around.

Since returning from our winter vacation earlier this month, we have continued to navigate various COVID-19 challenges within our school communities, but also continue to effectively work our *Return to Learn Plan* introduced last summer. Our plan for the coming weeks is to continue working this plan that has helped keep our schools open with minimal disruptions and our students and staff in safe and healthy environments. Please know that our team evaluates various scenarios for the possibility of increasing in-person learning opportunities for our secondary students, but will remain committed to only doing so when deemed safe by local, state, and federal health officials.

Much of the focus of our *COVID-19 Response Team* over the last several weeks has been the development of plans for when our staff are able to be administered the COVID-19 vaccine. While it is uncertain as to when our staff might have the opportunity to receive vaccines, we remain hopeful this might occur in February. We also know this would be a significant event as we all strive to regain some sense of normalcy in the coming months. We have communicated to our staff that we are committed to providing them with regular updates as this important initiative unfolds. We greatly appreciate the efforts of our local community partners, including the City of Liberty, Liberty Hospital, William Jewell College, Clay County Public Health Center, and others, who are all working diligently to provide our entire community access to COVID-19 vaccinations.

As we return for another week of learning on Monday and turn the calendar to February, we continue to thank all of you for your patience, grace, and flexibility. The one-year mark of the national shutdown in which we closed our schools and transitioned to fully

virtual learning is approaching, and COVID-19 fatigue is real in our respective lives. While oftentimes exhausting, there is reason for optimism. We must also continue to follow mitigation efforts, both at school and in the community, which include wearing face coverings, maintaining social distance, and avoiding large gatherings. We will remain focused on getting through this challenging time with an **#InThisTogetherLPS** mentality, one that has proven effective to this point and one that will get us through the months ahead.

We hope you have a great weekend. Be well!

Dr. M. Jeremy Tucker
Superintendent - Liberty Public Schools