

September 4, 2020

Dear Families,

As we approach the start of the school year, everyone at the New York City Department of Education is laser-focused on delivering a high-quality education that puts your child's health, safety, and emotional wellbeing first this fall. An education that creates a new standard of excellence for learning from any location. An education that will prepare your children to thrive—today, tomorrow, next year, and for the rest of their lives.

I want to share with you that full-day learning for all students will begin on Monday, September 21. A few days before that, beginning on Wednesday, September 16 through Friday, September 18, all students and teachers will engage remotely for a partial-day instructional transition and orientation to help students reconnect to school. Taking this time will help ensure all children are ready to learn and succeed.

In this letter, we include updates on what that teaching and learning will look like. You will find additional information on how our schools will support every student every day—whether they are participating in fully remote or blended learning (in which they are learning in school buildings for part of the week, and remotely for the rest of the week).

Read the Reopening Update for Families below to find more information on:

- How your child will learn at home: Live interaction and lessons with teachers, and projects that students complete on their own
- Who will be teaching your child in blended or fully remote learning
- How to stay informed on confirmed COVID-19 cases in your school community

If you have questions regarding the information in this letter, please contact your principal. Principal information is on each school's web page at schools.nyc.gov, in the "School Contacts and Information" section. You can find the page for your child's school on our website using Find a School: schoolsearch.schools.nyc. And as always, all information regarding back to school can be found at schools.nyc.gov/returntoschool2020.

You have heard me say that New York City has the best, strongest, most committed students, staff, and families anywhere. Every day, you continue to prove that true beyond any shadow of a doubt. I want to reaffirm our pledge to take absolutely every precaution to keep your children healthy and safe. And to ensure they receive the high-quality education they deserve no matter how or where they are learning.

I am so excited to welcome all our children and educators back to their school communities soon!

Sincerely,



Richard A. Carranza
Chancellor
New York City Department of Education

Reopening Update for Families: September 4, 2020

This information and additional details can be found at our school reopening webpage at schools.nyc.gov/returntoschool2020 to help you prepare for the upcoming school year.

How Will My Child Learn at Home?

Whether learning remotely from home part of the week or every day, students will receive remote instruction in two different ways: live interaction (sometimes referred to as “synchronous instruction”) with teachers, and independent learning (sometimes referred to as “asynchronous instruction”), which includes assignments, projects, or recorded video lessons. Let us explain what that means:

Live interaction means that your student will interact with their teacher on video, phone, live chat, virtual app, or another digital mode in real time. The teacher may be interacting with the whole class, small groups, or individual students. It can be done over Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, or other DOE-approved video or phone conferencing or digital platforms. It includes:

- Class Lessons;
- Office Hours to connecting in real time with teachers to get individual or small group help with instruction or instructional activities;
- Social-emotional wellness activities such as sharing circles or mindfulness exercises; or
- Feedback discussions with students and families about their work and progress via video or phone.
- Other “live participation” activities, such as chat, offered by the digital platform used by educators during lessons.

At the beginning of the school year, here are the target amounts we are asking all schools to engage their students in live interaction and instruction each day:

- Students in 3-K and Pre-K programs: up to 30 minutes
- Students in kindergarten through grade 2: 65 to 95 minutes
- Students in grades 3–5: 90 to 110 minutes
- Middle school students in grades 6–8: 80 to 100 minutes
- High school students in grades 9–12: 100 to 120 minutes

The amount of time devoted to live instruction will increase each month for all grades as the school year progresses to allow students and teachers to gradually transition. Scheduled times will be posted so that students and staff alike can plan for engagement.

Independent learning means your student will work on their own with assignments, projects, and materials provided by their teachers. This might include:

- Video lessons or presentations recorded previously
- Activities, assignments or tasks that build on lessons from previous days
- Collaborative projects and assignments with classmates
- Discussion boards and conversation, feedback, or guidance from teachers over email



Who Will Be Teaching My Child?

Your child will have a high-quality educator leading their education, no matter where they're learning. Instruction may look a little bit different in every school, reflecting the specific needs of the school community, but here is what you can generally expect:

For Students in Blended Learning

Blended learning refers to a combination of on-site, in-person instruction at the school some days of the week, and remote instruction at home on remaining days.

Your child may have different teachers for on-site and remote learning. Those teachers will work closely together in pairs or teams to create meaningful and connected learning experiences. For example, a student may begin a project in person and then continue to work on it while remote.

During the remote portion of blended learning, your child will regularly be with the same group of students with whom they attend in person.

For Students in Full-Time Remote Learning

Where possible, students engaging in full-time remote learning will be taught by teachers from their own school. Teachers will regularly meet with the same group of students on specific days.

How to Stay Informed on Confirmed COVID-19 Cases in Your School Community

It's important that your school can reach you to share crucial information quickly, including alerts about confirmed COVID-19 cases in your child's school. Please sign up for a NYC Schools Account (NYCSA) so we can contact you via phone, email, or text message. With NYCSA, you can access your child's grades, test scores, schedules, transportation information, and more—from anywhere, and in all nine standard DOE language translations. If you don't have an account, sign up today at schools.nyc.gov/nycsa. It only takes five minutes!