

# dodea americas

## SOUTHEAST DISTRICT

**Pierce Terrace Elementary School**

**Dr. Raymond Burk, Principal**

5705 Carter Road • Columbia, SC 29206 • 803-782-1772

March 15, 2021

Dear Parents,

DoDEA is preparing to safely open schools in-person systemwide for school year (SY) 2021-22 as local health conditions permit. As the CDC has indicated, evidence suggests that many K-12 schools that have strictly implemented mitigation strategies have been able to safely open for in-person instruction and remain open. We believe that the best educational option for most students is attending school in-person.

Given the uncertainties of the ongoing pandemic, DoDEA recognizes that students and families with health vulnerabilities related to COVID-19 may still have concerns about returning to school. To support all students, DoDEA will continue to operate full-time in-person schools and also provide a full-time virtual learning option for grades K-12 students. Full-time virtual option enrollments will be limited to 2000 students systemwide. Parents that choose to enroll their students in the Virtual School option **must agree to remain for the full school year**.

The request for current DoDEA students to enroll in the virtual option for SY 2021-22 will begin on Tuesday, March 23, and remain open through Wednesday, April 7. **Requests will be handled on a first-come, first-served basis**, meaning parents who want their student(s) in the virtual option should submit their request for each student as soon as possible once the window opens on March 23. Parents are committing their student(s) **to be enrolled in DVS for the full school year**. The virtual option is primarily for students and families with health vulnerabilities related to COVID-19. We understand that it will be a difficult decision for many to commit to the full school year in DVS, but it is critical for planning and staffing of DVS. It will also allow for the educational stability that is needed for teachers and students going into next school year.

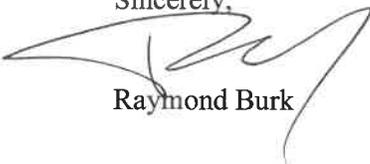
In addition, DoDEA eligibility requires that families with students in DVS be enrolled in a local DoDEA brick-and-mortar school. The student must reside within the geographical location of the brick-and-mortar DoDEA school to remain eligible for enrollment.

Parents will be notified in May of the status of their request for the virtual option for SY 2021-22. If all available spaces are filled, a wait list will be maintained and parents of the next student(s) in line will be notified as openings become available.

Students who are enrolled in the virtual option, regardless of location in the world, will follow the established DVS calendar that begins for students on August 23, 2021. If you have additional questions about the virtual option, please email [DVS.Americas@dodea.edu](mailto:DVS.Americas@dodea.edu).

School year 2020-2021 has been a challenging one for many of us. I sincerely appreciate the teamwork and support from our parents and faculty as we have found a way to navigate through these difficult times and focus on our creating the best educational environment possible for military-connected students. We're all in this together!

Sincerely,



Raymond Burk