

Hello Dallas Students, Families and Staff Members,

With the first week of distance learning behind us, I can confidently share that our preparation made a difference. Nearly all enrolled students logged in and experienced engagement in this new way of being for Dallas School District. This week demonstrated to me that we were able to accomplish something that seemed nearly impossible just a few months ago. I am proud of each staff member for their commitment to our distance learning efforts and to our students and parents for being responsive and cooperative. We've been troubleshooting problems as they happen -- and there were fewer and fewer as we worked through the week. We had an unexpected and brief district wide network outage this morning. Our IT department was quick to identify the problem and had us back up and running in 5 minutes. Everyone is working hard to maintain the support of our virtual classrooms and today's experience was a first-hand testimony of our responsiveness. This was also an example of the backup plans in place in the event of technology or related hiccups. We're getting better each day and we ask for your patience and grace as we work through these issues together.

Please be certain to email our IT support if you have device or connectivity issues. Here is that email address -- studenttechnology@dsd2.org. I ask that parents and students not request tech. support from teachers as they are working hard to prepare and then lead instruction every day.

Other information --

We've been told that hotspot devices have been shipped. Unfortunately we do not yet have a specific arrival date. Once in our possession we will be contacting families to arrange for distribution. We have access to wi-fi for any students in the parking lots at DHS, the middle school and Oakdale Heights Elementary School. We are also arranging for "limited" and scheduled access to schools and only for those students without any connectivity elsewhere and who have not yet engaged with their teachers. Staff members at schools will be contacting those families individually.

The next scheduled iPad distribution for K-3 students will occur on October 12 at Lyle School, from 11:00 AM until 6:00 PM.

Finally, I want to again acknowledge that this approach to teaching your children is not the one we would have chosen under ordinary circumstances. Our students need social interaction, character development and academic opportunities in person and among their peers. I've spoken with many parents recently and this is the common desire by everyone. I continue to be hopeful that we can return to this way of being soon.

My best to each of you. As always, please contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss our efforts in Dallas School District.

Andy Bellando, Superintendent