

NYC DOE Guidance for School Preparedness for Potential Transition to Fully Remote Instruction in the Event of Citywide Closures

Dear Principals,

You and your entire school communities have been essential partners in fighting COVID-19 since March. Your leadership has helped to ensure all of our students receive a high-quality education in both blended and fully remote learning environments.

Together, we have achieved an exceptional level of health and safety in our classrooms, and we continue to have remarkably low levels of positive tests in our schools. As you likely are aware, the City is experiencing elevated rates of COVID-19 transmission. We can fight this back like we have before and we need all New Yorkers to double down on our efforts to stop the spread together.

Out of an abundance of caution, and to keep our school communities safe, I am asking all schools to be prepared for a brief time of fully remote learning, system-wide. And while no decision has been made about a system-wide transition to remote learning, as every great school leader knows, we must be prepared for every scenario. Below are a few helpful things to consider as you lead your school through contingency planning:

1. Ensure you have the most current and up-to-date contact information for all your families, as well as communication pathways to reach all families quickly, such as the use of telephone messenger, robocalls, Skedula, DoJo or other systems that meet the needs of all families.
2. Distribute your school's inventory of devices and LTE-enabled iPads to students that need them. Ensure students know their login information for their DOE Student Account and all school learning platforms (schools can [download student accounts](#)).
 - a. Students can find their student accounts and log in information via the [DOE Student Accounts page](#).
 - b. Students can reset their DOE account password on the [Student DOE Account Password Reset Page](#).
 - c. Note: Some schools are still using their own G-suite domain and students are using accounts issued by schools. Students will need to use their central accounts (nycstudents.net) to access TeachHub and TeachHub resources.
3. Designate point person(s) from your staff to receive, certify and distribute materials (like devices) while school is fully remote.
 - a. The additional LTE-enabled iPads that the City has ordered are being prepared and delivered to **SCHOOLS** over the next 4-6 weeks. These deliveries will come to schools based on requests that have been submitted, and principals will be notified as soon as devices are ready so a core team from each school can distribute them when they arrive.
 - b. Ensure your school has completed the "[Prepare for Shipping](#)" process that each school needs to perform to get central iPads shipped to their schools.
 - c. If any family needs remote learning support, they should contact their child's school or call the help desk 718-935-5100, option 5. The help desk is open from 6am to 9pm Monday through Saturday.
4. Communicate with teachers and students the full-remote expectations and their schedules ([see here for previously provided guidance](#)). This includes redeployed staff assigned to your school

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who should continue to support your school with remote learning. Please also communicate expectations to any substitutes if they will be needed during the fully-remote period.

- a. Ensure that all staff are aware of communications channels being used for key updates, and that staff have also provided their up-to-date contact information.
5. Communicate with teachers the expectations around uninterrupted learning and key ways to ensure their planning and instruction delivery remains rigorous and adaptive in the remote-only setting.
 - a. Analyze best practices from your current remote model so that the entire team is able to leverage those lessons and create the highest quality learning experience for all students.
6. Ensure all staff understand the [Attendance Policy for School Year 2020-21](#) and are aware of how to take student attendance in a fully remote environment.
7. Remind teachers how and where to access [TeachHub](#), [professional supports](#), curriculum and instructional resources, and [2020-2021 teach from home guidelines](#) previously published by the DOE.
 - a. This includes making sure curricular resources are digitized to the maximum extent possible, and that teachers, students and families should have access to these resources online.
8. Provide families with a direct way to communicate with your school during this period of brief closure, including expectations for getting in touch with their student's teacher as well as school administration during the period where people will not be in school buildings.
 - a. Establish a line of communication with the parent coordinator, or parent leaders, to ensure you have multiple avenues to reach your parent community.
9. Continue to prioritize [social-emotional learning](#) and [mental health and wellness](#) for students and adults during this challenging time, including additional supports for blended students as they exit buildings and transition to fully remote.
10. Make all staff members fully aware of [grading policies](#), with expectations in place for teachers and families about how they may be appropriately adapted to a fully remote model.
 - a. Support and continue to closely monitor the progress of students that have previously received an "NX" and are in the process of making up their work to receive passing grades.
11. Continue to escalate staffing or programming concerns, including any staffing needs to your superintendent.

This list is by no means exhaustive, so please continue to exercise your leadership and judgment in supporting your school community as they prepare for a scenario where all students are learning remotely.

As the health situation evolves, we will share additional information regarding the status of grab and go meals, bussing, device delivery, and other key components of school and learning operations. You will continue to receive updates and information regarding next steps for your school.

Our DOE community has been our greatest asset at this time of crisis, and we will continue to support every one of you as this public health conditions continue to evolve. We know that for many of you, our staff, and our students and families, the possibility of temporary system-wide school closures and transition to fully remote instruction is challenging to hear. We know that many of our students and families need and want a blended learning model, and we too are eager to keep offering a blended learning model system-wide for as long as it is safe and healthy to do so. If the situation arises where we

must temporarily close school buildings, we will work collaboratively with City agency partners and all New Yorkers in taking swift action to curb COVID-19 transmission. And, most importantly, we know that you will be prepared to lead your team through any potential learning transition.

We've faced these challenges before and are prepared for any situation that comes our way. New Yorkers have proven they are ready and willing to do the collective work to fight back this virus. Thank you for continuing to provide our children with the best educational experience. We are so grateful for your tireless efforts.

In unity,
Richard