



# Henry County Schools Press Release

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## **Henry County Schools Kicks Off School Year Remotely for Students**

Over 43,000 students log on to classes for start to 2020-21 school year

HENRY COUNTY, GA – Instead of bells ringing to signify the start of school, the ping of students logging in to their remote classrooms was the sound that will be remembered to start the new school year in Henry County Schools.

Over 43,000 students logged on to classes Monday morning as teachers, fresh off of three weeks of intensive and extensive professional development and pre-planning welcomed students to their remote classes to start this unprecedented school year.

“While this isn’t the way anyone envisioned starting the new school year, we could not be more excited for how we got things going for our students and teachers on Monday,” said Superintendent Davis. “Every year, we encounter minor glitches across the district as we work out the first-day, return-to-school bugs, and this year is no different. However, there are some different bugs that we have to work out and will as we push forward with our remote learning plans.”

The district is utilizing the technology secured through the 1:1 technology initiative approved by Henry County voters during the last E-SPLSOT referendum. With every student having a device in their hands, remote learning was an option Henry County Schools had that many school districts did not have the ability to roll out in full force.

District and school officials spent the previous weeks ensuring that all K-12 students had a computing device that was ready to use on day one and are continuing to provide devices as students enroll. Students in K-2 grades did not have their devices to end the previous school year, but district officials ensured that they would have them to start this school year and make content delivery easier for teachers and families.

“Our Information Services team has been hard at work making sure that our devices and infrastructure are ready to meet the demands of everyday use by our students and staff,” said Dr. Brian Blanton, Chief Information Officer. “There were first-day issues to work through as we expected, but district leaders are working to address these as quickly as possible to keep the learning disruptions to a minimum.”

According to Melissa Morse, Chief Learning & Performance Officer, teachers across the district did a phenomenal job preparing for today and delivered high-quality instruction to students across all grade levels at every school. This included the establishment of critical and foundational relationships that support academic success.

“Our teachers worked tirelessly over the past few weeks to prepare for the demands of this unique school year,” said Morse. “The excitement of our teachers and students to start learning together again could be felt from that first login. You could see it on their faces, hear it in their

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 **Press Release**

joyful voices, and the learning began today on day one. This momentum will be carried forward thanks to extensive planning and preparation. No matter the instructional delivery model, we don't plan on missing the opportunity to capitalize on the great work of our students and teachers over the past couple of years.”

In addition to starting the day with remote learning, Henry County Schools welcomed their first K-5 Remote Learning Evening Program students for a new model designed to assist families needing scheduling flexibility. The evening program delivers the same instruction that took place earlier in the day for elementary level students.

Henry County Schools will begin its expanded school meal distribution starting this Wednesday. The distribution model will mirror that which took place during the summer in which five breakfasts and five lunches or just five lunches will be available for pickup on Wednesdays each week. Families must pre-order by Monday of each week. There could be a cost for meals this year based on a family's eligibility status. All meal pre-ordering will be facilitated through MySchoolBucks.com.

“We are glad that the start of the school year is finally here,” said Davis. “We will continue to provide remote learning at the highest levels while also planning for a return to campus when we are given the safe opportunity to welcome students back to our classrooms.”

For more information on Henry County Schools, visit

[www.henry.k12.ga.us](http://www.henry.k12.ga.us). ###

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