



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
 State Superintendent of Education

November 30, 2020

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents

FROM: Eric G. Mackey *EGM*
 State Superintendent of Education

RE: Average Daily Membership—REVISED

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 of Education

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Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
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I hope that you were able to take some time last week to rest and rejuvenate. You and your staff have certainly done some amazing, but also exhausting, work over the past several months. Today, I am writing you because we have now finalized the 2020-2021 Average Daily Membership (ADM) data, and the Executive Budget Office and Legislature will soon be working with these numbers in development of the FY 2022 Education Trust Fund (ETF) Budget. The final tally shows that the fall 2020 enrollment is 9,760.70 students fewer than the fall 2019 enrollment. Additionally, it appears that almost 5,000 students withdrew from their local schools and enrolled in one of the state's stand-alone, statewide-enrollment virtual schools operated by Chickasaw City, Eufaula City, and Limestone County. Furthermore, of the reduction in students, more than 3,000 are at the Kindergarten level. Since these students never enrolled in school, we have no way of tracking them.

Still, it appears that a little more than one percent of Alabama's students have left public schools in 2020. Without a doubt, some of these are homeschooling or in private schools. Others may be transient, undocumented, or lacking a permanent registered address, and I realize how difficult it can be to track down the whereabouts of these students. Indeed, Assistant State Superintendent Terry Roller and the staff of Prevention and Support Services have been working with local school systems throughout this semester to assist in these efforts. I urge you to continue and even redouble your efforts to locate these students.

Even though they represent a relatively small portion of our overall student body, these students highlight an instructional crisis on the horizon with at least two major prongs. First, when students who have missed Kindergarten arrive to register for fall 2021, will their parents expect to start them in Kindergarten at age six, or will they want to skip Kindergarten and go straight to first grade? There are, of course, essential skills learned in Kindergarten that students need to master before going on to first grade. Secondly, for those other students who missed a semester or even a year of school, how will local schools assess, place, and remediate them as necessary?

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At the moment, these are questions that weigh heavily on my mind, and I know that they weigh heavily on you as well. I pledge to you that my staff and I will continue to work with you to meet the challenges that lie ahead, both as we continue to deal with the obstacles dealt to us by this pandemic and as we still face the longer, challenging recovery process as well. It is my sincere hope that the widespread availability of a vaccine in 2021 will mean that by the fall of 2021, we will be fully engaged in those recovery efforts.

In closing, as you search for any students whose whereabouts may still be unknown, please contact Prevention and Support Services, Dr. Marilyn Lewis (mlewis@alsde.edu) or Dr. Kay A. Warfield (kaw@alsde.edu) at 334-694-4717 if you need further assistance.

EGM:LAK

cc: Dr. Daniel Boyd
Mr. Terry Roller
Dr. Marilyn Lewis
Dr. Kay A. Warfield

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