

The Brooklyn Public Schools

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COVID Updated 1/24/2021
[Connecticut COVID-19 Response](#)
[Northeast District Department of Health](#)
[Free Priority Testing Sites](#)

January 24, 2021

Dear Staff and Parents,

I hope that each of you is well. When this pandemic began, I wrote the first of many messages. Over the past ten months, I have provided you with as much information as possible and tried to make the best decisions possible for our students. While I am unable to meet the needs of every child or family through our instructional models, I have reviewed the data and sought the expertise of [CDC](#), [DPH](#) and [NDDH](#). I communicate with local and state experts and officials. This week after reviewing the numbers and planning for our return to hybrid instruction, I participated in a phone call with officials from the Department of Public Health that was concerning to me. The message, along with 112 new cases over the last 14 days has caused me to **extend the remote learning until the end of February**. Northeastern Connecticut has seen an extremely high rate of transmission and positive cases of COVID-19. There are confirmed cases of the COVID-19 variant in CT and DPH warns that this virus is mutating and additional variants are expected to be the predominant strain of the virus by March. DPH is warning that **now more than ever we need to double down on our mitigation strategies, slow the spread of the virus and that they are unable to vaccinate enough people to stop this second surge. Recommendations include wearing masks, avoiding crowds and maintaining 6' distances**. They reported that this new variant is not more deadly, but is transmitted more easily which will result in more people becoming sick, hospitalized and will result in more deaths.

Brooklyn Public Schools has had 27 students and staff test positive and an additional 118 students and staff that needed to quarantine in January. **16% of our population has been impacted during the last three weeks of school**. Some of these cases involve staff not associated with classrooms and some students who have not even been in the school, but for a small school community, these are very high numbers. These numbers and the warnings shared by DPH have caused me to prepare you for **continued remote instruction through the month of February**. I am informing you so that you can prepare and plan. If the number of cases drop dramatically we might be able to return sooner. It is my hope that when we pivot we can remain in the hybrid rather than having to bounce back due to cases or lack of staff to cover the buildings. I am listening to requests to not keep changing so I am giving you this information now.

Mission: The Brooklyn Schools will foster a drive for learning within each student to reach his/her greatest potential. To achieve this mission, the school will continually improve its educational programs and services to meet this community's expectations for a quality education for all.

It is critical that you continue to communicate with the school if your child is sick or tests positive for COVID-19. **In order for us to flatten the curve in this area, we need to quarantine when sick to reduce the spread of the virus. Please call the School Nurses:** Please continue to reach out to the school if there are illnesses, we need to know so we can stop the spread. **School nurses can be reached at:** [BES nurse's email](#) or 860-774-4618. [BMS nurse's email](#) or 860-774-1498. Reach out to your doctor and [COVID testing is available for free](#).

We will return to classes when we can safely do so and staff the classes. Please reach out to the administration if you have any questions or concerns. We have social workers available to assist you if needed.

Sincerely,

Patricia Buell

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