

[Bobcat Blast for Thursday, July 30, 2020](#)

Dear Charles Ellis Montessori Academy Family,

I hope you and your family are well.

Today I need your help to determine the technology needs of each individual student. Please complete the attached survey by 5:00 PM on Monday 3rd August. This information will help our school and the district to assess the overall technology needs of our school and then to make plans that will ensure every student has access to wonderful learning opportunities. Please make sure that you complete the survey for each child in your family that attends Charles Ellis Montessori Academy. If you have children that attend another district school DO NOT enter information for that child. I would appreciate your timely response to this survey. Please click the link below.

<https://forms.gle/6pyjBuCBBtMeHMH6>

I am sure like me you are anxious to have answers to all the questions pertaining to our current situation and the many unknowns surrounding this tragic COVID -19 Pandemic. Thankfully, information pertaining to the School District's plan are continually updated on the district website: <https://spwww.sccpss.com/Pages/School-Reopening-Guidance.aspx>

I encourage you to check this site frequently for the most current information and hopefully you will find the answer you are looking for.

As teachers return to work next week we are looking forward to contacting our families and establishing and renewing friendships as we partner together to...

“Educate the Whole Child for a Whole World”

Peace,
Ms. Tanya

[Bobcat Blast for Monday, July 20, 2020](#)

Dear Charles Ellis Montessori Academy Family,

At the July 16th SCCPSS Board meeting, modifications to the school calendar were approved the highlights are as follows:

2020-21 Calendar/Learning Model Modification Approved

At the regular meeting, Board members approved modifications to the academic calendar for the 2020-21 School Year due to impacts created by the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic. The calendar modifications include a delay in the start of the school year to support the District's goal to ensure student and staff safety in a manner that mitigates exposure during a period of high transmission. A delay will also provide critical time for staff training and preparation for a return to teaching and learning, the implementation of new safety procedures, and preparation

to ensure facilities are ready for social distancing protocols. The proposed calendar modification would allow teachers to return August 3, 2020 and students to begin instruction virtually on August 19, 2020. The twelve intervening staff days would be dedicated to preparing all educators to deliver effective online instruction and face to face instruction as well as address other matters related to social emotional learning, hygiene protocols, student/family support services, accountability procedures, and revised Title IX regulations. The modified calendar:

- Offers 170 days of instruction
- Provides 12 days of pre-planning and training before the first day of instruction
- Begins the school year on Wednesday, August 19, 2020
- Begins the school year in a virtual "E-Learning" Districtwide model
- Adds two staff planning days for teachers at the end of the school year
- Includes the strategic use of Districtwide "E-Learning Days" on the November 3, 2020 Election Day, at the start of Second Semester, and after St. Patrick's Day See the modified 2020-21 SY calendar here: <http://go.boarddocs.com/ga/sccs/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BRBJZU4F7457>

The administrative e-learning model is subject to change based on the existing conditions of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Should health conditions dictate, a Virtual Learning Model (E-Learning Days) could extend beyond the Labor Day Break and throughout the first nine weeks of the school year.

With the calendar modifications, at Charles Ellis Montessori Academy we will begin the year in a remote learning environment. During the summer, my leadership team and I have been working hard to plan a Montessori Prepared Environment for Remote Learning. We have been soliciting ideas nationwide and meeting with teachers and staff to collate and construct a cohesive plan moving forward. I anticipate that upon the teachers' return to work August 3rd, that we will finalize a fully developed resource guide to support your child and the family in a remote learning environment. Our focus, as always, will be to support the child's natural development and to address her/his learning needs in a manner that inspires wonder, creates joy and promotes an independent life-long learner.

I look forward to our continued partnership in our Montessori mission...
"To Educate the Whole Child for a Whole World"

Peace Ms. Tanya
(tanya.melville@sccpss.com)

[SCCPSS Notification for Friday, July 17, 2020](#)

Dear SCCPSS Families,

On March 18, 2020, Governor Kemp issued an executive order calling for schools to halt in-person instruction to protect the state from the spread of COVID-19. That order triggered widespread changes to our education system and way of life. Teachers transitioned to remote teaching; families turned their living rooms into classrooms; and students took on new challenges, balancing their studies with the physical and emotional impacts of this pandemic as well current social unrest. It was profoundly challenging, but you, your children, and our staff handled it with unbelievable commitment, patience, and effort.

Now, four months later, we have experienced so much change. As we look ahead to August, our commitment to health and safety will guide us into the new school year. We see the big picture: the continuing rise in COVID-19 cases in our own community and across the country; constantly evolving guidance from city, State, and Federal health authorities; and the knowledge that as the virus continues to change, our tactics and strategies will change also. Every decision to reopen a sector of society is determined by data demonstrating a decline in the spread of COVID-19. Our schools are no different. Data determines dates, and as such, we continue to monitor the progress towards our “new normal.” When the course of the virus changes, we must be ready and prepared to adapt. Over the last several weeks, we have studied the impact of this virus on our community’s health, surveyed parents and staff about preferences for reopening, and heard from a Task Force of more than 100 persons from across our community, including health care professionals, to help us make the most responsible decisions about opening schools.

The current data demands we begin the 2020-21 school year in an unprecedented way and one that we deem safest for all at this point. We are preparing to deliver education using a virtual model until the data indicates that is safe to meet for in-person instruction. In addition, we opened a dedicated virtual learning school to ensure that those families choosing a permanent virtual approach to learning always have that approach as an option. Make no mistake, we learned lessons from the overnight change in March and planned intensely for a better start this fall.

We know that most families want as much in-person instruction as is safely possible, and we share that goal. Our plans, our staff, and our families must be nimble so we can adjust as needed, as the public health landscape continues to shift. We will continue to lead through the lens of safety and academic excellence, giving children what they need to excel—and recognizing that this may be very different from our most recent past, especially in this time of crisis. We cannot ignore how this virus has affected every aspect of our lives, disrupting our normal processes from shopping for groceries, attending worship services, attending to those who are hospitalized or going to see a doctor, attending funerals, and now, attending school.

I am eager, anxious, while also nervous—just like you. I know that virtual learning is not a substitute for in-person instruction. What we will offer this fall will be an improvement over the abruptly implemented experience in March. While there are still many questions and concerns, we are confident that students and staff are safer using the virtual learning approach. We will

work with you every step of the way to answer questions about this approach until we can move back to in person instruction safely. We are committed to doing everything we can to make this easier for you—without compromising your health and safety.

Unpack your patience. Practice compassion. Together we can ensure that the 37,000+ students of SCCPSS—your children— get the education they deserve in the safest, most supportive environments possible.

Our Board of Education approved a revision to the academic calendar that will delay the start of school by 2 weeks to allow for additional planning and staff training to support the launch of a new learning management system. Based on the current levels of COVID-19 cases in our area, we will start school with a virtual learning model. It is our hope that conditions will eventually allow for in-person instruction; however, we will be ready for teaching and learning on Day 1 of e-Learning. Log on and Return to Learn on August 19! A link to the revised academic school year calendar is provided below and can be found by visiting our website at [sccpss.com](https://spwww.sccpss.com).

https://spwww.sccpss.com/Documents/Calendars/20-21_SCCPS_CALENDAR.pdf

Warm regards,

M. Ann Levett, Ed.D.

Superintendent

Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools