



NEWS RELEASE

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GCPS secures digital learning tools to help students in need

When Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) 2020-21 school year begins on **August 12**, students in need will have more access to the tools that are the backbone of virtual learning.

GCPS has spent more than \$6.6 million to close the need gap by acquiring Chromebooks and hotspots for students who have limited-to-no-internet access. In addition to the funds local schools have used to acquire Chromebooks, GCPS has spent \$2.34 million to purchase additional devices and \$4.3 million to procure hotspots with service for 12 calendar months. GCPS' first priority is checking these available devices out to families based on need.

As part of the district's back-to-school planning, GCPS asked families about their access to devices and reliable internet. Based on the parent surveys and data from last spring, GCPS determined it needed approximately 45,000 Chromebooks for families. The school district currently has 48,000 Chromebooks and it is working to increase that number. In the meantime it has also spent more than \$520,000 to convert older windows devices into 15,000 functioning Chromebooks. GCPS has 19,208 hotspots available to the families of students in need. Once GCPS has met the needs of students who have demonstrated difficulty accessing the internet, it will expand distribution of available resources to others.

GCPS also has activated the following three-pronged strategy for acquiring additional Chromebooks and hotspots to address increased need by students.

1. Continued Device/Hotspot Funds Sourcing:

GCPS is continuing to source additional grants and other funding opportunities to continue to build up the device/hotspot availability for families.

2. Strategic Community Partnerships:

GCPS is strategically engaging and partnering with local community organizations across the county that have access to additional funds and device supplies and are providing them to families.

3. Pilots of WiFi Access:

GCPS is in the process of procuring and piloting a limited number of WiFi hubs that will enable otherwise uncovered families to access the Internet at specific sites in addition to existing, publicly available free WiFi locations.

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The Mission of Gwinnett County Public Schools
is to pursue excellence in academic knowledge, skills, and behavior for each student, resulting in measured improvement against local, national, and world-class standards.

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