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THE DEKALB AGRICULTURE TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT CHARTER, INC.

A STEM (AdvancEd) Accredited School

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Dear Parent or Guardian:

Please see the communication below from the Georgia Department of Education.

Recently, the Georgia Department of Education received guidance from the U.S. Department of Education (ED) regarding assessment, accountability, and reporting requirements for the 2020-2021 school year.

The good news is ED is inviting states to request a waiver for the 2020-2021 school year of the accountability and school identification requirements in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This waiver will provide flexibility from several aspects of accountability reporting that have concerned many amidst the pandemic. Once the state receives additional information and the waiver template from ED, Superintendent Richard Woods will pursue all flexibility available to the state of Georgia and provide districts with additional information on that process.

Unfortunately, ED will not waive the federal testing requirements for 2020-2021.

Therefore, districts must proceed with administering federally-required assessments this spring. Among other information provided by ED, the communication the state received noted that “certainly, we do not believe that if there are places where students are unable to attend school safely in person because of the pandemic that they should be brought into school buildings for the sole purpose of taking a test.”

Therefore, no virtual students are required to attend school solely to participate in the Georgia Milestones, ACCESS and the Georgia Alternative Assessment (GAA), if they do not feel comfortable doing so due to the pandemic.

State Superintendent Woods has worked to reduce the high-stakes nature of testing this year, including the State Board of Education approving his recommendation to reduce the weight of Georgia Milestones EOCs to 0.01% of students' final grades and by directing school districts with flexibility contracts to use input from teachers and parents, placement committees, class performance, and formative tools instead of Georgia Milestones to make student promotion/retention decisions. The state has also waived the summative TKES evaluation for 2020-21.

State Superintendent Woods will continue to pursue the maximum flexibility available to ensure districts' ability to prioritize the health and safety of students and staff. If additional information is provided, you will be notified.

If you have questions regarding any aspect of testing, please contact the school at (678) 999.9294

Respectfully,

Dr. Maury Wills

Dr. Maury Wills, C.E.O. Dekalb Agriculture Technology Environment Charter School, Inc.