

What's Happening in NYC Public Schools

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schools.nyc.gov/messagesforfamilies

Week of September 27, 2021

After the excitement and joy of our first couple of weeks back in school, students, staff, and families have begun to settle into our new routines and rebuild the in-person relationships that we missed so much. It's an exciting time, but also a busy time! Learn how you can keep your children safe and support their academic success with the latest DOE Family Update, and visit our website for the most current information: schools.nyc.gov/homecoming

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[Important Updates to COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols](#)

Quarantining and Classroom Closures

As of **Monday, September 27**, in accordance with the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), we will no longer close an entire classroom when there is a positive case in the classroom. Unvaccinated students who are masked and have been at least three feet distanced from a student who tests positive are not considered close contacts under CDC guidelines and will not have to quarantine. This new policy applies to all students in any grade.

Please visit schools.nyc.gov/2021health for additional information and the latest on health and safety policies in NYC public schools for the 2021–22 school year.

In-School COVID-19 Testing

As of **Monday, September 27**, the DOE will increase random COVID-19 testing in all elementary, middle, and high schools for unvaccinated students in grades 1–12 from biweekly to **weekly**.

Testing is absolutely essential to keeping everyone safe in our schools, and all students should participate.

We only test students whose parents have provided consent, and we strongly encourage all families to provide an updated testing consent form for the 2021–22 school year to their school. If you have not yet submitted this consent, you can do so one of two ways:

- Fill out the form using your NYC Schools Account (NYCSA): [schoolsaccount.nyc](https://schoolsaccount.nyc.gov) or
- Download the form online at schools.nyc.gov/covidtesting and bring the completed form to your child's school.

Vaccination

In partnership with the NYC Vaccine Command Center and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), all school sites serving students ages 12 and older are offering Pfizer-BioNTech vaccinations to eligible individuals during the week of October 4–8 to make it as easy as possible to get vaccinated and stay safe. **If your child received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at a school site during the first week of school**, they may now receive their second dose at these sites during the first week of October. Individuals may also receive first doses at these sites during this time. Individuals who receive their first dose of the vaccine at a school site in October will be referred to a local provider for their second dose.

No appointment is needed at these sites. You can learn more about site hours from your school or by visiting schools.nyc.gov/covid19.

Vaccination is the most important step you can take to protect you and your family from COVID-19, and all New Yorkers ages 12 and older are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Students ages 12 and older participating in high-risk extracurricular sports and other high-risk extracurricular activities are **required** to be vaccinated in order to participate in those activities during the 2021–22 school year. For more information, please visit our website: schools.nyc.gov/2021health

If you have a child who is at least 12 years old and not yet fully vaccinated, the DOHMH and the DOE strongly encourage you to get them vaccinated as soon as possible by visiting vaccinefinder.nyc.gov. For the latest DOE vaccination information, visit schools.nyc.gov/covid19.

School Visitor Policy Reminder: All visitors who are eligible to be vaccinated must show proof of at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccination to enter a school building. Visitors do not include students attending school in a DOE building.

Department of Education (DOE) Vaccination Portal

Using your child's DOE account information, you can upload an image of your child's vaccination card or NYC Excelsior Pass to the DOE's vaccine portal at vaccine.schools.nyc. Submitting that

information will support New York City's pandemic response and recovery efforts, helping to ensure that our school communities remain safe and healthy.

Supporting Academic Success

Attendance

We are proud to have reopened New York City's classrooms to students, and it has been wonderful to see the joy in our school communities as students reunite with their teachers and classmates. The classroom is a better place when your child is in-person and at school. Research shows that attending in person makes a huge difference in student learning and their social and emotional well-being. If your child is feeling well, please make every effort to make sure they get to school each day.

Every Student, Every Day: Schools must take attendance every day to account for the presence or absence of every student. If your child is absent, your school will make a positive communication home that day by phone call, text, or email. We know that getting to school every day isn't always easy. Through these calls, we can provide you with valuable assistance in removing the barriers to your child's attendance. You may also call 311 for support. It is never too late to send your child to school. We are here to support you and are in this together.

Please share your correct contact information with the school by completing and returning the paper **Emergency Contact Form** provided by your school or updating your information in your **NYC Schools Account**.

Your school's attendance policy explains what qualifies as an excused or unexcused absence, as well as specific school rules regarding lateness, leaving early, and make-up time. It will also clarify how attendance is counted on days when a student may have to quarantine or learn from home due to snow days.

For help or questions, please contact your school's principal or parent coordinator. You may also email attendance@schools.nyc.gov.

Financial Support for College

Did you know? Families with kindergarten students in NYC public schools (including participating charter schools) citywide are now eligible to participate in the Save for College Program—no matter their income or immigration status.

The **NYC Kids RISE Save for College Program** provides families, schools, and communities with a way to work together to save for and invest in their children's futures. This scholarship and savings program is designed to make college and career training more accessible for public school students by providing every child with financial assets for their educational future.

We encourage you to attend a virtual information session with NYC Kids RISE to learn how the program works, the benefits for your child, and how your family can participate. Register at nyckidsrise.org/events

- Wednesday, October 6, 6:00–7:30 p.m. (English, live Arabic & Mandarin interpretation)
- Friday, October 8, 10:00–11:30 a.m. (Spanish)
- Tuesday, October 12, 6:00–7:30 p.m. (English, live Arabic & Mandarin interpretation)
- Wednesday, October 13, 6:00–7:30pm (Spanish)
- Tuesday, October 19, 10:00–11:30am (English, live Arabic & Mandarin interpretation)
- Wednesday, October 20, 10:00–11:30am (Spanish)
- Monday, October 25, 10:00–11:30am (English, live Arabic & Mandarin interpretation)
- Wednesday, October 27, 6:00–7:00pm (Bangla)
- Wednesday, November 3, 10:00–11:30am (English, live Arabic & Mandarin interpretation)
- Monday, November 8 20, 6:00–7:30pm (Spanish)

A video of this informational webinar captioned in 10 languages will also be available at Parent University: parentu.schools.nyc

Supports for Students in Temporary Housing

If your child is affected by homelessness (living in a shelter or in some other temporary housing situation due to economic hardship), there are resources available through your school to help support your family and your child's academic progress.

Every school district has a dedicated **Students in Temporary Housing (STH) Regional Manager** who can respond to questions and connect you to DOE and other City agency resources designed to provide no-cost benefits. These include transportation to and from school, help with enrollment and school moves, and access to programs and special opportunities. STH regional managers work directly with over 300 school- and shelter-based staff, including social workers, who are specially trained to understand the unique needs and strengths of families affected by homelessness.

Additionally, every school has a dedicated **School Based STH Liaison**, who can ensure students and families affected by homelessness are connected to information, resources, and benefits.

Please reach out to your school's guidance counselor, social worker, or principal for assistance. Learn more at schools.nyc.gov/sth.