



Solar Eclipse August 21, 2017 Parent Information

Dear Parent/Guardian

The Atlanta area will observe a partial solar eclipse on Monday, August 21st. The event will begin at approximately 1:00 pm and conclude at approximately 4:00 pm as the moon clears from in front of the sun. The eclipse will reach its peak at approximately 2:35 pm. At this point 97.4% of the sun will be blocked by the moon. Throughout this entire time any direct viewing of the eclipse should be done with the aid of special viewing filters. Looking at the sun without the filters can cause permanent damage to the retina of the eye.

The DeKalb County School District is delaying the dismissal of schools by one hour in the afternoon of Monday, August 21, 2017. The delay in student dismissal allows our schools to use this unique event as an instructional opportunity. The schools will be utilizing the event to teach the students about the sun, the moon, and how they travel through space. The District will provide all schools with CE certified and ISO 12312-2 compliant solar filters or safety glasses for student use.

If one of the planned instructional activities, in your student's classroom, includes the teacher taking the students outside to view the event, the specialized filters provided to the students will allow for students to safely view the eclipse. Instructions for the use of the special viewing filters will be supplied by the astronomers from Fernbank Science Center. A brief example of the instructions can be found on the Center's website at <http://fsc.fernbank.edu/eclipse.htm>. An **Opt-In form** for outside viewing is attached and is required for students to participate in outside viewing activities. Recognizing this is an exciting event for all, student behavior will be closely monitored during the viewing.

Afternoon dismissal will adhere to the district's delayed release schedule. The district will utilize the standard three tier bus schedule with elementary schools dismissing first. This will be followed by the high schools and then the middle schools. Parents are encouraged to contact the local school to receive the exact time for dismissal.

We want to emphasize that solar eclipses, with this amount of coverage, are rare. The next one will not occur until 2024. We are hoping that with proper safety procedures this becomes a very memorable experience for our community. Thank you for the opportunity to utilize this special learning opportunity and to engage your student in the learning process. Additional background information on the eclipse can be found in the Solar Eclipse Guidance document provided by the school district.

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