



--sent 8/4/20--

LPS Families,

Throughout the past several months, as we have navigated the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of understanding our need to be flexible has been critical. As a result, due to recent developments, and following the Board of Education work session this morning, we have several updates to share with our students, staff, families.

LPS has remained in close contact with local health officials, receiving updates for not only short-term community health trends as related to COVID-19, but for doing our best to look to the near future as to how this situation may develop over the course of the coming weeks and months. After our most recent consultation, we have made the decision to delay the start of the 2020-2021 school year. Our new first day of school will now be **Tuesday, September 8, 2020**. This new start date will be for all students enrolled in LPS, regardless of whether a student is participating in face-to-face learning or in our virtual platform.

When the Clay County Public Health Department's Community Recovery Plan was shared this past spring, it was our hope that our community would be able to transition through the phases outlined and be able to return to school as close to normal as possible. However, with the rise in COVID-19 cases in recent weeks, it has become clear to us that we will need to adjust some of our reopening plans for this fall. Following our most recent conversation with health officials, it has been recommended that we pivot to a plan that allows for our PreK-5 students to attend school as close to normal as possible, while our secondary students transition to a *Flexible Learning Plan* (additional details provided below).

Fortunately, due to the work of our leadership team over the course of the summer, we have been able to prepare various scenarios for our learners for the upcoming 2020-2021 school year. Having said this, we are announcing today a *Flexible Learning Plan* for all students who are scheduled for face-to-face learning this fall at the secondary level (grades 6-12). **Students in grades PreK-5 will attend their home school Monday-Friday, as normal.** Specific details of this plan are included below. In addition, a document is available that summarizes this updated plan and can be accessed by [clicking here](#).

- To achieve the *Flexible Learning Plan* for secondary students (grades 6-12), students will attend face-to-face at their home school two days a week and will participate in online learning from home three days a week.
- To minimize class sizes, students will be divided alphabetically into two groups.
- Students whose last names begin with A-K will be in Group 1. Group 1 will attend in-person classes on Mondays and Thursdays. On Wednesdays, a teacher will lead online instruction and engage with all of their students virtually from home. On Tuesdays and Fridays, students will access and engage with independent online curriculum, lessons, and tools with limited homeroom teacher interaction.

- Students whose last names begin with L-Z are in Group 2. Group 2 will attend in-person classes on Tuesdays and Fridays. On Wednesdays, a teacher will lead online instruction and engage with all of their students virtually from home. On Mondays and Thursdays, students will access and engage with independent online curriculum, lessons, and tools with limited teacher interaction.
- On independent virtual learning days, students are expected to be actively learning during school time.
- LPS will remain in close consultation with local health officials, with there being the potential of increasing the number of days that face-to-face students attend classes at school at either the start of the second quarter in late October or second semester in January 2021. Conversely, students may be shifted to full-time virtual learning at any time, if COVID-19 exposures significantly increase. All decisions would be made in collaboration with our local health departments.

Finally, please know that additional information regarding our face-to-face and virtual learning platforms will be shared with families in the coming days and weeks. Specific building plans will be communicated to families by Thursday, August 20, 2020. We have also developed an updated *Frequently Asked Questions* document that provides additional information regarding today's announcement, which can be accessed by [clicking here](#). Please know that this continues to be a very fluid situation and one that is subject to change prior to our new start date of Tuesday, September 8, 2020. While we know the work will not be easy in the coming weeks leading up to the start of the new school year, we are committed to providing our students with a high-quality learning experience, regardless of how instruction is delivered.

Thank you for your continued support and flexibility, and be well!

Dr. M. Jeremy Tucker
Superintendent - Liberty Public Schools