



North Little Rock School District

2400 Willow Street • North Little Rock, Arkansas 72114 • (501) 771-8000 • www.nlrzd.org

March 8, 2021

Dear North Little School District Staff, Parents and Caregivers,

We can't express enough how much we appreciate your being a part of our school district and allowing us to educate your child. We take the care of your child as our top priority to ensure they are getting the services and support they need to be successful.

Back in October 2020, the North Little Rock School District began Virtual Learning Fridays. We planned this structure for the following reasons:

- To provide support for our students to complete assignments and to seek additional help.
- To give teachers greater opportunities to collaborate with colleagues, support students, and for lesson planning.
- To reduce the strain on our resources by allowing additional time for disinfecting.

As the model of Virtual Learning Fridays is new for us, we knew that we would continue to monitor and adjust this concept based on multiple data points.

Therefore, the district will end Virtual Learning Fridays on Friday, March 19, 2021, and will return to a five-day school model, upon return from spring break, beginning on Monday, March 29, 2021.

The decision to return to school five days a week is based upon multiple data points and the full support of each school principal. As we have analyzed the results on local assessments used to monitor student growth and achievement, it clearly indicates the need to maximize instructional time to mitigate learning loss. Simply put, we must engage our students more with their classroom teachers each day and use every opportunity of instructional time to benefit each child. In addition, the recent inclement weather event further impacted the continuity of daily instruction.

Also, we will be administering the state-required assessments next month as we further use the data to better understand the impact of the pandemic on student learning. Furthermore, we have seen a sharp decline in the number of COVID-19 positive cases and the number of quarantines seen in each of our school buildings. Our students and staff have been vigilant in adhering to the federal and state health guidelines that we have mandated throughout the district. Our students and staff are wearing their masks, washing their hands, and social distancing. We are very proud

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to say that more than 85% of our staff members have been fully vaccinated and another 15% are awaiting the second dose.

As we prepare for the 2021-2022 school year, it is imperative that we continue to maximize instructional time over the summer. Summer school planning is currently underway and will be offered at each site. More information will be forthcoming as program options are being finalized.

Finally, we recognize that Virtual Learning Fridays have served a need in our school district in order to educate every child during the global pandemic and to provide additional support for teachers. However, going back to a five day instructional model will benefit all students. As a school district, the care of each child is our top priority while ensuring he or she is getting the services needed to be successful. Principals will share additional information with each of their communities as we transition to the five day instructional model on Monday, March 29, 2021.

Thank you for being a part of the North Little Rock School District. We appreciate all of your support as we strive to have a strong finish to the 2020-2021 school year.

Sincerely,



Gregory J. Pilewski, Ed.D.
Superintendent