

SY21-22 COVID Policies

(Last Updated 9/3/2021)

We have been preparing our school buildings and training our staff to ensure our schools are not only excellent learning environments where our scholars can thrive, but are also safe environments for all members of our community.

While vaccination is the single most powerful tool for keeping our community safe, we know all members of our community can't be vaccinated, especially our scholars under age 12. As we shared during our first town hall of the school year and subsequent campus based community conversations, we are leveraging multiple layers of protection to keep our whole community safe, per the Center of Disease Control (CDC), as we all come back together to learn this fall.

Our layered measures of protection include:

Clean and Safe Environment: We will ensure our buildings are clean and properly ventilated each day before arrival, and maintained throughout the day.

- We will keep windows and rooms open.
- We will purchase space ventilators.
- Routine cleaning throughout the day.

Staff Vaccination & Community Screening: Safety continues with a healthy community. We will ensure every member of our community that enters our building is healthy. Tactics include:

- **We have required all teachers and staff to be vaccinated.**
- Every community member will do a health screen before they enter the building.
- We will test scholars and staff regularly through saliva based PCR tests.
- **What this means for families:**
 - You will need to fill out a health screen for your scholar daily
 - You will need to sign a testing consent form so your scholar can be tested
 - We are asking everyone to stay home if they are feeling sick, actively monitor symptoms and get tested if needed.
 - **If your scholar is not vaccinated and is a close contact to someone who tests positive for COVID**, please let your school know, have your scholar tested and keep them home for ten days.
 - If you and your scholar, who is above the age of 12, are eligible to be vaccinated and are not yet vaccinated, don't delay. Get vaccinated. You can sign up here:
 - www.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.
 - For answers to frequently asked questions about the COVID-19 vaccine, visit nyc.gov/vaccinefacts.

Masks for Everyone. Masks prevent spread of COVID for unvaccinated community members. As long as some of our students are not eligible to be vaccinated, we will ask everyone to stay masked to model mask wearing and keep everyone safe.

Social Distancing and Contact Reduction: We will social distance and reduce contact as much as possible, and use layers of protection when we can't.

- Students and staff will stay 3 feet apart as much as possible.
- We will only do big events outdoors.
- What this means for families
 - You can have an in-person parent meeting, but must stay masked and socially distant
 - Meetings and Family Conference Day will also continue virtually.
 - Home Visits will be held virtually.
 - Unity Meeting will be held virtually and families are welcome to join via zoom.
 - Community Council and Family Engagement events will be held outdoors socially distanced or virtually.

Consistent Hygiene Routines: We will take care of our community, ensuring everyone's personal hygiene, washing hands and using hand sanitizer. We will handwash/sanitize:

- Upon entrance to the school building each morning
- Before and after eating or handling food
- After coming in contact with bodily fluids
- After handling garbage
- Before and after using shared equipment or supplies
- After restroom use

Symptom Management and Emergency Protocols: When there is a positive case in the community, we will work quickly with clear systems and communication to minimize exposure in case of COVID positive test

- While the CDC and New York State Dept of Education has advised that only an infected student needs to quarantine and classes don't have to close when one student tests positive, we are **going to exercise an abundance of caution this fall and we will be closing the impacted class and shifting to remote learning when a student tests positive**. The closure period will span ten calendar days until further notice
- What this means for families:
 - If your scholar does test positive for COVID, please let us know ASAP and keep them home for ten days.
 - If a scholar in your child's class tests positive, we will send out notification, we will provide appropriate materials for remote learning, and we will start remote learning for all non-vaccinated students throughout the ten day closure.
 - Symptom-free vaccinated students and vaccinated teachers will continue to come to school and will be tested through our testing program.

How long do we anticipate full class closures due to positive COVID cases?

- We will continue to monitor the data, science and research, and to consult the various authorities/other leaders in the space, and hope to move to only quarantining the impacted student - but for the start of school, we will be exercising an abundance of caution and close classes, and do remote learning for all non-vaccinated students throughout the ten day closure.