



Building Bridges for today's students to cross into tomorrow's world with equity, innovation and optimism

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James J. Montesano, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

May 22, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

I hope this letter finds you in good health and positive spirits. On behalf of our Board of Education, administrators and staff, I want to thank our Nyack families for your cooperation and assistance with our ongoing remote learning program. It is our sincere hope that we will soon be reunited as we truly miss seeing you.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about a multitude of challenges to our school community as well as societal changes to our everyday way of life. We are especially proud of our instructional staff and students who have reconstructed and re-designed our educational program during these unprecedented times. Below please find some important updates as we move closer to the end of the 2019-20 school year.

Memorial Day

Schools will be closed on Monday, May 25 in recognition of Memorial Day. There will be no remote learning activities planned for that day.

Last Day of School

School will conclude on Wednesday, June 17th. This will represent the 180th day of student attendance as well as the date our staff will reach its maximum contractual workdays.

Retrieving Personal Belongings

Parents/Guardians should have received communications from your School Principal(s) who have been scheduling times for students to safely enter our buildings to retrieve personal belongings. Arrangements are being made for families who may be unable to physically come to their school. If you have not received this information from your child's school, please contact your Principal.

Graduation/End of Year Ceremonies

Perhaps the most heartbreaking outcome of the pandemic is knowing that our graduating Class of 2020 will be deprived of a traditional ceremony. The majority of our Seniors have been in the Nyack Schools for thirteen years and have distinguished themselves in the classroom, concert stage, athletic fields, play productions and as a class whose character is greatly admired by our faculty and administration. We have received wonderfully creative feedback from our community to assist us in planning a memorable experience for this outstanding group of young men and women. Our Seniors will be receiving letters detailing the activities that have been planned to honor our graduating Class of 2020. The activities will include opportunities for our students to be presented with their diplomas and having pictures taken with their parents. Most importantly, the activities have been reviewed by County health officials and represent

our best efforts to recognize our students while protecting the health and safety of all of our school stakeholders and complying with the Governor's Executive Orders.

Parents will also be receiving information regarding our 8th grade promotional exercises, 5th grade 'clap outs' and kindergarten 'move-up' ceremonies.

Reopening Schools

Following the announcement by Governor Cuomo that schools will remain closed for the remainder of the school year, planning has begun surrounding the eventual reopening of our schools. This planning process will have multiple tiers with an understanding that the health, safety and wellness of students and staff will be the highest priority. We must also recognize that as medical experts continue to learn more about COVID-19, and the conditions surrounding the crisis evolve, plans may be subject to change or be amended. At the State level, Governor Cuomo has established a reopening task force to plan for the reopening of schools in New York. This task force is comprised of 116 members that include a cross-section of people across the state and including representation of higher education, real estate industry, the financial sector, sports teams and commerce. The Governor's task force does not include any representation from the K-12 educational community. The State Education Department has also convened a task force focusing on the reopening of schools made up of K-12 superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, school board members and other stakeholders. Recognizing that different areas of the State will be confronted with unique challenges, Rockland County has formed a county-level task force with representation from each of the school districts within the county. A member of the Board of Regents is attending meetings with the Rockland County group and will be communicating information from the State task force as the process moves forward. The county task force also includes representation of the County Health Department, Social Services and Mental Health agencies. The Nyack Schools will be developing our own group of stakeholders to review the work of the county and state committees and utilize our collective expertise to address the needs of our students, families, staff and community-at-large. Among the areas under review are, *logistics of transportation, restarting education programs, health and safety, scheduling issues, technology issues, budget issues, social emotional learning, athletics/extracurricular activities, Special Education, Bilingual Education and staffing*. It will be our intention to work directly with our local Health Department and stakeholders to ensure that protocols that are established reflect best practices and align with the most current scientific knowledge and community expectations.

Annual School Budget Vote/Board Election

The Annual School Budget and Board Election vote will be held on June 9, 2020 beginning at 5:00 p.m. In accordance with Executive Order No. 202.26, the Budget Vote and Board Election will be held remotely, by Absentee Ballot only. Qualified voters of our school district will receive an absentee ballot by mail with a postage paid return envelope. All returned ballots must be received by 5:00 p.m. on June 9, 2020 in order to be counted. To be a qualified voter you must be a U.S. Citizen, at least 18 years old by June 9, 2020, a School District resident for 30 days immediately preceding the vote, and registered to vote in School District elections and having voted in any School District election/vote during the past 4 calendar years. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, there will be no personal voter registration held at school district offices prior to the June 9, 2020 vote. If you are not registered, you can register through the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles website at: <https://dmv.ny.gov/more-info/electronic-voter-registration-application>.

There are five (5) candidates on the ballot running for the Board of Education. Voters will be asked to choose any three (3):

- Beth Davidson
- Steven Francisco
- Leeann Irvin
- Jen Marraccino
- James Marshall

I hope that you and your loved ones are safe and healthy.

Sincerely,



James J. Montesano, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

JJM:ld

**Si ou bezwen enfòmasyon tradui an kreyòl, rele Jocelyne Abraham nan 353-7044.
Si le hace falta información traducida en español, llame a Yesenia Polanco 353-7042.**