



LAURENS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mr. Jerry Hatcher, Interim Superintendent

Dr. Jameson Travick, Associate Superintendent

Ms. Holly Deal, Associate Superintendent

Dr. Ronda Hightower, Associate Superintendent

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 10, 2017

LAURENS COUNTY, GA- On **August 21, 2017**, the middle Georgia area will experience a solar eclipse at approximately 2:41 p.m. As a result, the Laurens County School System will release students early so all pupils will be home safely during the darkest hours of the event.

Early release on August 21 will begin at 12:00 p.m. Prior to this event, teachers will conduct lessons on the eclipse so students can learn about this rare occurrence. Lunch schedules will be adjusted to accommodate the early release.

The most dangerous time is not during the approximate two-minutes of the height of the eclipse, but rather in the approximate two hour window surrounding the eclipse. School officials cannot ensure all students will utilize the recommended special eye protection properly throughout the duration of the event. Moreover, officials do not recommend driving during the eclipse, and bus drivers, bus riders, and student drivers would be facing the sun directly during many of the afternoon routes.

In an abundance of caution, district leaders consulted with system and school administrators and completed a thorough review of recommendations from external agencies including the Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia Department of Transportation. The district has determined early release is the best option for students and staff. While we regret the inconvenience this may cause, the safety of students and staff remains the top priority of the Laurens County School System.

For more information regarding the solar eclipse, parents may want to consult these resources:

<http://www.weather.gov/sgf/SolarEclipse>. *The National Weather Service*

<https://eclipse2017.nasa.gov/> *NASA Eclipse website*

<https://eclipse.aas.org> *American Astronomical Society*

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