

New Dawn Charter Schools Reopening Plan

Background

On March 15, Mayor Di Blasio closed New York City, followed by the closure of all NYS schools by Governor Cuomo. New Dawn Charter Schools anticipated these regulations and moved ahead with a full remote learning plan to ensure that all students would not only have access to their learning, but regular contact with their mentors and teachers. Remote learning has been ongoing since this closure was announced without interruption.

New Dawn Charter Schools has two sites. One school was located at 760 Dekalb Avenue in Brooklyn, and will be moving back to their original home at 242 Hoyt Street. The Queens campus opened for the first time in September 2019 at 161-06 89th Avenue, and will be moving to its permanent home at 89-25 161st Street in September. Both schools have been open weekly for students to access materials throughout the entire closure period. The Brooklyn campus has served as the main hub particularly when the number of cases was so high in Jamaica. Many parents and families picked up Chromebooks at the Brooklyn campus. Eligible families also received tablets from the NYC DOE.

The generalities of this plan are organized along the lines of the DOH guidance of people, places and processes. This is followed by the specifics of reopening for the fall semester.

I. People

A. Social Distancing and Face Coverings

Classrooms are currently organized with the recommended six feet between all desks including the teacher's desk. There will be no elevator use and moving between classes will be limited to movement in specific directions. While transitions are the largest areas of exposure, according to the NYC DOH, social distancing does not need to be observed for periods under 10 minutes. Our transitions between classes is three minutes. All students will be expected to wear masks during transitions.

Students and staff will be expected to wear masks while in the building at all times except during instruction where they will all be 6 feet apart and during lunch. We understand from the NYC DOH that students who are medically and/or behaviorally incapable of wearing masks can receive waivers and will not be expected to adhere to this. For our very high population of emotional disturbed students, we expect this percentage to be around 50% of adult students in the building at any time. Because of this, our cohort groupings are very small, keeping the number of students in the building at any one time very low. Face masks and hand sanitizer will be available at the front desk at check in.

We will have staggered arrival times for students. Temperatures will be taken at the front desk, unfortunately we understand that the NYC DOH would prefer to have this done at home by parents, but many of our homes do not even have thermometers and many of our students are homeless or in temporary housing situations and this will not keep the community safe. We will have staff and marked spots so that students will be socially distanced during the start of the school day. All staff, consultant, vendors, etc., will complete the check-in procedure every day at the front desk. Teachers arrive significantly earlier than students.

Twelve feet distancing will be maintained during PE and the basketball season will be cancelled. The school will be completely closed to all individuals who are not students or who are not the parents of students with an appointment.

Signs will be posted throughout the school regarding public health protections against COVID-19 as outlined in the NYS DOH Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

B. Gatherings

There will be no gatherings other than in the classrooms where desks will be separated by 6 feet. We currently have no small spaces for use by students. We do have individual offices, but these spaces are occupied by only one person. While staff will be onsite, all staff meetings will be held over Zoom with the content teachers appropriately socially distance within a classroom. One classroom will be for the three math teachers, another for the three History teachers, etc.

Both schools have just recently replaced their HVAC systems and will use HEPA filters. The lunch room and culinary kitchen will be closed to all students for the time being. Students will eat lunch in a classroom with their mentors. Bathrooms will be monitored to ensure only one student is using it at a time—which both schools already do.

C. Operational Activities

Due to the huge number of students who we expect to have waivers from wearing masks, our cohort will be small. These cohorts will have assigned days to attend school. Using new tools developed by Jupiter Ed, our SIS, we will be able to stream all classes. All materials will also be posted on Jupiter and streamed classes will be recorded and available to any student at any time. All students will be in school every week, and there will be a focus on struggling students during the month of September.

D. Movement and Commerce

We have staggered arrival times and our teachers come to school much earlier than students. Everyone checks in with security before entering the school. All our students are between 16 and 22 years of age and ride subways and busses to attend school. Teachers will be responsible for disinfecting shared objects (pens, pencils, desktops, calculators, Chrome books) between each class.

II. Places

A. Personal Protective Equipment

Everyone will be expected to wear a mask and masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer will be available for all students and staff. Everyone may bring their own masks if they wish.

B. Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection

The Director of Operations at the school oversees the janitorial companies and all were training on deep cleaning and disinfection during COVID-19 as outlined in the CDC and DOH, Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19. “Stop the spread” posters will be displayed. Records will be kept of all cleanings.

