March 27, 2020

Dear LCPS Families and Staff:

Loudoun County Public Schools continues to evolve and refine our initiatives in support of continuity of education for students, community care and implementing revised efforts to meet the continuing needs of students as we adjust to our new way of operating. Following is the latest information on a variety of topics.

**Continuity of Education Update**

Since the Governor’s announcement on Tuesday, March 24, LCPS has been developing plans for continuity of learning for the remainder of the school year. The attached PDF outlines a timeline for distance learning beginning March 30, including the original plans provided in the March 19 Continuity of Education FAQ and plans for teachers to provide synchronous and asynchronous learning of new skills and knowledge starting on April 15.

**Mental Health and Wellness Parent/Guardian Resource**

Parents, guardians and teachers play a critical role in helping children cope with crises. When a crisis has occurred and traumatic events have stopped, caregivers can provide children an essential source of social support they need during this difficult time and promote their resiliency and recovery through simple ways of responding. Benjamin Fernandez, LCPS Lead School Psychologist and past Chair of National Association of School Psychologists’ School Safety Crisis Response Committee, has prepared a short Caregiver Training video that helps build basic skills in parents and other caregivers for providing effective social support to children who have experienced a crisis event. This Caregiver Training will help parents and other adults appropriately deliver crisis facts, prepare them for reactions that may follow crisis exposure, and review effective techniques for responding.

**Contact Your School Unified Mental Health Team**

LCPS parents and guardians may email the Unified Mental Health Team (UMHT) assigned to their student’s school. The UMHT member can assist parents and guardians with information regarding the best approach for supporting their student’s mental health needs. Upon receipt of an email, a member from the school UMHT staff is expected to respond within 24 hours on workdays (not including weekends, holidays, or non-work days).

This resource is intended to connect families with UMHT members located at their school. The UMHT email resource should not be used in an emergency situation. In emergency situations, parents or guardians should contact emergency services or their mental health professional.

The school-based UMHT contact information is located on the LCPS Continuity of Education webpage Mental Health & Wellness Resources and Student & Family Services link.

**Public Participation in School Board Meeting March 31, 4 p.m.**

The Loudoun County School Board believes that strong community engagement and outreach are important components of a successful school system, even while the COVID-19 crisis requires special arrangements to safely conduct business while implementing recommended preventative measures. For the first time, the March 31, 2020, meeting will be held completely virtually, with all School Board members and staff representatives participating electronically from remote locations. The LCPS Administrative Building will be
closed, and no opportunities for public participation will be available there. The meeting will be available for public viewing through the live-stream telecast on LCPS.org, and live on Comcast channel 18 and Verizon FIOS channel 43.

For this meeting, and for all meetings while the present state of emergency in the Commonwealth of Virginia persists and the Loudoun County School Board determines it is necessary to operate under the modified procedures described in the School Board Resolution passed on March 20, 2020, written public comment will be accepted electronically via an online form no later than five minutes prior to the start of the meeting on the day of the meeting. Please note that all written comments submitted prior to ten minutes of the meeting start time will be made available to the public and the School Board on the School Board page of the LCPS website at the start of each meeting.

School Campuses Remain Closed for All Activities

All Loudoun County Public School campuses remain closed at this time, including all playgrounds, athletic fields, and courts. While we appreciate that these are attractive venues for fresh air and exercise, heavier than normal use has impacted the residents’ ability to maintain the physical-distancing measures that are recommended to slow the spread of the virus. By practicing community care, including physical distancing and other preventative measures, we can come together as a community to help protect all Loudoun County residents’ health and well-being.

Thank you for your continued flexibility and responsiveness as this situation evolves. I encourage you to continue demonstrating community caring by practicing physical distancing, handwashing and other protective measures to safeguard your well-being and that of your families and neighbors.

Sincerely,

Eric Williams, Ed.D.
Superintendent