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Superintendent

July 27, 2020

Dear Madison City Schools Special Education Community,

On Wednesday, July 22, 2020, Madison City Schools (MCS) announced plans to begin the 2020-21 school year with all students receiving remote instruction. Since that announcement, a number of parents, families, and stakeholders have reached out to us expressing their concerns as to how special education and related services will be provided to students in a remote learning environment.

First and foremost, we want to say that we completely understand and appreciate the concerns of our families and students. We knew that this year was going to present challenges, and we have been preparing to meet them as best we can. We can assure you that we are committed to supporting our special education students during remote learning. Our MCS special education team is working diligently on the remaining details of our plan to provide special education and related service support options for students and families. We know that a one-size-fits-all model will not work for our students. Therefore, we are working tirelessly to complete our plan to address the individualized needs of each student. That plan will be completed soon, and we will share its details as soon as it is complete.

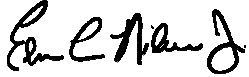
Unlike the shutdown of schools in the spring, our buildings are not closed, and we will be better able to meet your child's Individual Education Plan (IEP). We feel confident that we can blend remote instruction with in-person services to meet our students' occupational therapist (OT), physical therapist (PT), and other needs. As we explained when we made the announcement on last Wednesday, we are continuing to monitor guidance from the Alabama Department of Public Health, and we are encouraged by the recent change in the ADPH Code for Madison County from red to orange. These changes in the infection rate in our community allow us to look at returning our students to our buildings sooner than later.

In an effort to make sure we address your needs and questions, we have created an email address for you to use, which directs you to our special education team. Please direct all questions and/or concerns related to special education to this address, specialed@madisoncity.k12.al.us. Also, we need you to fill out [this short contact form](#) to ensure that we have your most up-to-date preferred contact information. This will ensure that you and your family are part of our group emails for special education announcements going forward.

Please know that we all want our students to return to our schools as quickly as possible. However, we want to ensure the return to school is as safe as possible for our students, faculty, and staff. As the infection rate in our community lowers, we have a better chance of returning to our buildings and sustaining in-person learning. The last thing we want to happen after we return to in-person learning is to quarantine a class or close a school on short notice due to a student or employee testing positive for COVID-19. As with our students, many of our employees have unique or challenging health conditions, and we want to protect them as much as possible. It is my hope that by returning during a lower infection level we can keep our students with their full-time teacher and not a rotating substitute teacher.

Again, please remember that we will update information on our webpage. Thank you for your support and patience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Nichols".

Dr. Ed Nichols
Superintendent
Madison City Schools

Mrs. Brenda Albritton
Special Education Coordinator
Madison City Schools