Students will be training on appropriate procedures in September and all information will be included on the Schools’ websites. All appropriate hand sanitizers (60% alcohol or greater), soap, water, paper

towels, etc. will be available with the appropriate signage. Wipes will be available in all classrooms and office spaces. Sanitizers and hand wipes will be available next to all high touch surfaces.

Space will be cleaned throughout the day and deep cleanings will occur at night. In the event we have a staff or student who has been exposed to, or has, COVID-19 the janitorial staff will follow the guidelines as listed by the NYS DOH and be supervised by the Director of Operations.

C. Coordination and Phased Reopening

A COVID-19 Safety Coordinator will be assigned at each school and overseen by the Director of Operations.

D. Communications Plan

We have involved administrators, teachers, Board members, parents/families, NYC DOH, Department of Education, and attorneys in the development of this plan. Parents and students will be notified by webpage, social media, email, and texts. We will work with local institutions on the monitoring strategies for public health conditions because they have been so helpful so far.

III. Process

A. Screening and Testing

All students and staff will have a temperature check at the front desk. We know our students and parents will not be able to call in every morning with a temperature check. Anyone with a temperature of 100 or higher will be sent home. If the person has a temperature two days in a row, they will not be allowed back to school until they return with a doctor's note. In the event that they do have COVID-19 there will be a two week quarantine period.

In addition, all employed adults, vendors, repair people, etc., will complete a survey as outlined in the NYS DOH Guidelines. No one other than those with direct school business will be allowed into the buildings and then they must complete the survey. No screenings will take place at the schools but we have relationships with walk-in clinics nearby that we can refer students to for testing.

B. School Health Offices

We have identified a dedicated area to separate individuals who become sick during the day with the appropriate adult supervision.

C. Tracing and Tracking

We are hoping that the NYC DOH will revise its thinking on notifying the school if they find anyone who is positive or has been exposed to COVID-19. This would be a great help in keeping our students and staff safe. When a student has the measles we are immediately notified, why not for COVID-19 as well. In the meantime, we will follow all protocols with reporting students we find who are positive or have been exposed. We will follow all guidelines listed in the Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure.

Below are the specifics for opening the two schools.

Summer Semester

After celebrating a very successful spring semester, both campuses have joined together to teach the summer semester. New Dawn students have high attendance, high pass rates in course completion, and for the Brooklyn campus, our highest graduation rate EVER. We are very proud of the work that our students and staff have accomplished since moving to this remote model. The summer semester will conclude on August 14th, with classes ending officially August 7th and final exams August 10-14th. Students must submit final exams and complete their Regents courses in order to earn a Regents waiver for the summer 2020.

Looking ahead

New Dawn Charter Schools is committed to continuing to offer students high quality, individualized instruction while COVID-19 continues to threaten the health and safety of our families. It is our belief that in order to have a safe environment, we must limit the number of people in our buildings, and also limit the travel that our students and families must make in order to get to school. This is very important to us, as we serve students who travel from all over New York City and many of our students take mass transit, transferring and traveling long distances.

With safety in mind, we have developed a system of instruction that maintains the regulations as set forth by the New York State Department of Health, and the New York State Department of Education. These regulations for the NYS DOH can be found here: https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/Pre-K_to_Grade_12_Schools_MasterGuidance.pdf and the regulations for reopening from NYSED can be found here: <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/reopening-schools/nys-p12-school-reopening-guidance.pdf>

Phase 0: Remote Learning Continues.

This is our current state of activity and will continue to serve our students and families in this model until the Governor releases new guidance.

Phase 1: Orientation

The following scenario is in place ONLY if the Governor announces that students can come to school. If the Governor announces that schools will remain in remote learning, then we will continue as we have since the first announcement in March, 2020 (Phase 0).

If the Governor announces that schools begin face to face instruction, the following will take place:

Staff

All staff are expected to report to work on September 9, 2020. During this time they will be reaching out to students and scheduling them for classes. Appropriate social distancing professional development will also take place on this day.

