

What's Happening in NYC Public Schools

Week of May 24, 2021

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COVID-19 Vaccines for Children Ages 12 and Older

We are excited to share that all New Yorkers age 12 and older are now eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. If you have a child who is at least 12 years old, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene strongly encourages you to make a vaccination appointment for them as soon as possible by visiting vaccinefinder.nyc.gov. You can also call **877-VAX-4-NYC (877-829-4692)** for help making an appointment at a City-run vaccination site. Many sites now have walk-in appointments.

Vaccination is the most important step you can take to protect you and your family from COVID-19. It is especially important for those with an underlying health condition that increases the risk of severe COVID-19 illness, such as asthma, obesity, or diabetes. The same is true for people who live with someone 65 or older or with an underlying health condition that increases the risk of severe COVID-19 illness. **Vaccination is free and available regardless of immigration status.**

In the U.S., the Pfizer vaccine is currently the only vaccine authorized by the Food and Drug Administration for children ages 12 to 17. The Pfizer vaccine has been shown to be very safe and effective at protecting people from severe COVID-19 illness, hospitalization, and death. Your child cannot get COVID-19 from the vaccine.

To find a site offering the Pfizer vaccine, make an appointment, or locate a walk-in site, visit vaccinefinder.nyc.gov. You can also check with your child's healthcare provider to see if they are offering the Pfizer vaccine.

For answers to frequently asked questions, visit nyc.gov/vaccinefacts.

Chancellor Family Engagement Forums

Chancellor Meisha Porter has launched a [five-borough family engagement tour](#) to hear directly from school communities about their top priorities for next school year. These virtual forums are an opportunity for families, teachers, school administrators, and staff to provide Department of Education leadership with their thoughts on the types of resources and support they need as we move towards a full reopening in September.

The remaining three forums will be held from 6:30–8:00 p.m. on these dates:

Queens—Thursday, May 27

Brooklyn—Monday, June 7

Bronx—Wednesday, June 9

How to register:

Families can register for the forums at learndoe.org/chancellor. When you register, you will be asked if you want to ask a question or provide a comment during the event about topics, including health and safety, special education, fall 2021 school reopening, social-emotional learning, and more.

Each forum will be recorded and posted at learndoe.org/chancellor so you may access them at any time. Interpretation services will be available at every forum.

Update on Regents Exams

We want to remind families of high school students that the New York State Regents exams will be administered in person from **June 17–24** for English Language Arts, Living Environment, Physical Setting/Earth Science, and Algebra I. All other subject exams have been cancelled for June, as well as all August Regents exams.

Due to these cancellations, certain students are eligible for Regents exam waivers, including for the four exams still being offered in June. Your child's school will contact you to share information about the waivers and determine your interest in having your child participate in the Regents exams. Students receiving fully remote instruction are not expected to come to school to take the Regents; however, if they would like to participate, they may attend the in-person administration.

Halal Meal Expansion

We are pleased to announce that an additional 11 schools are being certified to serve halal take-out meals, for a total of 43 schools citywide. The additional schools serve students and members of the public in Spanish Harlem, Harlem, Jamaica, Jackson Heights, and Soundview. A full list of schools serving halal meals is available at schools.nyc.gov/FreeMeals.

This expansion reflects the DOE's commitment to respecting the religious identity of all students and to ensuring that children can eat consistent with their dietary needs. All the menus were reviewed by a panel of imams. Each school offering the halal options was inspected and certified by imams, and kitchen staff were trained to prepare food in compliance with halal rules.

This initiative was launched in partnership with the New York City Council to provide meals in the schools and neighborhoods with high demand for halal meals.

School Survey Reminder

The 15th annual NYC School Survey is underway! We encourage all families and teachers in grades 3K through 12, and students in grades 6–12 to visit nycschoolssurvey.org by June 11 to share your thoughts on your school experience this year. Make your voice heard to help make your school a better place to learn!

To view a copy of this document in your language, visit schools.nyc.gov/messagesforfamilies

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