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## ECSD NEWS RELEASE

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### ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA SUPERINTENDENT THOMAS ANNOUNCES START DATE DELAY STUDENTS BEGIN MONDAY, AUGUST 24, 2020 FOR 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

Superintendent Malcolm Thomas has announced he will be recommending a change in the District's Reopening Plan, which will delay student and staff return for the 2020-2021 School Year. The first day for teachers will be **Monday, August 17, 2020**; the first day for students will be **Monday, August 24, 2020**.

Superintendent Thomas has analyzed the results of the three (3) *Intent to Return* options for parents, noting the response for the Remote Learning or Virtual School option was twice what was expected. The deadline for parents to select one of the three instructional options for 2020-2021 School Year was yesterday, July 20, 2020.

"The number of students participating in the Remote Learning/Virtual School option means additional training for a number of our current instructors," states Superintendent Thomas, "pushing the student start date to August 24, 2020 is necessary to provide our educators with the professional development required for quality virtual instruction. This also means students returning to Traditional School can improve social distancing within the classroom and school buses."

The Monday, August 24, 2020 return date for students will also mean 10-month Educational Support Employees (ESP) within the district will return to their regular work schedules on Friday, August 21, 2020.

In addition, Superintendent Thomas will recommend the following edits to verbiage within the District's Reopening Plan regarding face coverings: *Face coverings will be worn in district facilities as directed by staff and instructional leaders. If a situation arises whereas a student, member of staff, or a visitor is not wearing, or is incapable of wearing a face covering, such individual may be assisted or guided by appropriate authorities within the district to undertake alternative, reasonable and accommodating actions to protect self and others.*

"Students and staff members will wear face coverings, or face shields, when they cannot adequately socially distance," stated Superintendent Thomas, "while no one is expected to wear face coverings for 6 to 7 hours at a time, it is particularly important to

comply on school buses, in hallways and/or shared spaces such as cafeterias and libraries. Parental support will be appreciated in order to maintain the safest learning environment possible.”

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