



1665 Honeysuckle Road  
Dothan, AL 36305

334-793-1397

[www.dothan.k12.al.us](http://www.dothan.k12.al.us)

**Dr. Phyllis A. Edwards**  
*Superintendent*

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*District 5*

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*District 6*

*Dothan City Schools mission is to prepare all students for the choices and challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (the future). Our goal is to prepare all students to participate productively and responsibly in a rapidly changing society.*

August 31, 2020

Dear Dothan City School Parents:

With one week left before Dothan City Schools (DCS) begins, I wanted to reach out to you to provide information.

Throughout the spring and the summer, I have given virtual updates that can be found on the Dothan City Schools' Facebook page and website. In addition to my virtual updates, you will find all pertinent information related to COVID-19 as well as the District's comprehensive ReOpening Plan.

Over the last few months, our staff at Central Office worked diligently ordering sanitizing equipment, masks, PPE for our nurses and food service workers, thermometers and much more. These are items we best believe will help us in the transition of safely reopening our schools.

In the late summer, you may have participated in the survey that offered our families and staff the opportunity to delay the opening of school until after Labor Day. I believe this was the right decision for DCS as we have seen the infection level reduced to low risk this past week.

In our ReOpening Plan, there was a link for you to register your child for Virtual Education with over a month registration period. In the last few weeks, we have scheduled over 2,900 students in virtual classes and assigned the students up with virtual teachers. Some school sites reduced the number of students attending brick and mortar or in-person by a third to half of the student body. This has allowed the system to keep in-person class sizes relatively low to ensure that we work to socially distance while also providing additional support to the students.

For our families who elected virtual instruction, you also had an option to ask for a device and a hot spot. With costs of almost \$1 million, technology equipment and materials were purchased with federal funding received for addressing the issues brought about by COVID-19. Virtual parents should look for a call from their virtual teacher and there will also be a training video provided for parents.

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At the secondary level (7-12), approximately 1,000 students will be virtual utilizing a secondary platform called Edgenuity. Edgenuity is a learning platform DCS invested in for preparation of our new way of learning. In Edgenuity, students will take courses and their assigned virtual teacher will monitor the students' progress, reteach and maintain grades and attendance.

Any parent who chose virtual in a timely manner, has been given their choice. At the end of the first nine weeks, DCS will ask parents whether they wish their child to continue virtually or return to school in person.

In addition to curriculum needs, our Athletic Director is working hard to get the word out about decisions relating to sports, competitions and other related events. Please remember that we work with the City of Dothan when scheduling the events at the stadium and the City has done an excellent job indicating appropriate seating to allow for distancing at events.

DCS will continue to work collaboratively with the Health Department and as cases arise, each decision will be made on a case by case basis. If a class or a grade or a team must quarantine, we will inform the parents in a timely fashion.

With all of our planning, we want to continue to think ahead with the hiring of two full-time substitutes for each school, additional nurses, a district School Health/Community Liaison and a Coordinator for Mental Health for the system.

As we continue to move into this unprecedented time, we ask that you stay connected to your school Principal and make sure we have the correct information to stay in contact with you.

Last week our buses ran the routes; stopping at each of the designated stops. As with any school year, these stops may change within the first two weeks of school.

Thank you for your continued patience and support as we navigate these rather murky waters. We want the best for you and your child and long for the day when we can get back to normal.

Sincerely,



Dr. Phyllis Edwards  
Superintendent