



Head of School Report to the Board of Directors

June 8, 2020

Greetings Centennial Academy Board of Directors,

We have ended the 19-20 academic year and summer break is officially underway for scholars and staff! Our annual staff enjoyed a much deserved vacation last week and members of the senior leadership team are now working our official summer work hours of 9:00 am - 4:00 pm, Monday through Thursday. For your review, I have included a few updates below:

Summer Opportunities: Although our teachers are officially on summer break, several of our staff members will be engaged in summer professional learning opportunities.

Congratulations to Ms. Kieara Reed (3rd grade), Ms. Anesha James (3rd grade), Mr. Keith Jackson (7th grade), and Mr. Erik Herndon (UA Band) for their selection as members of the 20-21 Georgia Tech GoSTEAM Cohort! Through the Center for Education Integrating Science, Mathematics, and Computing (CEISMC), our teachers will have the opportunity to create models of sustainable, school-based STEAM programs that focus on Computer Science, Engineering, Invention, and Entrepreneurship, while integrating the arts in authentic and compelling ways with educators and community partners across Georgia. This year long program will provide over 70 hours of professional development over the summer and continued support during the academic year with a STEAM Coach and two school-based Innovators-in-Residence provided by Georgia Tech.

Kudos to Mr. Brent Johnson (UA Computer Science) on being selected as a member of the 2020-2021 induction cohort of the Honeywell STEM Teacher Leadership Program at Georgia Tech! The Honeywell STEM Teacher Leadership Program is a software engineering and computing training program that brings advanced teaching techniques to middle and high school teachers in Metro Atlanta. Mr. Johnson will participate in 4-weeks of summer professional development and will partner with a Honeywell mentor to design and implement a Honeywell Student STEM Challenge focused on computer science during the academic year.

Additionally, 13 Centennial Academy teachers will participate in Computer Science Training through CEISMC and Code.org to prepare our teachers to lead effective computer science classrooms in addition to establishing our new K-8 Computer Science Connections pathway. Our new principal, assistant principals, academic coaches, STEAM specialist, and lower and upper academy teacher representatives are all participating in the Buck Institute for Education annual PBL Works Conference where they will learn how to move from theory to practice with Project Based Learning. This is in addition to our staff participation in the Georgia Department of Education STEM/STEAM that begins tomorrow and Georgia Tech Constellations Computer Science Professional Development Summit that will be held next week.

We want our staff to rest and reset over the summer but we are intentionally growing a culture of lifelong learners who value professional development opportunities during our "off" months. All of these professional learning opportunities will be offered virtually and many offer guidance on supporting distance learning with students. Teachers will be engaged in synchronous sessions of lessons, activities, and discussions in addition to on-your-own time activities and readings. This provides a hands-on approach to becoming a highly effective digital educator, particularly as we pivot our instructional models due to COVID-19.

Our teachers are not the only ones actively engaged in summer learning opportunities. In partnership with GoSTEAM at Georgia Tech, rising 6th, 7th, and 8th grade scholars received full scholarships to virtual summer camps. Three scholars will participate daily in acting games, record their performances on FlipGrid, and learn acting and performance techniques with the Alliance Theatre. Two scholars will learn how to create mobile apps and games on a variety of mobile and computer platforms through CEISMC at Georgia Tech. Over twenty scholars will receive additional academic support through our partnership with Horizons at Georgia Tech to help prevent summer learning loss.

2020-2021 Academic Year: There is still uncertainty as to the instructional model for the 2020-2021 academic year. We are still waiting to receive guidance from the Atlanta Public Schools District whether schools in APS will reopen in a face-to-face, virtual, or hybrid environment. As a charter school, Centennial will be expected to adhere to the guidance provided by APS and public health officials, however, there may be some flexibility as it pertains to the implementation of the instructional model. I am a member of the APS charter leader re-opening committee and was selected to join the Georgia Charter Schools Association (GCSA) COVID-19 Charter School Reopening Task Force. School leaders are coming together to

proactively anticipate challenges and analyze proposed solutions for schools to reopen in the 2020-2021 school year. Scholars' health, safety, and academic needs will be the key driver of decision-making throughout the work of the taskforce and we are focusing on key areas including:

- Budgeting for FY21
- Legal/health & safety issues
- Professional development
- State-wide accountability
- Technology - hardware & connectivity
- Reopening scenarios

I have also convened two internal re-opening planning committees with members representing instructional leadership, operational team members, teachers, and our parent liaison. A special thank you to our board member, Chris Burke, who has shared planning tools from Georgia Tech to aid in the decision making process. It is our goal to communicate a final decision regarding next year's school model by mid-July once additional information is received from the district.

Fundraising: We are actively engaged with Coxe, Curry & Associates on fundraising efforts for the 20-21 academic year as we anticipate additional expenses due to COVID-19 preparedness. Over the coming weeks, I will personally reach out to foundations in the metro-Atlanta area in hopes of scheduling virtual meetings as many have pledged support in response to the coronavirus, particularly those that have joined forces as members of the Atlanta Emergency Response Collaborative.

Final Enrollment:

Grade Level	Total	Grade Level	Total	Grade Level	Total
Kindergarten	80	3rd Grade	112	6th Grade	97
1st Grade	103	4th Grade	94	7th Grade	73
2nd Grade	90	5th Grade	97	8th Grade	73
				All Grades	819

In light of the recent unrest across the country due to the violent deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd, Centennial remains committed to standing firm for equity and justice, particularly as it pertains to education. We firmly believe in our black scholars and black staff, and will add training on social justice issues in addition to trauma-informed practices for all staff members during pre-planning. We have also partnered with Pathways Mental Health Counseling to secure a full-time school-based mental health therapist for the 20-21 academic year for individual and family therapy free of charge to the school. Our beautiful and diverse community remains united as we hold firm to the belief that we are #CentennialSTRONG!

Warmest regards,

Tequila Lamar

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Head of School