

Brooklyn Public Schools' Reopening Update

October 16, 2020

[Connecticut COVID-19 Response](#)
[Northeast District Department of Health](#)
[Brooklyn Public Schools Website](#)
[Brooklyn Public Schools, CT Facebook](#)

Dear Parents, Guardians and Staff,

Good afternoon! I hope that this message finds you well. I would first like to commend everyone who is reading this message! Together we have overcome so many challenges since we first learned about COVID19 and we have all the students back to school who want to be back.

Today's message has five parts.

1. **Masks and handwashing:** Thank you all so much for your efforts to wear masks, wash hands, open windows and follow all of the mitigation procedures. I believe that this is the only way that we will remain open and keep students in school! ♪ ♪ [Mask it Up!](#) ♪ ♪
2. **Instruction:** We have had many questions and conversations about instruction. In Brooklyn we have in person teachers and distance learning teachers. The in person teaching includes ONE teacher who is working with the class of students and other subject teachers who are recording mini lessons or providing live mini lessons through Zoom. The purpose of the mini lesson is to articulate the learning objective, build connections to the content, and provide meaning for the new learning. After the mini lesson the classroom teacher opens Zoom so that questions can be asked to the teacher who recorded or is delivering the mini lesson. The classroom teacher supports students along with the teacher on Zoom. Parents have asked why students do not have the teacher directly in front of them teaching the lesson and wouldn't it be better to have them live. **We do not have the students moving from room to room because we are cohorting to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. Students report to one classroom and use the same desk every day.** We clean the desks daily, but do not have staff to clean desks if we move students during the day. We do not want to have 300-500 students coming into contact with one another when they would be passing in the hallways. If one teacher becomes sick, we do not want to expose 80-100 students/day to the virus. We also do not have the network infrastructure to handle live Zooming within the building on a large scale. We have tried this and when trying to live stream, the video and audio instruction is very choppy or freezes. We lose instructional time and create frustration when this happens. Using the short recorded lessons is our solution. These short recorded lessons are very well done by our staff and provide all students the lesson objective and overview in the most time efficient manner. **We believe we have the best model of instruction to meet the educational, health and safety needs of our students at this time. We will continue with this model until there is a significant change in the virus and vaccination, or find a better model.**

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3. **School Nurses:** Our school nurses have been working hard to ensure that they are current and following all of the guidance provided to us by our Medical Advisor, CDC, State DPH and our local Department of Health. They are doing an amazing job of tracking symptoms, contacts, making referrals to pediatricians and advising staff and parents about quarantine periods. Some parents have already dealt with sick students being sent home and COVID Testing. I know that it is not always easy, but they are following guidance from State health officials to ensure they do everything they can to keep the schools healthy! We are following [Addendum 5](#) from the [Adapt, Advance, Achieve](#) document. That document provides guidance for most scenarios and we reach out to [NDDH](#) for additional assistance when needed. Please see the [School Decision Making Tree](#) that was created by staff at the Ledge Light Health District which we find very helpful which is shared with their permission. If you need information about [COVID Testing sites](#).
4. **Changing enrollment:** I would like to recognize the hard work of school secretaries, administrators and teachers on a daily basis who are working with changing class lists and schedules. Thank you to the custodial staff who have moved MANY desks, tables and other furniture! There have been an extremely high number of changes in class lists as students enter and exit in person instruction. The bus company is continually changing bus routes, the tech department is changing student access and class assignments based on these changes and every related arts teacher is faced with changes in every class they meet. On Monday, 10/19 we welcome to school about 40 students who will have their first day in person! As our students change, classrooms are welcoming new students to their classrooms and they are learning the new routines. Thank you to the classmates who help their peers get settled in! Thank you for the wonderful effort by everyone to address the emotional and academic needs of our students and for welcoming students into the classroom family that changes almost daily!
5. **Food Services:** This is a reminder from our food services department. The Seamless Summer Meal Program provides free breakfast and lunch for those children 18 years and younger. Children are eligible to receive **one** breakfast and **one** lunch daily. If your students are attending school in person five days a week and receiving meals while in the building, we have included a **two-day grab and go option for weekend meals only** for children 18 and under to be picked up on Fridays. Please note that the [on-line meal survey](#) has been updated to include this meal pick up option. As always, if you have any questions, please contact Heather Plourde at 860-455-1552 or hplourde@eastconn.org.

I hope that this is helpful to parents as they continue to navigate school with COVID! We are in this together and you, your children and our entire staff continue to do an outstanding job helping students to be healthy and learn!

Sincerely,

Patricia L. Buell
Superintendent

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