



North Metro GNETS Program



A member of the Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support
Serving Atlanta Public Schools, Buford City Schools, Fulton County Schools, and Gwinnett County Schools

August 3, 2020

MEMORANDUM

To: North Metro GNETS Staff, Leadership, and Stakeholders
From: Dr. Cassandra Allen Holifield, North Metro GNETS Director
Subject: Welcome Back to School!

Welcome back to school North Metro GNETS staff, leadership, and stakeholders! I hope each of you had an opportunity to relax, release, and get some much needed restorative rest. As we plan for the beginning of another school year, like no other that we've seen in the past, our focus will still be on ensuring that all of our students' academic, behavioral, and therapeutic needs are met. It's essential that every student feel safe, connected, and challenged by new learning experiences in our new normal. To ensure your safety and that of our students, each of our school districts will have new policies in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Although the reopening of schools this Fall may look different than in times past, our high teaching and learning expectations will continue as we help our students thrive. Therefore, I ask you to continue to be positive, flexible, and committed to our students and to our program. Many of our students have experienced trauma associated with the pandemic and some have experienced trauma as a result of the protests. Through trauma informed care, restorative practices, and other appropriate therapeutic interventions, it's imperative that our students be welcomed back into our community of trust with as little angst as possible.

You too are a valuable member of our North Metro GNETS team, and your mental health, safety, and well-being are important. It's crucial for you to practice self-care more than ever before and ask for help when you need help. This year we will continue to practice mindfulness and be present in the here and now and not allow fear of the unknown to overtake us. Dealing with the unknowns of the Coronavirus-Covid-19 has been extremely challenging and it's impact should not be taken lightly. North Metro GNETS and Metro RESA are working closely with each of our respective local educational agencies (LEAs), the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), our Superintendents, and other agencies to ensure that our parents, students, and staff have the most up to date information regarding Covid-19 commonly referred to as coronavirus. The most up to date guidance for North Metro GNETS (Metro RESA) employees can be located on the website of the respective school district in which you work and on the GaDOE's Covid-19 Coronavirus and Schools website located at: <https://www.georgiainsights.com/coronavirus.html>. Although we're all maneuvering through the unknowns of Covid-19 and it's impact, let's not forget we take teaching and learning seriously, and meeting the needs of our students must remain in the forefront.

"It is easier to build strong children, than to repair broken men". –Frederick Douglass.

Welcome Back to School!

Sincerely,

Cassandra Allen Holifield, PhD