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EBRPSS Families,

As we reflect on the start of this school year and evaluate the effectiveness of virtual learning thus far, we recognize that it served as an important substitute during the early stages of the pandemic. However, we do not believe it is a long-term replacement for the hands-on, focused instruction students receive at school. We implore all families still participating in virtual learning to return their children, especially those that are failing academically, to the classroom.

Even though many students these days are tech-savvy, not all students have been able to demonstrate strong progress in the virtual classroom. Therefore, over the next few days, school employees will contact the parents/guardians of the virtual students who will be best served in face-to-face learning. If your child is in the virtual environment and has an “F” letter grade in one or more subjects, we strongly encourage you to contact your child’s school as soon as possible to transition back to in-person schooling.

We commend our incredible educators and support staff for their innovative ideas and efforts to meet the needs of every student. It has not been easy to teach in a physical classroom one period and turn it into a virtual classroom the next. Teachers rely on face-to-face interactions to not only educate but also examine body language and behaviors to assess comprehension levels. Another online challenge that has yet to be fully addressed is the integrity of student assessments.

The health and safety of our students and staff is our top priority, and we continue to place focused attention on the cleanliness of schools and classrooms. All proper health protocols have been implemented, and we have enjoyed a very successful return of PreK-12th grade students to schools thus far. Please know that we will continue this important work to provide safe and rigorous learning environments for all.

Parents, you deserve to be celebrated for the many months of supervising at-home learning while juggling careers and other important responsibilities. While you are always your child’s first teacher, our classrooms and in-person learning environments stand committed to ensuring your child receives focused instructional attention, essential wrap-around services, social and emotional support, and student engagement with teachers and peers.

We recognize that virtual learning can be an excellent tool when all parties are engaged. We remain dedicated to adapting teaching methods - studying what works in the virtual environment, letting go of what does not, and exploring opportunities for improvement.

Sincerely,

Adam Smith, EBRPSS Interim Superintendent