



Dear Families,

September 18, 2020

I hope you and your loved ones are safe and healthy. I am writing to you today with an important update on the start of school.

As you know, for months we have been preparing to reopen our school buildings so that if COVID-19 infection rates fell low enough in our city, we would be ready to welcome students back to school. And thanks to all of you and everything you have done over the last six months, we are there. The city has seen infection rates hovering around 1% for several weeks, making us the only city in the country able to reopen.

Just as you have done everything necessary to flatten the curve of COVID-19, we have made a pledge to you [schools.nyc.gov/pledge] that we would put health and safety first to help keep it flat. That is what we have done—inspecting tens of thousands of classrooms for proper ventilation; distributing millions of pieces of PPE and cleaning supplies; prioritizing students and staff for expedited COVID-19 testing; requiring face coverings and physical distancing; developing a swift and strong testing, quarantine, and tracing protocol anytime we might see COVID-19 activity in our schools; and more.

All of this means that we have needs we never have before—for more supplies, more staff, more facilities, more inspections, more training. To fulfill all these needs, we need more time.

We have come to an agreement with our union partners to allow for that time, resulting in the new staggered schedule below for the start of the 2020-21 school year. If you have a child in blended learning, they will be learning remotely until their in-person start date as outlined here:

- Monday, September 21:
 - Full-Day teaching and learning begins for fully remote students
 - In-Person Learning Begins for 3K, Pre-K, and District 75 students ONLY
**according to students' specific schedules—check to see if your child should report on Mondays*

- Monday, September 28: In-person learning begins for kindergarten through 5th grade students ONLY **according to students' specific schedules—check yours to see if you should report on Mondays*

- Thursday, October 1: In-person learning begins for students in middle (grades 6-8) and high school (grades 9-12) **according to students' specific schedules—check yours to see if you should report on Mondays*

We know that for many of you this is difficult, as you seek to reconnect with your school community in person as soon as possible. But we also know that we are accountable for our pledge to deliver a strong, safe, and supportive education to every student this year. Many families and educators are concerned and we want each of you to know that this additional time means that we hear you and we are acting.

I always say that New York City has the best students, staff, and families in the world, and nothing will ever change that—no matter when, where, and how we are learning.

Thank you for everything you do for your children and this city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard A. Carranza". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "C".

Richard A. Carranza
Chancellor
New York City Department of Education