

**March 2, 2021**

Dear Fayette County Public Schools families:

We are excited to welcome our third, fourth, and fifth graders whose families chose in-person learning back to campus in the morning. After a week with our primary-aged students, we have refined our health and safety procedures, and our elementary schools are ready for the next step in our return to face-to-face instruction.

We are grateful to our entire community for efforts to reduce COVID-19 transmission. Today's 7-day average of new cases is 67 – solidly in the orange range. Each Tuesday, we also review multiple data points as part of our FCPS In-Person Learning Matrix, and we are pleased to report that all indicators continue to support our return to campus.

We are still working to solve the transportation challenge for middle and high school students who attend Carter G. Woodson Academy, Eastside Technical Center, Family Care Center, Locust Trace AgriScience Center, Martin Luther King Academy, Opportunity Middle College, Southside Technical Center, STEAM Academy, Success Academy, The Learning Center, and The Stables.

Yesterday, the Fayette County Board of Education approved an incentive pay package to help us retain our bus drivers and monitors and attract additional substitute drivers. Transportation hubs, schedule changes, and the use of nine-passenger vans may also play a role in the solution. As we said last week, we will update our families on next steps no later than March 15.

In the meantime, on Monday, March 8, the sixth, ninth and 12<sup>th</sup> graders whose families chose in-person instruction will go back to school at Beaumont, Bryan Station, Crawford, Edythe J. Hayes, Jessie Clark, Leestown, LTMS, Morton, SCAPA, Southern, Tates Creek, and Winburn middle schools and Bryan Station, Frederick Douglass, Henry Clay, Lafayette, Paul Laurence Dunbar, and Tates Creek high schools. On Monday, March 15, students in preschool, and grades 7, 8, 10, and 11, will return at those same schools.

In closing, I would like to take a moment to explain how we use the practice of quarantines as a precaution. You may have seen media reports that since last Monday, seven students and two employees on our campuses tested positive for COVID-19. None of these cases are related to school exposures.

Out of an abundance of caution, for our youngest students, a single positive student or staff member may lead to placing a class into quarantine. This is a preventative measure because our elementary students share the same space for several hours, with multiple interactions, including eating lunch and having recess together. At the middle and high school levels, where students are not together all day, the approach will be different.

Our goal is to keep everyone well, and we work hand-in-hand with our partners at the health department to review each situation. The quarantine process is just one of the precautions we use, along with mask wearing, hand washing, physical distancing, health screenings, and more. Thank you for your understanding and your continued support.

Sincerely,

Marlene Helm,  
acting superintendent of Fayette County Public Schools