



Superintendent

August 26, 2020

Hello School District of Philadelphia families,

The first day of school, September 2nd, is only one week away. I am writing to share new information to help you and your family prepare for the start of school, which begins with all students engaged in digital learning with teachers from their enrolled school.

You can now access the latest back-to-school information by visiting philasd.org/backtoschool. There you'll find important information, guides and resources to ensure your family is ready to start the school year strong, including:

- a **Back-to-School Family Checklist** - to help you get organized,
- an **Attendance and Grading Quick Guide** - on what to expect this year and how you can help support your child's strong attendance in school,
- **Chromebook Information** - including Family Tech Center locations and hours of operation as well as step-by-step guides on how to log on and use the devices,
- and much more.

I also want to update you about changes in how we will be distributing meals to students and how we will support the social-emotional needs of our students once school starts.

Meals for Students

The U.S. Department of Agriculture now requires that School District's only provide meals to students enrolled in their schools. That means that, **beginning Thursday, September 3**, anyone seeking to pick up grab-and-go meal boxes for students at any of the 62 School District meal distribution sites is now required to provide a student ID number for each student. A complete list of school meal sites can be found at philasd.org/grab-go-meals. Children not enrolled in the School District can still receive meals from one of the City-run meal sites listed at phila.gov/food.

Healing Together

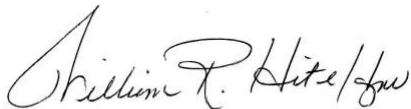
To help address the needs of students and families in the wake of sustained trauma, the District is launching its *Healing Together* initiative. As part of the effort, all students will have daily opportunities to participate in community meetings with their teachers and peers, and engage in social-emotional learning and relationship-building activities

throughout the day. For example, teachers may introduce mindfulness exercises designed to help students manage and regulate the many emotions they may be experiencing. Teachers and counselors will work together to identify students who need additional support, partner with families to identify more ways to support students in school, and assist with connecting students and families to other support services as needed. A behavioral health provider also will be assigned to each school to provide extra supports. You can learn more about *Healing Together* [here](#).

Lastly, our Back-to-School Drive-Thru Backpack Giveaway Event is this Friday, August 28th from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Lincoln Financial Field, Lot K. For more information, visit philasd.org/face/backpacks.

We are ready and excited to welcome all of our young people back to school on September 2nd. By working together, we can support a safe and successful 2020-2021 school year for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William R. Hite Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

William R. Hite Jr., Ed.D.
Superintendent
The School District of Philadelphia