



Addison G. Davis
Superintendent of Schools

CLAY COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOLS

900 Walnut Street
Green Cove Springs, Florida 32043

MEDIA ADVISORY

BOARD MEMBERS:

Janice Kerekes
District 1
Carol Studdard
District 2
Betsy Condon
District 3
Mary Bolla
District 4
Ashley Gilhousen
District 5

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Nicole Snyder, (904) 336-6511
nicole.snyder@myoneclay.net

CLAY COUNTY SCHOOLS PREPARES FOR SOLAR ECLIPSE

Clay County Schools to operate as scheduled during event; outdoor activities to be moved inside

CLAY COUNTY, Fla. August 15, 2017 --- All Clay County Schools will proceed as scheduled on Monday, August 21, during the solar eclipse. All outside after-school and athletic activities will be moved indoors from 1:00 p.m. to 4:15 p.m.

The District is encouraging all faculty, staff, students, and parents to take appropriate safety measures when viewing the eclipse. Due to the impact of this event, schools may experience unintentional delays in transportation. However, the District is asking for everyone to remain on schedule with regularly released hours. The District's Operations Department will be working with all school-based leaders to ensure that proper lighting is available during the timing of the eclipse.

"We are looking forward to this educational opportunity. We know teachers are working to develop lessons that are aligned to this event. It is imperative that staff members work collectively with their principals to obtain approval for all activities to ensure student safety. All outdoor activities must have approved equipment along with proper guidance to students in order to have a safe learning experience," said Superintendent Addison Davis.

Attached is a letter that will be sent to all parents on Tuesday, August 15. This letter provides an opportunity for parents to OPT out of any activity related to the solar eclipse.

Below is a list of guidelines and FAQs sent out to all staff members:

ECLIPSE INFORMATION SUMMARY

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| <u>Times:</u> | Partial Eclipse Begins: | 1:16 pm |
| | Maximum Partial Eclipse: | 2:48 pm (lasting 2-3 minutes) |
| | Partial Eclipse Ends: | 4:12 pm |
| | Eclipse Magnitude: | 92% darkness at max |
| <u>DO:</u> | Encourage students to learn more about the solar eclipse. Take appropriate safety precautions during the window of the eclipse. Use dedicated eclipse glasses. Supervise school-based activities at all times. | |
| <u>DO NOT:</u> | Look at the sun without proper eye protection. Look at the sun through a telescope or binoculars. Look at the sun through sunglasses, smoked glasses, or welder's glasses. Look at the sun through a camera/smart phone. | |

WARNING: Do not allow anyone to look at the sun without proper eye protection. **Regular sunglasses are not strong enough** to be used during an eclipse. The human eye can be severely damaged from looking directly at the sun, even when it is partially eclipsed.

"Discovering Endless Possibilities"

Equal Opportunity Employer

Frequently Asked Questions

1. QUESTION: WHAT TO EXPECT ON MONDAY, AUGUST 21ST?

ANSWER: On August 21st, the United States will witness its first solar eclipse since February 26, 1979. A solar eclipse occurs when the orbit of the moon lines up perfectly and the moon passes directly in front of the sun. The shadow cast by the moon is known as the path of totality as it sends a 70-mile wide shadow across the surface of the earth. People inside the path of totality will witness a total solar eclipse, meaning the moon will completely block out the sun and result in approximately three minutes of total darkness.

In Clay County, we are outside the path of totality but still close enough that we will be inside the penumbral shadow of the moon. This means that the moon will block a majority of the sun but not all of it. Astronomers expect Clay County to be treated to an eclipse magnitude of approximately 92%, meaning the moon will cover roughly 92% of the sun. This will result in a very significant partial solar eclipse.

2. QUESTION: WHAT IS IT GOING TO BE LIKE DURING THE DAY? WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT DURING THE ECLIPSE?

ANSWER: If you are inside the path of totality (the closest spot to Clay County is South Carolina) it will get dark for roughly three minutes during the middle of the eclipse. In Northeast Florida, the partial eclipse will begin at 1:16 pm and end at 4:12 pm. During that time, we will be able to see the moon passing directly in front of the sun, resulting in the appearance of a crescent sun. Clay County will observe the maximum partial eclipse at 2:48 pm, meaning at that time the moon will cover the largest amount of the sun.

Although we will not experience total darkness, as the moon passes in front of the sun, we can expect it to somewhat darken outside. At its maximum, it might appear as if it was sunset or dusk outside. Please remember no matter how much of the sun is covered, you still need to wear special eye protection to look at the sun.

3. QUESTION: IS THE CLAY COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT CHANGING ANY SCHOOL TIMES FOR THE DAY OF THE ECLIPSE?

ANSWER: All school start and stop times will proceed as scheduled on Monday, August 21. Students will not be dismissed early or kept late due to the eclipse. Employees will also work their contractual hours and the District will provide resources to educate parents, teachers, and students on how to interact with the eclipse.

4. QUESTION: WHAT ABOUT STUDENTS WHO DO NOT ATTEND SCHOOL TO VIEW THE ECLIPSE?

ANSWER: The District will continue to follow state guidelines for attendance policies, even on the day of the eclipse. The District is able to offer excused absences for eclipse viewing.

5. QUESTION: IS THERE ANY WAY I CAN SAFELY LOOK AT THE SUN DURING THE ECLIPSE?

ANSWER: It is unsafe to look directly at, or stare into, the sun. Looking at the sun during the eclipse for even few seconds can cause permanent damage. In order to safely view an eclipse, you must have specially designed glasses known as solar safe glasses. You must use glasses that meet or exceed **ISO 12312-2** requirements and are marked as safe for direct observation of the sun. Sunglasses are not strong enough to be used during an eclipse and do not offer sufficient protection.

6. QUESTION: WHAT PRECAUTIONS WILL THE CLAY COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT TAKE TO ENSURE EVERYONE'S SAFETY DURING THE ECLIPSE?

“Discovering Endless Possibilities”

Equal Opportunity Employer

ANSWER: As always, the Clay County School District places the utmost importance on the safety of our students and employees. Our Operations Department, including facilities and maintenance, are working to ensure all outdoor lights are operational. Additionally, we are asking all school principals to assign any available staff to outdoor positions during the maximum eclipse phase as well as during dismissal and student pick-up times to help monitor students and maintain a safe environment.

###

“Discovering Endless Possibilities”

Equal Opportunity Employer