



Dear Blue Ridge Families,

I feel like in every newsletter I send out, I am welcoming our families back to school. This will be the third time in a row I am doing so, as our elementary-aged hybrid students returned to in-person learning on February 16th and the rest of our students are slated to do so on March 3rd. Of course, I'm also deeply appreciative of the fact that learning has been continuously occurring virtually through this time due to the hard work of our LCPS educators. Even so, I am crossing my fingers that this is the very last time I will have to welcome our students "back to school" during this school year!

The biggest question on everyone's mind is, "Will we be back to normal this fall?" Our operating assumption is that, YES, we will be back to five days of in-person learning for students in the 2021 – 2022 school year, with continued options for distance learning based on need or choice. We need to continue to "embrace the unknown," but I am optimistic that all signs point to increased returns to normalcy as community transmission drops and the community continues to be vaccinated in the coming months.

We are continuing to work with our national search firm to select our new Superintendent. We have received the results of initial focus groups and community surveys, and the search firm has put together a "Leadership Profile" based on those results that we will use to select the best fit for LCPS. I'm looking forward to finding a candidate who embodies that Leadership Profile - a visionary leader, outstanding communication skills, high visibility and engagement, and transparent.

Below, you will find some school-related news and updates, my contact information, and other information you may find useful. As the weather warms, I hope you and your families have a wonderful Spring.

Sincerely,

Ian Serotkin
Blue Ridge District Representative

Please note that the views contained herein reflect the views of the individual School Board member who is the publisher of this newsletter and may not reflect the views of the Loudoun County School Board and/or Loudoun County Public Schools.

BUDGET UPDATE

The LCPS FY22 Budget has been approved by the School Board and is awaiting review and approval from the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors. The budget plans for a 100% return to in-person learning this fall, as well as modest enrollment growth and increased support for virtual learning opportunities.

In total, the Board reduced the Superintendent's Proposed Budget by \$4.5 million. The Board approved nine budget amendments in total, and I was appreciative to have the support from my colleagues on all three of the budget amendments I sponsored. Most notably, I sponsored a pay increase for bus drivers and other related driver positions in order to resolve an ongoing bus driver shortage and fully staff our student transportation, and I also successfully moved to reduce the projected enrollment for FY22 by 2%, which resulted in a budget cost savings of \$6.4 million. The budget includes additional support for the expanding the summer school recovery program and the distance learning program Virtual Loudoun, increased stipends for arts employees, including drama, band, and choral directors, a step increase for certain classified employees and teachers, as well as a market increase in salaries for all LCPS staff.

The Board of Supervisors is expected to adopt the FY 2022 budget at its business meeting April 6, 2021.

RETURN TO HYBRID LEARNING

On February 2, 2021, the School Board voted 8-1 in support of the motion I sponsored to re-initiate Stages 1 through 3 of the in-person learning model for all Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) students who chose hybrid learning for the second semester on Tuesday, February 16. Stage 4 (secondary students) will return on March 3rd.

Students in stages 1 through 3 include:

- Students whose parents chose hybrid learning for the second semester in grades preschool through fifth grade.
- Monroe Advanced Technical Academy students.
- Academy of Engineering and Technology seniors and Academy of Science seniors who chose hybrid learning.
- Grades K-12 English learners, proficiency levels 1.0 - 1.9
- Students with disabilities who receive instruction through the Aligned Standards of Learning (ASOL) and those receiving instruction through specialized self-contained programs. Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) through returning graduates, are eligible to receive up to four days of in-person instruction as determined by their IEP team.

ATHLETICS UPDATE FOR SEMESTER 2

For Season 2, all athletes, coaches, and athletics staff are required to wear face masks during practices and competitions, with limited exceptions for certain sports. Should either core indicator of community spread in Loudoun — case incidence rate or percent positivity — fall below the school system's "lowest risk level" for five consecutive workdays, students will no longer be required to wear masks during outdoor competitions.

