



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

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**The School Board of
Broward County, Florida**

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Richard Corcoran
Commissioner of Education
325 W Gaines Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

September 25, 2020

Dear Commissioner Corcoran:

We are in receipt of your correspondence dated September 25, 2020 concerning the Broward County Public Schools process and decisions concerning reopening “brick-and-mortar schools” for children’s education. While we share your ambition to open our school facilities for instructional delivery as soon as pandemic conditions allow, there are elements of your letter with which we have concerns described below.

We are confused by your assertion in the second paragraph that states the actions being taken by BCPS “. . .directly contradicts the district’s Reopening Plan . . .”. This assertion is incorrect. A copy of the BCPS approved plan is attached to this letter for your review. Our approved plan states on page 11, “Beginning on September 8, 2020 BCPS will commence reviewing with the School Board the impact of the pandemic on the District’s ability to deliver brick-and-mortar and/or hybrid instruction.” The BCPS administration has exceeded this commitment by providing the School Board weekly updates on the status of the pandemic in Broward County and the implications for BCPS to resume “brick-and-mortar” operation. The plan further states on page 11:

The primary factors which BCPS will consider for the return to providing five days a week brick-and-mortar, or a hybrid of brick-and-mortar and eLearning, instruction are:

- *The status of Broward County on the State of Florida Department of Health phase designation. As of July 31, 2020, Broward County remains in Phase 1 status.*
- *Disease progression (e.g. infection rate, positivity rate trends, absolute positivity rate)*
- *Ability to manage the spread (e.g. test result turn-around time, contact tracing capacity)*
- *Health system capacity (e.g. COVID hospitalization rate, hospital bed/ICU capacity)*
- *District Safeguards (e.g. Availability of PPE and sanitization materials)*

It is clear from this section of our approved plan that the movement of Broward County from Phase 1 to Phase 2 of the State of Florida Department of Public Health phase designation is one of five criteria being used by the District to determine the appropriate date to reopen.

In addition, prior to establishing the criteria for reopening cited above, the DOE approved the plan BCPS submitted, which explicitly states on page 11, "The District anticipates needing to remain in the eLearning modality for the first quarter of instruction (ending October 16, 2020)." While we have been hopeful that pandemic conditions would allow our District to open earlier than October 20, the first day of instruction scheduled after October 16, we believe that accelerating our date for student return can commence no earlier than October 14. This decision was reached with extensive parent, staff, and community input as well as multiple public health professionals.

Therefore, we choose to move forward with the First option and continue to follow our original State approved Innovative Reopening Plan.

Sincerely,



Donna P. Korn
School Board Chair



Robert W. Runcie
Superintendent of Schools

C: School Board and Cabinet Members

RWR/JS:mg