



Ben Hill County School System

**Dr. J. Shawn Haralson
SUPERINTENDENT**

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August 12, 2021

Dear Parents,

As of this morning, we are seeing a large increase in the number of students that are either positive or being quarantined for COVID-19 at all schools. With safety of all students and staff being our number one priority and seeking guidance from EMA, DPH and the CDC, we feel that for the safety of all students, staff, and parents that Ben Hill County Schools will go to all virtual learning from home effective Friday August 13, 2021. All extra-curricular and sports activities are canceled at all school for Thursday August 12, 2021 and Friday August 13, 2021.

Making the decision for all schools to go to virtual learning from home is never an easy one. However, given the uncertainty of the rapidly changing situation with COVID-19, we know this is the best plan of action for protecting our students, staff and faculty members. During this time, staff will report to work each day as required with masks and teach online each day from their individual rooms.

Ben Hill County Schools will go to all virtual learning from Friday August 13, 2021 until Friday August 20, 2021. During this time, all students will be required log onto their individual devices from home each day and participate in live learning or any other computer programs that are assigned by the teacher. Attendance will be recorded each day when students log on from their individual computer. (Packets may be used in place of live learning, specifically in Kindergarten or First grade). We will have a district technology hotline in place for assistance to students and parents with technology issues.

Our Middle and High School campuses will be the food distribution centers for the school district during this time-period. Buses will be delivering meals to the bus stop locations as we did last year. We will be sending out a letter to explain detailed instructions of feeding students and posting it on our social media pages and web page.

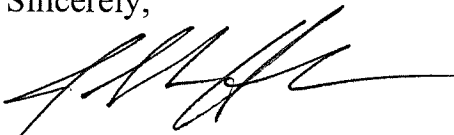
We understand that many will have on-going concerns about how these virtual learning days will impact their families; please know that we will not have answers to all of them. Our plans will evolve daily as we continue to deal with the impacts of COVID-19. However, our districts will continue to answer as many as we can through our websites, social media sites, and local media outlets. Employees of the districts are encouraged to reach out to their supervisors for any questions or updates.

We appreciate everyone's patience and support as our communities work together to move past this continued pandemic health crisis. We are grateful for the constant guidance from Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and various other state agencies, departments and leaders.

We encourage all of our Hurricane families to continue following the recommended hygienic prevention methods. If you begin to feel sick or experience symptoms, contact your health care provider via phone immediately. All providers are asking for potential patients to call before going to the office. Our hope is that we are able to return to our regular school schedule in a short time. Please continue to update your child's school nurses and administrators if your child has been quarantined or has a positive Covid result.

We will continue to provide everyone with updates and changes for the districts plans to return to face-to-face prior to Friday August 20, 2021.

Sincerely,



Dr. J. Shawn Haralson

Superintendent

Ben Hill Charter School System