

November 29, 2020

Dear Families,

I hope you have had a restful break, and an opportunity to enjoy time with family.

As you are aware, on November 18, we temporarily closed school buildings for teaching and learning, and all New York City public school students transitioned to fully remote learning. Today, I am pleased to write to you with our plan to reopen school buildings for in-person instruction for many of our students. As always, health and safety remain our highest priorities, and this letter also contains information regarding mandatory weekly in-school testing for COVID-19 in all reopened buildings, and how you can submit the required consent forms.

The guidance below applies to students in blended learning, who have already chosen to learn in the school building part of the week, and from home the rest of the week. Students who chose fully remote learning prior to building closures will continue to learn remotely full time.

When can my child return to in-person learning?

- Students in Grades 3K through Grade 5 will return to in-person learning beginning on **Monday, December 7**.
 - This includes all students in grades 3K through 5, across early education and elementary school types (e.g., in K-2 schools, K-3 schools, K-5 schools, as well as District Pre-K Centers, K-8 schools, and K-12 schools).
 - This excludes schools currently located in State-designated Orange Zones, or Red Zones if they are declared. You can see if your school is currently in one of these Zones at <http://nyc.gov/covidzone>.
- Students in all grade levels in District 75 will return to in-person learning beginning on **Thursday, December 10**.
 - This also excludes schools located in State-designated Orange Zones, or Red Zones.
- Students in grades 6 through 12 (outside of District 75) will continue to learn remotely until further notice.
- Students who have recently traveled outside of New York to a place on the State's travel advisory list must quarantine for 14 days. You also have the option of testing out of quarantine based on the State's guidelines: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>. Students should continue to complete the health questionnaire daily.
- These return dates apply to students in blended learning, including those who selected blended learning during the recent opt-in period.

What do I need to do to return to my school building?

In order for your child to return to in-person learning, you must submit the consent form for in-school COVID-19 testing by the first day your child returns to their school building. Testing will happen weekly for a random selection of staff and students in your child's school. Given the ongoing fight against a citywide resurgence of COVID-19, this mandatory weekly testing for COVID-19 is a crucial part of our plan to keep all schools safe.

Any student in grade 1 or higher returning to school buildings must submit a consent form for COVID-19 testing in school by their first day back in school buildings.

- Any student in grade 1 or higher returning to school buildings must submit a consent form for COVID-19 testing in school by their first day back. 3K, Pre-K, and Kindergarten students are excluded from random testing.
- The test is quick, safe, and easy. A video showing the testing process is available at schools.nyc.gov/covidtesting.

How do I submit consent?

Submitting consent to have your child tested for COVID-19 in school is quick and easy. *Even if you have already submitted consent, we ask you to do so again to ensure your student has the latest consent form on file.* There are two easy ways to submit:

1) Fill out the form online using a New York City Schools Account (NYCSA) at mystudent.nyc.

- If you already have a NYCSA account linked to your student(s): Log in, click your student's name, click "Manage Account," and then when a dropdown menu appears, click "Consent Forms." Read the page, and then choose the consent option at the end for your student.
- If you do not already have a NYCSA account: You can create one right away! If you have an account creation code from your school, you can create a full account in approximately five minutes, and then provide consent as described above. If you do not have an account creation code from your school, you can still provide your consent right away by clicking "Manage Consent" under "COVID-19 Testing" and filling out your and your child's information to provide consent.

2) Print and sign the attached form and bring it to your child's school on the first day they are back in the school building. A printable PDF file is available in ten languages at schools.nyc.gov/covidtesting.

Can my child receive an exemption from weekly random testing?

Exemptions will only be granted in certain limited cases:

- For students who need a medical exemption, due to a health condition that would make it unsafe to undergo testing (e.g., facial trauma, nasal surgery), you will be able to submit a separate form for consideration. This form must be signed by a physician and you must submit medical documentation from a health care provider.
- For students with disabilities who cannot be safely tested in school due to the nature of their disability, you will be able to submit a separate request for an exemption.
- The exemption forms will be available in English on Monday, November 30 at schools.nyc.gov/covidtesting. Translations will be available shortly thereafter.

What happens if I don't submit consent?

You must submit consent by the day that your child returns to your school building; this is the due date, and we need all students to participate.

- If your child comes to school on their first day back for in-person instruction without a consent form on file, principals and school staff will contact you to obtain consent.
- **After that, students without consent forms on file, who do not have a medical or disability-based exemption submitted, must be moved to fully remote instruction.** More information on exemptions will be provided by your child's school principal this week.

What if my child's school is in an Orange or Red Zone?

- As of now, schools in Orange Zones remain closed for in-person learning. We are working with the State to develop a plan to reopen buildings in Orange Zones as soon as possible.
- We will share information as soon as a plan is confirmed with the State of New York.
- There are currently no Red Zones in New York City, but per the State, school buildings in Red Zones would also be closed.

As always, I am grateful for your flexibility and patience as we continue our journey together through this unprecedented year. All of us at the DOE are focused on a strong, supportive education for your child every day—no matter where they are learning—and that will never change.

We look forward to welcoming students back into school buildings in the coming weeks.

Sincerely,



Richard A. Carranza
 Chancellor
 New York City Department of Education

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