Executive Summary for Reopening School in 2020

June 9, 2020

On May 5, 2020, Superintendent Dr. Mike Looney presented a detailed plan outlining phases of work during the COVID19 closure as well as plans for returning to school in a face-to-face environment in August. At that time and now, we continue to make plans based on the following four assumptions:

**Ensuring Safety and Health of All Stakeholders:** We are and will continue to work with local, state, and federal agencies to ensure that our protocols are up-to-date and reflect our commitment to protecting the students, staff, and families of Fulton County Schools (FCS).

**Ensuring Continuity of Student Learning:** Our leaders and teachers will continue to assess, plan, and improve student learning materials to provide the best possible experience during this unprecedented time.

**Providing Social and Emotional Support to Students and Staff:** The social and emotional health of our staff, students, and families is important to us, and we will continue to provide a menu of options and events for stakeholders to receive information and support.

**Making Financially Responsible Decisions:** Our Board and District Leadership will continue to analyze the fiscal environment to forecast the impact of COVID-19 on the FCS Budget and develop fiscally responsible decisions to ensure continuity of operations.

As described in May, FCS is prepared to open school based on the proposed 2020-2021 school calendar under one of three scenarios:

- **Scenario One:** All students and staff will report in our traditional face-to-face structure for instruction and work with modified social distancing and cleaning practices in place.
- **Scenario Two:** Due to a recurrence or resurgence of COVID-19, the district will remain in a remote learning and remote work environment until clearance is given by public health officials.
- **Scenario Three:** Fulton County Schools will adopt a new model for ongoing instruction and work that includes a blend of remote and in-person instruction.

If public health concerns force the district into Scenario Two or Three, we recognize these are less than ideal for instruction. Some aspects of instruction will forever be changed; however, data continue to reinforce face-to-face instruction remains the most effective model. FCS also sets these plans forward with the assumption these scenarios will be temporary and only utilized during a period when public health or state officials advise against districtwide, in-person instruction. Following are details for reentry if it should become necessary to follow one of these options.

**Scenario Two:**

Scenario Two would be required if a recurrence or resurgence of COVID-19 demands the district remain in a universal remote learning and remote work environment. Under these conditions, we would utilize the lessons learned during the temporary period in Winter/Spring of 2020 and improve upon the implementation of a fully remote learning model. These steps include:
Safety and Sanitization

A. The District will continue to ensure healthy and nutritious meals remain available for students.
B. All in-person athletic or art competitions or practices will be cancelled.
C. Buses will not run for student transportation, however, bus drivers, transportation staff and buses may be utilized for support of remote learning programs.

Instruction

A. The District will ensure standardized instruction and grading practices.
B. The District will develop methods to raise learning expectations and student participation accountability measures.
C. Teachers will be required to post plans for parents and students on a weekly basis, at minimum.
D. A bank of pre-recorded lessons for online delivery will be created for use by teachers, parents and students.
E. Teachers will provide regularly scheduled live video instruction via TEAMS.
F. Schools will deliver Learning Packets to PreK-5 students and students who qualify for specialized programs.

Technology

A. The District will simplify online resources by defining a focused menu of digital applications which are safe, secure, and effective. The approved menu will include Microsoft Office 365 and TEAMs.
B. The District will provide a mobile learning device for use at home to those students who request one in grades 3-12.
C. The District will provide training resources on the public website to assist families and guardians in using TEAMS to help their students.

Finance

A. Funding will be prioritized to support remote learning, considering increased demand for certain resources which will help make this model more effective, while potentially decreasing traditional in-person, infrastructure which may not be in use during universal remote learning.
B. The District will seek alternative funding sources through grants and provider programs to assist families without internet access with devices or service that are safe, secure and effective.

Talent Management

A. School leadership will develop and share updated remote work expectations for all employees.
B. Schedules and work assignments will be adjusted for those jobs not aligned to the remote environment.
C. Professional development will be increased to develop competencies and skills related to remote work and remote instruction.
**Scenario Three:**

If public health conditions require major restrictions, but not full closure, FCS will adopt a new model for ongoing instruction and work that includes a blend of remote and in-person instruction. The current recommendation will include, first, a change in schedule to a 10-day rotational model.

