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April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians of BTPS Students,

We continue to see the impacts of COVID-19 in our schools and our communities. While we are committed to ensuring that we do all we can to “flatten the curve”, we will be relentless in our work to continue learning for our BTPS students. We appreciate the outstanding effort of our staff to make this happen and your hard work at home to support your children.

Initially, when the cancellation of classes was made by the Minister, it was shared that funding levels would be maintained for the rest of the school year. With this information, we set our BTPS Learning Continuity Plan in action and shared that plan with you. As you may have heard, on Saturday, the Education Minister announced that school boards would see funding reductions. These cuts came in the form of funding reductions for support staff and transportation services. We received notice yesterday that BTPS would see a total reduction of approximately one million dollars for the months of April, May and June.

As a result, we are having to revisit our plans and make adjustments. In the area of transportation, we have reduced the amount that we pay to our bus contractors for the months of April, May and June. The funding that we are able to now provide is what we refer to as the basic grant and does not provide dollars that would typically be provided to support bus driver compensation or day to day operational costs. This means that our contractors will need to reduce expenses and adjust the service they can provide. We were very pleased that our contractors were able to support our learning continuity plan through the pickup and delivery of learning materials to some of our rural bus students. With this reduction, this may not be possible any longer. Your child’s school will contact you to let you know if we will be able to continue this service and what the plan is if it is no longer possible.

The funding reduction in the area of support staff will mean that effective the end of this month, we will be without these very important members of our team. We are very sad that they need to leave us for now, but look forward to their return when things get back to normal. Our commitment to providing the best possible learning experience for students remains our focus. Schools are reviewing the assignments of their teaching staff and determining how they can best offer the supports for all students. Your child’s school will be connecting with those who are currently receiving additional supports and determining how they will provide assistance for the months of May and June. We anticipate that they will communicate with you after the Easter Break and before May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

We will continue to communicate with you when we have information to share. Thank you again for your continued support.

Take care,

Bob Allen  
Superintendent

Lanie Parr  
Board Chair