



The Superintendent's Spotlight

Sheila S.-Gorski-DISTRICT 32 –August, 2020



Welcome to our sixth Virtual CEC Meeting and taking the time from your very busy schedules to join us this evening!

Summer School (SITC)

I want to thank all our families for ensuring that our students were interacting with their teachers and completing their independent assignments. All our SITC Programs have now ended. Promotion Portfolios for mandated students were reviewed this past Wednesday, August 12, and Thursday, August 13.

FAMILY INFORMATION, RESOURCES & LINKS

These and other suggestions are on the Info hub; click on the link below to obtain more information. <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/get-involved/families> As we plan for safe reopening of our schools let's continue to support each other. Here are some areas of consideration that will help you and our schools to ensure that we have successful, healthy and safe openings:

1. Make sure your emergency contact information is complete and up-to-date so your child's school is able to reach out to you. Speak with your child's school's main office to verify and/or update your home address, cell phone number, email, etc.
2. Parent coordinators are available to help you! Get to know the parent coordinator at your child's school, and get in touch for guidance and information about school programs, resources, trainings, events, and ways to get involved. Use [Find a School](#) to locate your child's school contacts, including the parent coordinator.
3. Schools are holding various events now and throughout the school year that provide opportunities to connect with your child's school community. For example, at this time our principals are hosting Town Halls, Parent Forums, and Informational Sessions. Please make sure to attend these sessions. During the school year schools will also host family workshops, continuous informational sessions, and events to showcase student classwork. There is a way for you to participate regardless of what your schedule is. Speak with your parent coordinator about upcoming events and activities. Use [Find a School](#) to locate the parent coordinator at your child's school. You may also find your school parent coordinators on the school website, the district website or the CEC website.



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4. Schools need diverse parent voices in order to understand what the school community needs and to decide what programs and policies will help keep their community healthy. Join a School Wellness Council:
 - Ask your parent coordinator if your school already has a wellness council. If so, contact the council leader to find out how to get involved. (Note the school may use a different name for their wellness council, such as SEL or Health Team)
 - If your school does not have a wellness council, speak to your principal or the parent coordinator and let them know you are interested in starting one
 - Email wellnesscouncil@schools.nyc.gov for help
 - Staff from the DOE Office of School Wellness Programs can reach out to your school to help them start a council and apply for a grant

Updates on Reopening Our School Buildings

Our Chancellor has ensured that as the largest school district in New York State communication of our plans are timely, continuous and transparent. Similarly, we continue to serve as thought partners with our principals ensuring that parent leaders, families and their school communities are informed with the most current information. The excerpt cited here is directly from our Chancellor to each of us as well as consistently communicated to the NYSED in a letter prefaced in our Reopening Plan. I would like to highlight this excerpt which is paramount to our commitment to our families, our students, our school leaders and all staff members, especially as we approach our reopening day. I quote, “Nothing is more important to me than the health and safety of our students, educators, and school communities. Over the past four months, the New York City Department of Education has been exhaustively planning for a coordinated reopening of school buildings in an ever-changing landscape, while keeping health and safety at the center of our planning. We have leveraged the expertise of our partners at the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, NYC Health and Hospitals, and the New York City Test + Trace Corps to develop rigorous protocols to ensure our schools are well prepared. With their collaboration, we will take swift and decisive action when needed to address any issues of concern and prevent the spread of COVID-19 in school buildings.” In summary, what I just cited District 32 is committed to fulfill as well.



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At this time our Principals, Assistant Principals, SLT members, PA/PTA members, CEC Liaisons, reopening committees, and community families are all engaged in unceasing and strategic conversations regarding the reopening of our district schools. As I visit some of the meetings I am listening to the depth of conversations which include making comments and posing important questions in support of thinking with their school leaders and staff. Additionally, family concerns are relevant to school decisions of program choice.

The information our school leaders provide our families with will help them make the best decisions they are comfortable with and feel best fits both their children's needs and their needs. Beginning with our end goal which is, a successful reopening of our school buildings in September 2020: Classes will begin for all students whether remotely or in hybrid model. With that thought in mind we also know that should our health advisors find that due to health concerns we must close a school building we have also established contingency plans to close individual school buildings.

District Review Team (DRT) and Timeline

- My District Review Team and I have reviewed all Models submitted by our schools and they have all received preliminary approvals for their requests
- The Central Review Team has granted final approval of all submitted school model preferences and the results are now stored in a tracker
- All District 32 principals are currently engaged in programming their cohorts of students for those in the Hybrid Blended Model
- The chart below will inform you of the steps our schools have taken thus far and where they are in that timeline.



