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Media Contact:
Tania Dall
Director of Communications
NOLA Public Schools
(504) 206-6611
communications@nolapublicschools.com

NOLA-PS ANNOUNCES TASK FORCE MEMBERS & TIMELINE FOR BACK TO SCHOOL; LAUNCHES PUBLIC SURVEY ON EDUCATION DURING COVID-19

District seeking public input to inform creation of roadmap to re-opening schools

NEW ORLEANS – (MAY 26, 2020) - In planning for the reopening of schools for the 2020-2021 school year, NOLA Public Schools (NOLA-PS) has announced it will be launching an open survey for parents, students, teachers, school staff and the community to share their insights and experiences on how COVID-19 has affected public education, as well as share their thoughts on how to best return to school in the fall. The survey, which will launch online this week, will inform the newly formed NOLA-PS Reopening Task Force in their development of a Roadmap to Reopening, which is tentatively scheduled for release by the end of June.

“Now more than ever we need to hear from our community,” said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Henderson Lewis, Jr. “The virus has presented us all with unique and trying challenges. As we plan for what lies ahead for the next school year, we want to be sure we are involving everyone in developing plans to best keep our children and education professionals healthy and supported, while also taking into consideration the needs of families and the community at large. It’s going to take all of us to do this and I know we can do this. I am eager to hear more from the Task Force and encourage everyone to participate in the survey and have their voice be heard.”

The Task Force, which held its first meeting virtually last week and will meet weekly throughout the summer, is focusing on planning for every possible scenario to ensure students, staff and faculty are safe while helping children grow and learn. The group will act as a conduit for various stakeholders including the City, the Louisiana Department of Health, the Louisiana Department of Education, the Office of Youth and Families as well as the district’s students, parents, retired educators and faith-based community advisory committees. It will advise district administration and the board on the resources and supports that should be available to students, families and educators next school year. In addition to safety and educational considerations, the group will address the needs of diverse learners and the mental and behavioral health of students and staff in various reopening scenarios.
The group is comprised of school leaders, teachers, social workers, medical experts, parents, city officials and other key experts. Current members include:

**City Officials:**
- Mayor Latoya Cantrell
- Dr. Jenifer Aveygo – New Orleans Health Department
- Emily Wolfe and Camille Alexander – Office of Youth and Families

**School Leaders:**
- Sharon Clark- Sophie B. Wright Charter School
- Mervin Jackson- Warren Easton Charter High School
- Rhonda Kalifey- Aluise- KIPP New Orleans
- Myrialis King- Foundation Prep and Community Academies
- Jamar McKneely- InspireNOLA
- Sabrina Pence- Firstline Schools
- Patricia Perkins - Morris Jeff Community School
- Troave Profice- Bricolage Academy
- Kathy Riedlinger- Lusher Charter School
- Terri Smith- Encore Academy
- Terri Williams- Moton Charter School

**School-Based Staff: Teachers, Principals, and Social Workers:**
- Tom Coates-Welsh- Akili Academy of New Orleans
- John Gravier - ReNew Dolores T. Aaron Academy
- Arriane Jones - Fannie C. Williams Charter School
- Hope Loughran – Edward Hynes Charter School
- Raquel Palacio - Mildred Osborne Charter School
- Zerlander Ragas, New Orleans College Prep

**Charter Board Chairs:**
- Gina Dupart- Lake Forest Elementary Charter School
- Aaron Jackson – Algiers Charter School Association
- Stephen Rosenthal- Collegiate Academies and ReNew Schools
- Robert Stefani- Crescent City Schools
Parents from the Superintendent’s Parent Advisory Committee:

Erica Martinez
Anna Dominique
Diane Freedman

Key Experts and Experienced Educators:

Dr. Donaldo Batiste
Valencia Douglas
Lamar Gardere
 Quentin Messer, Jr.
Carol Rowe
Pat Watson

The pending launch of this survey and the formation of the Task Force are the first step of re-entry planning for the district’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The response has been organized into four phases - Rapid Response, Assessment, Re-entry Planning and Implementation.

Over the last several weeks the District has been in the Assessment phase of the COVID-19 recovery; working with school leaders to determine what has worked and what will be needed to continue to support teachers and students in the next school year. As the District works through realigning plans and changing budgets for the next school year, it has been sharing various potential scenarios for reopening with school leaders and working with them to develop plans for each step. To better unify the protocols for reopening schools, and to make protocols and guidelines streamlined across the district, the administration has been sharing multiple potential needs to inform schools’ planning.

Some of those shared considerations include:

- Preparing for a potential virtual first day of school
- Considering staggering school schedules to allow for fewer students on campus at one time
- Reducing class sizes
- Increasing hygiene practices for staff and students and increasing sanitation schedules for campuses
- Social distancing on school buses
- Conducting lunch service in classrooms
- Controlled entry and exit points on campus and limiting visitors to campus
- Regular wellness checks for students and staff
- Masks for students and staff

Additionally, NOLA-PS is in the process of hiring a medical and public health advisor who will oversee reentry planning processes and will be available to all schools in the district to advise on actions to take and how to keep our campuses safe.

How to Participate in The Public Education Survey

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/1?ik=d437206bce&view=pt&search=all&permthid=thread-f%3A1667792498456783325&simpl=msg-f%3A1667792498456783325&…
NOLA-PS will be issuing notifications to parents across the district once the survey is live. It will also post announcements on social media and issue to the media as well. Please be on the lookout for announcements this week.

They survey will be completely anonymous and open to all parents, teachers, school staff and admin, students in grades 6 and above, and community members. The goal of the survey is to gather feedback on the current experience of stakeholders and discover what is most important to them at this time as they think ahead to the start of the new school year. The combined responses will help the district and Task Force understand what is happening in our community right now.

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**ABOUT NOLA PUBLIC SCHOOLS:** NOLA Public Schools is the public school district for Orleans Parish, which includes the district’s elected school board, known as the Orleans Parish School Board and the district’s administration led by NOLA Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Henderson Lewis Jr. NOLA Public Schools currently oversees 78 public schools. For more information, visit [www.nolapublicschools.com](http://www.nolapublicschools.com). For updates, follow NOLA Public Schools on Facebook @NOLAPublicSchools, Instagram @nolaps and Twitter @NOLAPSchools.

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Marta Jewson <mjewson@thelensnola.org>  
To: Laura Aviles <laviles@tegpr.com>  
Cc: OPSB Communication <Communications@nolapublicschools.com>  

Hi Tania,

Does each charter get to make their re-entry plans, such as staggered school schedules or whether to teach virtually, on their own? So long as it complies with Gov. John Bel Edwards’ orders.

Will NOLA Public Schools enforce certain measures or recommendations coming from the task force?

Thanks

Marta

[Quoted text hidden]

Marta Jewson  
Education reporter  
cell: 612-802-3063  
The Lens | [www.thelensnola.org](http://www.thelensnola.org)

c:612-802-3063  
@martajewson

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Marta Jewson <mjewson@thelensnola.org>  
To: Laura Aviles <laviles@tegpr.com>  
Cc: OPSB Communication <Communications@nolapublicschools.com>  

Are the Task Force meetings open and accessible to the public?

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Dall, Tania <tdall@nolapublicschools.com>  
To: Marta Jewson <mjewson@thelensnola.org>, Laura Aviles <laviles@tegpr.com>  
Cc: OPSB Communication <Communications@nolapublicschools.com>  

Hi Marta,
Thanks for your follow-up questions. We'll get back with you. When is your deadline?

Regards,

-Tania