

August 19, 2020

Superintendents:

Thank you to everyone who participated in Monday's Superintendents' webinar. To improve communication, we will send updates out each Wednesday and plan to have Superintendents' webinars on a regular basis throughout the fall as needed. Next week, however, ADPH has a webinar scheduled, and we will not schedule another one because we want to honor your time and know that your schedules are stretched.

ADPH Toolkit Follow-up Physician Led Webinar

ADPH released their [Back-to-School Toolkit](#) on Tuesday, August 4. To clarify and expound on the Toolkit, ADPH is hosting a follow-up webinar on Monday, August 24 from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. This will be a physician led webinar with Drs. Harris, Landers and McIntyre. The webinar will include:

- Review of any new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance and updates to the toolkit.
- Review of core COVID-19 principles.
- Discuss close contacts and examples of how to address.
- Discuss school case studies and Q&As.
- Provide a mini virtual school walk-thru overview – ADPH/ALSDE.

The questions pertaining to ADPH, submitted in Monday's webinar, will also be addressed. Click [here](#) for more information. To register for the ADPH webinar, please click [here](#).

Alabama Broadband Connectivity (ABC) for Students Internet Vouchers

ADECA will send notifications, beginning next week, to the homes of students who qualify for the *ABC for Students* program. ABC will provide home internet access vouchers for families of students currently eligible for free and reduced-price school meals, or other income criteria. The data sets pull from the 2020-2021 school year, but ALSDE will provide ADECA an updated data set to accommodate student address/eligibility changes throughout the semester. Also included in the data set are students with a lunch code of Temporary Direct Cert (DC). These are students identified as DC during the prior school year (2019-2020) that have not been identified as DC in the current school year (2020-2021). These students remain DC for the first 30 operating days of the school year or October 1st, whichever comes first. All students enrolled in CEP and Provision 2 schools at the time of file generation and in subsequent files were/will be included in the data set sent to ADECA and CTC. Individual NSLP forms will not need to be completed. Each household will receive a voucher letter, but per the letter households earning more than \$48,470 are asked not to use the voucher. Homeless students are included in the data sent to SDECA and CTC. The lunch code information used to build the data files is pulled from data replicated to the state by LEAs. Please refer to your student management system and Student Data Application (<https://aim.alsde.edu>) for information on students eligible for the program. The **Enrollment → Student - Last Enrollment** and **Federal Programs → Students – Poverty** views in the Student Data Application are good sources for this information.

The vouchers will help cover equipment and service costs for high-speed internet service from the fall through Dec. 31, 2020. Providers will contract with the state through ADECA to provide the service using existing lines and technologies. Families with children who receive free or reduced school lunch will be notified via a mailed letter in August with the program expected to run August through Dec. 30, 2020, in accordance with CARES Act guidelines. ADECA has developed an [ABC toolkit](#) where you can access documents, assets and images to share details about the program. ADECA will administer the program and a website to assist Alabamians with questions as the program nears its launch can be found [here](#). FAQs from the webinar are attached.

GuideSafe™ for K12

Developed by a team of experts at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), part of the University of Alabama System, GuideSafe™ promotes safer entry methods through testing, tools, and actions. By using testing and self-reporting the GuideSafe™ app provides ongoing COVID-19 monitoring, so you can make informed decisions and help stop the spread. The GuideSafe™ platform has been provided to all public colleges and universities across our state and is now available for K12 school systems and is FERPA and HIPPA compliant. There are four GuideSafe™ tools:

- [Healthcheck](#) -- a COVID-19 assessment tool that allows individuals nationwide to report COVID-19 health status, symptoms and exposure
- [Exposure Notification App](#) -- facilitates anonymous self-reporting and automates alerts to individuals with previous proximity or close contact with a later positive COVID-19 person
- [Event Passport](#) -- a COVID-19 assessment tool for meetings, conferences, and events of more than 10 people
- [Personalized COVID Contact Center](#) -- responds to requests for education on benefits related to COVID-19, next steps for issues raised within the online tools, and more

Your district may opt to participate by utilizing one or all four of the tools for your staff or students. If you are interested in piloting the GuideSafe™ platform, please email Dr. Sue Feldman at sfeldman@uab.edu. To learn more about GuideSafe™ and access promotional materials available to school systems please click [here](#).

Alabama Counts Census Bowl for Schools Program

The [Alabama Counts! Census Bowl for Schools](#) program is designed to encourage higher self-response rates in the 32 lowest-performing counties in Alabama. A grant competition will be held where winning counties receive funds to distribute to all public school systems within the county. These school systems can earn up to \$65,000 for local schools by increasing census self-participation throughout the whole county, not just among the families of students. During August, eligible counties will be notified of participation in the program. The competition begins on September 8th. Details for the competition can be found at www.alabama2020census.com.

Office of Student Learning Updates – Professional Development Links

- [Digital Learning Repository](#)
- [August 2020 “Byte-Sized” Menu of Professional Learning Opportunities for Remote Instruction](#)

AMSTEP (Loan Reimbursement for Teachers in Math and Science)

The Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) and the Alabama State Board of Education (ALSBE) implemented the Alabama Math and Science Teacher Education Program (AMSTEP) utilizing funds appropriated by the Legislature. Recognizing the shortage of public high school math and science teachers across the state, the 2018 Alabama Legislature passed into law this federal loan repayment program. AMSTEP has a two-fold mission: to encourage individuals to enroll in and complete programs leading to Alabama certification in mathematics or science; and to improve the educational system in Alabama by encouraging those who complete the program to accept math or science teaching positions in Alabama public schools, preferably in public school systems where the shortage of math or science teachers, or both, is most acute. AMSTEP funds are still available for teachers who completed a mathematics or science Class B or Alternative Class A approved program at an Alabama institution at the end of spring semester 2018 or since then.

- 71 Alabama teachers -- 46 math and 25 science -- from 37 LEAs have been cleared to receive up to \$24,000 federal loan reimbursement via the AMSTEP opportunity funded through ACHE.
- Three from Montgomery County and one from Phenix City are eligible to receive up to \$30,000 because they are employed in a targeted LEA.

For more information on this program, please contact Dr. Jane Meyer at jmeyer@alsde.edu or visit the [ACHE website](#).

COVID-19 Attendance Codes

The memo for COVID-19 attendance codes is still being finalized and the update will be distributed within a few days.

As always, thank you for all you do.

Eric S. Mackey

State Superintendent of Education

Twitter: @AlabamaAchieves #AlabamaAchieves

Facebook: AlabamaDepartmentofEducation

Instagram: @aldeptofeducation