



# LOUDOUN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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Ashburn, Virginia 20148  
(571) 252-1020

Eric Williams, Ed. D.  
Superintendent

March 18, 2020

Dear LCPS Families and Staff:

The purpose of this communication is to provide the latest updates on the status and operations of Loudoun County Public Schools, as we continue to adjust to the evolving guidance and direction from federal, state and local health authorities.

### **Community Care – Social Distancing**

We ask everyone to promote and demonstrate appropriate social distancing strategies when engaging with others. Social distancing strategies increase the space between individuals and decrease the frequency of contact among individuals to reduce the risk of spreading a disease. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, keeping individuals at least 6 feet apart is ideal based on what is known about COVID-19. If this is not feasible, efforts should be made to keep individuals as far apart as is practical.

Please practice social-distancing and other preventive strategies such as avoiding physical contact when greeting or receiving documents and meals, covering coughs and sneezes, frequent handwashing, and similar measures. The health and well-being of every member of our community is our highest priority, and these measures help to protect us all.

### **Essential Items Pick-Up**

LCPS is providing an additional opportunity for families to retrieve medication, laptops and other critical items from school buildings. On Thursday, March 19 and Friday, March 20, families who need to collect critical items should call the main office at their school or email the school principal to make an appointment for a brief visit. Appointments must be made prior to your arrival at school. As the virus situation continues, LCPS is unsure if we will be able to offer another opportunity in the future. We encourage families to use discretion and to arrange visits for only those essential items. We also ask for patience as we will require visitors to maintain appropriate social-distancing at all times, and the number of visitors to any building at any one time will be limited. Thank you for your understanding.

### **Mobile Internet Hotspots**

LCPS has made an initial purchase of mobile internet hotspots to help ensure continuity of access to internet-based instructional resources for students and staff during an extended closure. LCPS is prioritizing the distribution of hotspots to students in grades 3-12 to households with the greatest needs, with a limit of one hotspot per household. Hotspot devices could be available for distribution as early as the week of March 23.

Families and staff will need to formally request a device via the described process. To request a device, families/staff must:

- Complete the [online form](#) or
- Call the LCPS Technology Support Center at 571-252-2112 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays.

Each hotspot supports up to 15 device connections. The hotspots come with pre-configured internet content filtering, meeting the requirements set forth by the Children's Internet Protection Act. Submitting a request does not guarantee access to a hotspot.

The LCPS hotspots are configured to operate on the T-Mobile cellular network. For a hotspot to work T-Mobile cellular coverage must exist in your area. T-Mobile cellular coverage is not available in all areas of Loudoun County though most of our high need areas in Loudoun do have T-Mobile cellular coverage. LCPS continues to explore options for connectivity in areas of Loudoun without T-Mobile cellular coverage; identifying a solution for these other areas may take several weeks.

LCPS is planning for the pickup of the hotspots by parents and guardians at locations throughout the community. The distribution will be subject to ongoing consultation with the Loudoun County Department of Health and other experts, to ensure appropriate measures are in place to meet public-health recommendations. Each household receiving a hotspot will be required to sign a hotspot usage agreement before a hotspot can be taken home.

Please note that many commercial vendors have made available increased services to support schools and the community. We recognize that people without connectivity may not be able to access the following links and are including the information for broader community awareness.

- Comcast is offering the Essentials internet package for free for 60 days
  - <https://www.internetessentials.com/>
- AT&T, T-Mobile, and Sprint have removed data limits for cellular data customers
  - <https://about.att.com/pages/COVID-19.html>
  - <https://www.t-mobile.com/news/t-mobile-update-on-covid-19-response>
  - <https://newsroom.sprint.com/covid-19-updates-sprint-responds.htm>
- Verizon offers unlimited data on hotspots and cell phones

## **Meal Deliveries**

Loudoun County Public Schools continues to provide daily breakfast and lunch service to the students that rely on the schools for meals. The program has been established for students age 18 and under. We understand that in these difficult times, many people across the country and our county are in need of meal support. We ask the community to support our commitment to our young citizens when visiting our school meal distribution sites. Sites that experience fewer student visitors than anticipated may be able to make leftover items available to the general public after the scheduled 1 p.m. program close each day. LCPS is also working with other hunger relief agencies to make sure no leftover food is wasted.

## **Continuity of Education Resources**

LCPS has created a [Continuity of Education](#) webpage that contains digital and offline learning resources to provide optional learning experiences for students that are consistent with the LCPS curriculum. Resources are organized by grade level with references to curriculum guides that align the supplemental opportunities with students' recent classroom experiences. Up to March 27, the emphasis in these experiences is on reinforcing skills and knowledge that have been previously taught. Learning experiences may begin including new skills and knowledge that have not previously been taught after that date. More information will be provided as the Virginia Department of Education provides guidance and our distance learning (digital and non-digital) plans are refined.

## **US Census Continues**

Even as we all adjust to the challenges of the virus situation; the 2020 US Census has begun. Loudoun's Census count impacts LCPS as much as any other county program. Loudoun County receives more than \$15 million in federal funding based on Census data for school programs. These programs include free- and reduced-price school meals, special education, Title I resources, Head Start, teacher training and more. For each child or adult not counted in the 2020 Census, Loudoun County expects to lose \$2,000 per year in federal funding during the next 10 years. Please respond to the request you will receive in the mail to complete the online Census questionnaire. It's important that everyone gets counted!

Thank you for your continued support and flexibility as our community adjusts to the challenges we're facing.

Sincerely,

Eric Williams, Ed.D.  
Superintendent