**Proposed 10-Day Rotation:**

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<th>Week One</th>
<th>Week Two</th>
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<td><strong>Face to Face Instruction</strong></td>
<td>Group A – M, W, F</td>
<td>Group A – T, Th</td>
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<td>Group B – T, Th</td>
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<td><strong>Self-guided Instruction</strong></td>
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<td>Group B – M, W, F</td>
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This model allows significant commitment to in-person instruction yet limits potential exposure to the coronavirus over time with appropriate social distancing measure while on-campus. The District will work to align schedules by cluster schools to help families who have students in more than one school.

Additional considerations being made for operations and instruction for this model are listed below.

**Safety and Sanitization**

A. Additional cleaning and disinfecting guidelines will be implemented in buildings and on buses aligned to public health recommendations and approved chemical standards.

B. Guidance will be provided for implementation of personal hygiene practices, including standardization of paper products for hand washing and safe practices regarding access to drinking water.

C. Employees will be required to wear face coverings as prescribed by public health officials. If face coverings are not required, they will be permitted based on individual employee, student, and community member preference.

D. The District will consider adjustments to on-site staffing levels at district building to reduce possible exposure; however, staffing levels at schools will be maintained in order to facilitate student capacity.

**Instruction**

A. Instruction will be focused on standards using a 10-day rotational model.

B. Teachers will regularly assign digital work to increase proficiency in using technology amongst teachers, students, and parents.

C. A bank of pre-recorded lessons for online delivery will be created for use by teachers, parents and students.

D. The District will support the social and emotional needs of students returning to school by implementing SEL lessons at all FCS schools.

E. The district will create an instructional model that includes diagnosis, analysis, and planning to address the student learning recovery due to COVID-19 closure.

**Technology**
A. The District will simplify online resources by defining a focused menu of digital applications which are safe, secure, and effective. The approved menu will include Microsoft Office 365 and TEAMs.

B. The District will provide a mobile learning device for use at home to those students who request one in grades 3-12.

C. The District will provide training resources on the public website to assist families and guardians in using TEAMs to help their students.

**Finance**

A. The District will adjust and operate under reductions anticipated in the 2021 State budget.

B. The District will seek alternative funding sources through grants and provider programs to assist families without internet access with devices or services that are safe, secure and effective.

**Talent Management**

A. The District will provide support to employees returning to work by leveraging a variety of resources such as the district’s employee assistance and wellness programs.

B. The District will use existing public health standards and develop mandatory training on the symptoms of COVID-19 and stress employees do not report in-person when they are sick or exhibit symptoms.

C. The district will provide standards that align with the social distancing guidelines in place as of August 2020 to include signage and mandatory employee training. This includes employing limits to various large gatherings, meetings, and visitor access when deemed necessary.

**Alternative Selection information**

Regardless of which scenario Fulton County Schools employs, we acknowledge that many families will remain concerned about the impact of COVID-19 on their student and family, and many may seek to enroll their students in exclusively remote options. To accommodate this anticipated demand, we will offer virtual schooling options for students in all grades 1 through 12, which reflects FCS’ commitment to serving the needs of our community.

**High School:**

- FCS Virtual, a school that already exists in the District, will be expanded and will be open for students in grades 9 – 12.
- Students will enroll either at Independence HS or McClarin HS with instruction provided through online programs such as Edgenuity, Microsoft TEAMS, Illuminate, Class Link and Safari Montage.
- Students will not have access to extracurricular activities provided at their districted high school.

**Middle and Elementary Schools:**

- Individual remote learning programs for grades 1 - 8 will be offered and allow students to stay enrolled at their home school.
• Instruction will be provided in a combination of live, real time delivery by teachers over TEAMS and through on demand, pre-recorded lessons.

Initial implementation is planned for Fall 2020 only. Continuation through Spring 2021 will be considered after initial performance and interest level data is gathered.

The District is dedicating resources for these options, but they are not unlimited. If we reach capacity based on the current budget, the District will prioritize students with documented health concerns based on 504/IEP and then will seek to accommodate individual preference requests.