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Timeline Key Dates

- ✓ 8/7: Learning Preference Surveys were due (We will continue to consider surveys until plans and programming are in place)
Week of 8/ 10
- ✓ Families can continue to opt into remote only learning
- ✓ Reports will continue to be sent to schools indicating which students have opted into full-time remote learning
- ✓ Non-respondents should be programmed for in-person instruction (based on model school selects)
- ✓ 8/14: Last day for principals to submit program model selection or exception requests/ongoing communication with Parents
- ✓ 8/21: Last day for Superintendents and District Review Teams to review all school submissions.
- 8/28: School plans are posted (May be sooner)
- September 2020 –Classes begins for all students



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Full Time Remote Learning

- Families who choose full-time remote learning will be able to reevaluate their choice during certain set time periods to change their preference and have their child receive in-person instruction instead.
- These set time periods will be communicated to schools and families at the beginning of the school year
- Schools have access to real-time reports indicating students who have chosen full-time remote learning
- Because families can choose full-time remote learning at any time, schools will review these reports on a daily basis
- In these same reports, schools will be able to see which families have chosen full-time remote learning and are opting back into in-person instruction for the next set time period.
- When families choose to switch their student to in-person instruction, schools will make every effort to accommodate these requests based on programming and space capacity
- The window will close at least two weeks prior to when the student would switch to in-person instruction to allow schools and families sufficient time to prepare
- As always, families can engage with their school leadership if they face unforeseen circumstances or challenges in their learning and can coordinate with their school to make adjustments outside of these set time periods
- If all-remote learning is your preference, we ask to hear from you by filling out a short web form (link below), or by calling 311

<https://www.nycenet.edu/surveys/learningpreference>



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Blended Learning & Remote Only Learning (Hybrid Model)

Instructional Leadership Framework- Culturally Responsive Sustaining Education

The qualities and benefits of in-person learning are meaningful. There is no doubt that the benefits of live instruction are many. During this critical time we also recognize that there are a variety of challenges and causal factors that create uneasiness to returning to school buildings, and families are making decisions that are personal and specific to their situations.

District 32 Schools and all schools across NYC are currently preparing for a blended learning model. Blended learning means that students learn part of the time in-person in school buildings, and continue their learning remotely, from home, on the remaining weekdays. Any family can also choose all-remote learning this fall, for any reason.

Our district schools have Instructional Leadership Teams focusing on our Instructional Leadership Framework and knowing each student well. Schools are designing and crafting instruction at high levels for our students whether they are learning in-person or remotely. We are committed to delivering instruction through both live interaction with their teachers on video and assignments, projects, and work to be completed independently throughout the course of the school day and week. In addition, live video instruction will be designed in short intervals (15-20 consecutive minutes) and taught throughout the day with our young learners. This time period will increase based on developmental appropriateness and grade-level.

Blended learning enhances instruction with technology tools, resources, and flexibility to personalize instruction. Students will maximize learning time as more digital content and innovative data resources become available. Furthermore, Blended Learning models support instruction using data and tools to understand the individual academic needs of each student. These models will also support students who may have lost learning or skills during remote instruction; identifying shared, inclusive, and standards-based curricula that schools may use to support learning happening in-person and remotely. We are also emphasizing supports for our Multilingual Learners in their Dual language, Traditional Bilingual Education, or ENL services. Students with Disabilities will receive their related services, accessible curriculum and interventions, student accommodations and specially designed instruction. These remain at the forefront of the planning to meet the individual



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needs of students with disabilities in a blended learning environment. Additionally, we will continue our focus on culturally responsive, inclusive and sustaining educational content and practices based on students' racial and cultural identities. As parents meet with their school leaders more information will be provided about instruction.

Health information

Nurses in Every School Building

Nursing coverage for schools serving Kindergarten through 12th grade is being provided through a NYC Health + Hospitals nursing contract for 400 full-time, onsite nurses. Nurses will be hired and in-place by the first day of school.

The over 2,000 early childhood care programs and new Learning Bridges childcare programs require two layers of nursing coverage. 100 contract nurses will be hired to provide geographic coverage, prioritizing the by zip codes hardest hit by COVID-19, for early childhood and Learning Bridges childcare programs. Additionally, the Department of Education will contract with a tele-health nursing provider to make available a hotline accessible to all programs Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM-8:00 PM. Program leaders, Family Child Care Network staff and home-based providers could call and consult with a nurse who would be specially trained to advise program leaders on COVID-19 and other medical questions and concerns.

