



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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K-12 Students Are Returning to In-Person Learning Five Days a Week

Dobson, NC — All K-12 students in the Surry County School System may officially begin in-person learning five days per week beginning Monday, April 12, 2021. This decision came during the special meeting of the Surry County Board of Education today, Friday, March 12, 2021, and in consideration of options granted by Senate Bill 220. The Board convened to discuss Return to Learn plans after a unanimous decision to increase in-person learning on Monday, March 8th.

The Board heard compelling reports from all eight middle and high school principals who had solicited feedback from school staff prior to the meeting. In detail, the principals presented an overview of their staff's concerns along with the number of remote learners being served and any additional resources needed. Numerous concerns were raised about the mental health of students, grades, and attendance to name a few.

The Board reviewed current health metrics and noted a significant decline in positive COVID-19 cases over the past few weeks. With the current health and safety protocols in place, the Board made the decision to return all K-12 students to in-person instruction five days per week beginning April 12, 2021. Students currently being served through remote learning will retain that instructional option or are invited to return to in-person instruction.

Surry County Schools is actively working to submit a revised Return to Learn plan to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services for review. Items included for review include enhanced health and safety protocols, transportation protocols, and social distancing guidelines. District administrators are also working on a summer school plan to provide additional instructional time for students.

“One year ago, none of us had any idea we would be in this position. Now, one year later, we are on the cusp of getting our students back to in-person learning five days per week. I am so proud of our principals and staff for how dedicated they have been to our students and families, especially during the pandemic. It has been challenging but administrators, teachers, and support staff have worked tirelessly to ensure our students had continuity in care and continuity in learning, whether remotely or in-person,” said Dr. Travis L. Reeves, Superintendent. “I am so excited we will have all of our students in our schools and classrooms full-time very soon. I have every confidence that our team can return to in-person instruction safely five days per week with a continued focus on maintaining health and safety protocols.”

In other news, the Surry County Board of Education approved federal COVID-relief funds to recruit and employ 28 additional temporary classified employees to be allocated throughout all K-12 schools to assist with a variety of duties including literacy instruction, tutoring for student support, classroom management, bus monitoring, and student supervision. “I am proud of the step our Board took today. These additional positions will enable us to facilitate our plans and also support teachers in the process,” stated Superintendent Reeves. “Having students back in our classrooms full-time, our goal will be for teachers to fully concentrate on teaching students in-person, and we have plans to ensure our remote learners continue to have high-quality instruction as well.”

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