

January 26, 2021

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Rome City Schools Announces Schools Closing and Start of Virtual Learning Due to COVID-19**

**ROME, GA**— At the direction of Superintendent Louis Byars, all Rome City Schools will transition from in-person learning to live virtual learning on Thursday, January 28, 2021 through Friday, February 5, 2021 due to the rising number of COVID cases and the number of students and staff having to quarantine. RCS currently has over 750 students, faculty and staff members in quarantine due to possible exposure or positive test results. Return date to in-person learning is subject to the number of cases meeting the requirements of the RCS Decision Matrix.

Rome City Schools will continue to offer Virtual Online Live Tutoring (VOLT), a program offered by RCS and started in September by the system. VOLT is an online tutoring service designed to offer students educational resources and help provide educational support. For more information regarding VOLT, please contact your school's administration.

We plan to continue with all extracurricular activities, and the system will provide transportation each day for those students who need it. If you have questions regarding practice schedules or event details, please contact your school's athletic department.

Rome City Schools Nutrition will send home two days' worth of meals on Wednesday, January 27 to students. Meals for next week will be available for pickup on Monday, February 1, between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Meals will be available at all elementary schools, as well as at Rome Middle School and Rome High School. Students can pick-up meals at any school.

RCS safety protocols, in partnership with the Department of Public Health for cleaning and sanitizing any affected areas, is in progress. We will continue to follow the guidelines and recommendations from the Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Department of Health, and the Center for Disease Control. The safety and security of our students, faculty and staff remains our number one priority.