Building Safety Measures & Maintaining Healthy Environments

Keeping students and staff safe requires that the physical environment in which our staff works and our students learn must be modified to meet current health and safety needs.

- School Based Health Centers (SBHC) may provide supplemental care, if this is a viable option.

Cleaning and Disinfection

- Schools will need to implement enhanced cleaning and disinfection of surfaces to ensure the health and safety of staff and students.



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- Throughout the school year, the DOE will continue the rigorous practices used to prepare buildings for reopening, including:
- Providing adequate cleaning and disinfection supplies or plan to procure those supplies.
- Requiring deep cleanings to be completed on a nightly basis, including with the use of electrostatic sprayers.
- Improving HVAC systems to ensure proper ventilation.
- Setting-up enhanced cleaning in classrooms, bathrooms, and for high touch areas such as doorknobs and shared equipment such as laptops.
- Providing teachers with cleaning supplies for classrooms.

Ventilation in school buildings is provided by a combination of the following systems:

- supply and exhaust fans
- windows and exhaust fans
- HVAC Systems: rooftop units, air handling units, and dedicated outside systems in newer buildings, such as Univents
- These systems are installed to meet the Building Code Requirements at the time of design and construction
- All DOE school buildings were surveyed by Division of School Facilities (DSF) staff this summer to assess the state of building ventilation and they are currently performing repairs in conjunction with the School Construction Authority. These repairs include fixing windows, repairing HVAC systems, and replacing air filters in buildings with central HVAC systems



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Social-Emotional Learning Support- We understand the need all staff, students and families have for support as we reopen school buildings and so we expect that:

- Schools will allow time for teachers, staff and students to readjust to being in school buildings and to adapt to changes;
- Dedicate the first few weeks of school to providing social and emotional support as part of the school reopening plans;
- Integrate social-emotional learning and trauma-informed care into core academic instruction; and
- Prioritize mental health supports throughout the 2020-2021 school year.



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Dates to Remember:

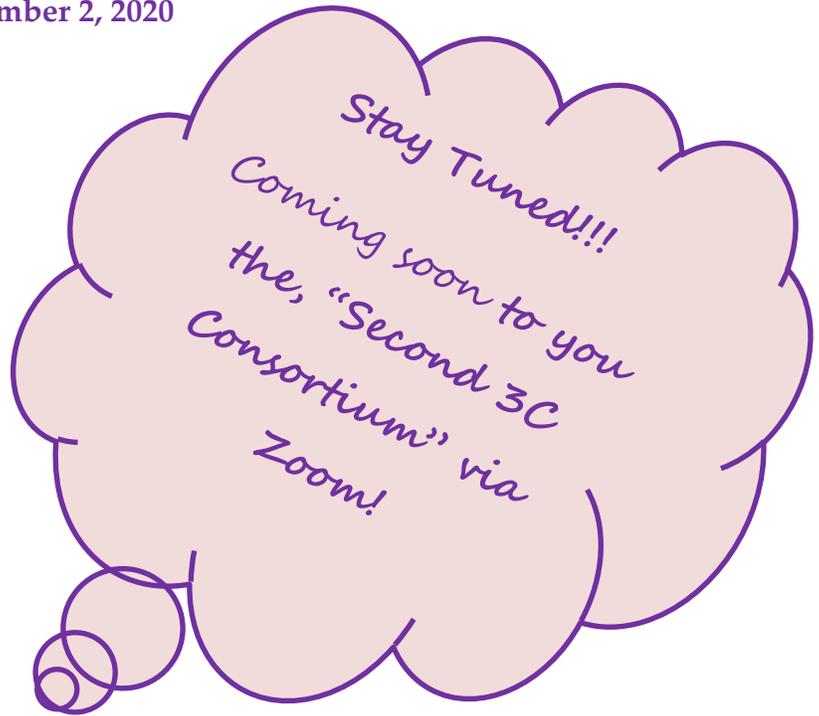
- Your voice and feedback are essential as our work continues. We will be hosting another information session; See below:



Live Event: NYC Department of Education Family and Student Information Session

Join us! Thursday, August 27. You can visit our [Return to School 2020](#) page to register and submit a question.

District Event – Wednesday, September 2, 2020



Stay Healthy and Safe!

**We are here for you!*

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