New Families

New Dawn enrolls new families throughout the school year, but September is the biggest portion of our enrollment period. Therefore, we are holding new family orientation throughout the month of September. Families will schedule their orientation with the Parent Coordinators of both schools. The Parent Coordinator at our Brooklyn campus is Ms. Kim Fields, and can be reached at 347-505-9105 to make an appointment. The Parent Coordinator at our Queens campus is Ms. Connie Francis, and can be reached at 347-947-2580 to make an appointment. It is important to note that the Queens campus is

openly enrolling students ages 16-21 and have LESS than 19 credits. The campus in Brooklyn is accepting students ages 15-21 and with all credit levels.

Returning Students

During September, those students who struggled during the spring semester and summer semester will be schedule to attend school specifically to get support to catch up. These students have already been identified and our School Wellness Counselor and Dean of School are contacting these families. We will also have more laptops and Chromebooks available for those students who do not have the technology.

Also during September, small cohorts of students will be brought to the school for classes on appropriate behavior during COVID-19 which will include, but not be limited to, facial coverings disposal and cleaning, disinfecting items, hand washing, etc.

While new families are in the building, all other students will be working remotely. Students will report REMOTELY for testing September 10-11, and then engage in new classes for the fall semester beginning on September 14th. Students will be hearing from their school leaders and mentors about their scheduling and testing appointments. Please look to Jupiter for any important messages that relate to scheduling and enrollments.

Health and Safety.

Any person entering either campus will be subject to an evaluation prior to entering the building. Temperatures will be checked at the door along with our usual daily intake procedures. Temperature checks are in line with the NYSED/DOH regulations, which are linked above.

1. Any person that attempts entry without a mask will be turned away.
2. Anyone that refuses a temperature check will be refused entry.
3. Anyone that has a temperature 100° or over will be refused entry.
 - a. Any student that is sent home with a temperature of 100° two days in a row cannot return to school without a medical clearance.
 - b. Any staff that is sent home with a temperature of 100° two days in a row may not return to school without proper medical clearance.
4. Any student or staff that becomes ill during the school day will be isolated or immediately sent home. They will not be allowed to return to school without the proper clearance.

When students enter the building, they will go directly to their assigned location. Students and staff will follow the proper walkways and stairwell access for entrance and egress per DOH and NYSED regulations. All desks will be kept six feet part.

No student will take off their mask for excessive periods of time, particularly inside school buildings when social distancing is not permissible.

Phase 2: Face to Face Instruction begins with small groups.

Once all families have been enrolled at both campuses and the Governor has permitted face to face instruction, groups of students will be scheduled at both campuses.

Brooklyn Campus

All students will be assigned an A, B, C, D, or E week. Students will report to classes at school for instruction and participate remotely on the assigned days below.

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
A Week	In person	Remote	Remote	Remote	Remote
B Week	Remote	In person	Remote	Remote	Remote
C Week	Remote	Remote	In person	Remote	Remote
D Week	Remote	Remote	Remote	In person	Remote
E Week	Remote	Remote	Remote	Remote	In person

Students have to travel far distances on public transportation to get to the school and we want to minimize their exposure. Plus this allows for just under 50% of the usual number of people in the building at any given time.

Queens Campus

The Queens campus is entering its second year of operation, so their numbers of students are ½ of the Brooklyn Campus. All students will be assigned an A, B, C, D, or E week. Students will report to classes at school for instruction and participate remotely on the assigned days below.

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
A Week	In person	In person	Remote	Remote	Remote
B Week	Remote	In person	In person	Remote	Remote
C Week	Remote	Remote	In person	In person	Remote
D Week	Remote	Remote	Remote	In person	In person
E Week	In person	Remote	Remote	Remote	In person

New Dawn will be adding a series of online programming that will enhance the remote experience, including participating in CTE classes in lieu of internships until we are cleared to place students in the community. *It is important to note that students who are currently working may use their current employment as their internship experience and work with their Research Paper Instructor to tailor their work to that employment experience.*

Phase 3. Hybrid Schedule Continues

At the Queens campus, Phase 3 will continue in this remote model. Our lunch period will be shortened to 20 minutes and students will eat lunch with their mentors in individual classrooms. During this time they can receive help and be directed for further support.

Phase 4. Normal scheduling, with increased safety precautions.

In the event that the Governor makes the announcement that students can return to school full time, we will continue to schedule face to face learning per our regular model. However, we will continue to with all safety precautions but social distancing to ensure that all of our students, families, and staff are safe.

Phase 5. Regular scheduling.

We hope this comes sooner than later, but when COVID-19 is behind us completely, we will return to a full regular schedule without limitations.