Based on guidance from the Virginia High School League, spectators will be allowed for Season 2 sports as follows:

OUTDOOR SPORTS: Each student athlete on the team roster will have the opportunity to purchase 1 ticket per game and must use their student ID as the code to purchase the available ticket. These tickets are available for purchase until 12pm the day of the game. After 12pm, all remaining tickets up to the 250-spectator limit will be made available for purchase by any individual wishing to attend the game. Golf is excluded from since LCPS is a guest of the golf course and must comply with the rules of the golf course management.

INDOOR SPORTS: Each student athlete on the team roster will have the opportunity to purchase 1 ticket per game and must use their student ID as the code to purchase the available ticket. These tickets are available for purchase until 12pm the day of the game. After 12pm, all remaining tickets up to the 25-spectator limit will be made available for purchase by any individual wishing to attend the game.

SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH UPDATE

Search firm Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates, who were hired by LCPS to recruit our next Superintendent, just completed a confidential survey of parents, students, teachers, classified staff, and administrators. The survey was designed to gather community perceptions of the school district and the importance of various characteristics for school superintendents. By the end of February, the consultants plan to present the board with a leadership profile that will be used to measure candidate qualifications. After the search team reviews the pool of applicants, the first round of interviews is expected to begin early in May. Before the end of that month, the finalist should be selected, with the goal of the new Superintendent beginning on July 1, 2021.

LCPS MEAL INFO FOR SEMESTER 2

- **Walk Up Meal Service:** 10:00 am – 1:00 pm (Elementary Schools) & 10:00 am - 2:30 pm (Middle & High School Sites except Lightridge HS, not including Charter Schools)
- **Monday Bus Delivery:** 2 Runs: 11:30 am – 12:30 pm and 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm

- **Students returning to in-person learning** are eligible to receive a free breakfast, lunch, and snack meal. For supper meals, please contact your child's school.
- **Meal service available to childcare participants.**

ONLINE PRE-REGISTRATION OPEN FOR NEW OR RETURNING STUDENTS

LCPS will begin accepting online pre-registrations on February 17, 2021 for NEW students in the 2021-2022 school year. Once the pre-registration has been submitted, your child's school will reach out to you to schedule a meeting to submit the remainder of your child's registration requirements. Currently enrolled students do not need to register with the exception of rising pre-K students. [ParentVUE StudentVUE / ParentVUE Online Registration Create Account \(lcps.org\)](https://www.lcps.org/parentvue)

VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS MONDAY, MARCH 8th

I'll have virtual office hours on Monday, March 8th between 5:00-7:00 pm via Zoom. Please sign up at the following link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4CACA823A7F4C34-virtual2>

BLUE RIDGE DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

A team of students from three LCPS elementary schools, including **Creighton's Corner Elementary School**, finished third in the K-6 category of the FAA's Airport Design Challenge. More than 1200 students from 21 countries participated in the competition. The team submitted a design for the Leesburg Executive Airport. Congratulations to **Prashasth Sai Bodduna**, a fourth grader at Creighton's Corner, for his contributions to the award-winning design.

Brian Minnick, a senior at **Loudoun Valley High School** and **The Academies of Loudoun**, has been named as a Top 300 scholar in the 80th Regeneron Science Talent Search, which is one of the most prestigious science and mathematics competitions for high school seniors. The scholars were selected from 1,760 students across the US and 10 other countries. His award-winning project is "A Fully 3D Printed 3D Printer as a Step Toward a Self-Replicating Spacecraft" and features a 3D printer that can completely replicate itself. Congratulations, Brian!

DATES TO REMEMBER

Tuesday, March 2: Student Holiday

Tuesday, March 9 4 & 6:30 pm: 2nd Tuesday School Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 23 6:30 pm: 4th Tuesday School Board Meeting

Monday, March 29- Monday April 5: Spring Break

STAY CONNECTED

Email: Ian.Serotkin@lcps.org

Phone: 571-420-1628

March Virtual Office Hours (March 8th):

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4CACA823A7F4C34-virtual2>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/ianserotkinLCPS/>

Twitter: @ianserotkin

LCPS App: The LCPS App is a free download from both the Apple App Store and Google Play App store. To learn more, click [Public Information Office / Mobile App](#).

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