

## Chancellor's Parent Advisory Council

Tweed Courthouse \*52 Chamber Street, New York 10007

### CPAC Parent Advisory Council Board

Co-Chairperson – Marco Battistella

Co-Chairperson – Jimmie Brown

1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairperson – Andrea Daniels

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairperson – Rasheedah Harris

Recording Secretary – Jessica Zilo

Treasurer – Randi Garay

Corresponding Secretary – Shirley Aubin

Parliamentarian – Marie Plaisir



Website: [www.cpacnyc.com](http://www.cpacnyc.com) / Twitter: @cpacnyc

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/cpacny>

July 13, 2021

Chancellor Meisha Ross Porter  
Department of Education  
Tweed Courthouse  
52 Chambers Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Chancellor Porter,

### ***The COVID-19 Pandemic has Disproportionately Impacted Low Income Communities of Color in New York City; A Full-Remote Option Should Be Offered Again This Upcoming SY***

#### **2021 to 2022**

**WHEREAS**, families of approximately 400,000 filled out the School Reopening survey last year in August 2020, with 264,000 choosing remote-only learning and 130,000 selecting the hybrid model, remaining 600,000 students were automatically enrolled in the hybrid model by the Department of Education;

**WHEREAS**, possibly the majority of those families of 600,000 students who did not fill out the survey were parents/guardians who are not able to comprehend the language of the survey to fully decide and/or was not assisted by any DOE staff to elaborate the purpose of the survey given to them and or was tricked to believe if you didn't fill out the survey you would be in full-remote.

**WHEREAS**, over two thirds of families in low-income/below-poverty neighborhoods have chosen a full-remote option for their child(ren) this SY 20-21 due to the many concerns and health impacts that COVID-19 brings along;

**WHEREAS**, in low-income/below poverty neighborhoods, it comprises the majority of the population as Blacks, Latinos, Asians, foster-youth, immigrants, and the undocumented;

**WHEREAS**, neighborhoods like the South Bronx, Chinatown, Harlem, Brownsville, Sunset Park, Elmhurst, Jamaica, St. George in Staten Island, just to name a few where low-income/below-poverty communities are located in the city; (re: list of neighborhoods hardest-hit by COVID-19 <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/neon/programs/covid-neighborhoods.page>)

**WHEREAS**, in low-income/below-poverty neighborhoods, the support and services of the health-care system falls short; 1 or more family members in a household has either asthma, diabetes, a diagnosed heart-condition, immune-compromised, or medically vulnerable; 1 or more family members in every eight-households are either an older-adult or an individual who is medically fragile;

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has not just brought the health priorities to the for-front but the trauma and the isolation we still are living through and for many individuals we are suffering from PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). With the lack of trauma and crisis intervention providers and services, low-income/below-poverty communities will struggle to recover slower and longer compared to other higher socio-economic neighborhoods that have plenty of accessible health-care institutions and providers that can support a much faster COVID recovery;

**WHEREAS**, on May 24, 2021, Mayor De Blasio announced that this upcoming September 2021-2022 school year, students will be fully in-person and no more remote option will be given to families;  
(re: <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/about-us/news/announcements/contentdetails/2021/05/24/a-recovery-for-all-of-us-mayor-de-blasio-and-schools-chancellor-porter-announce-historic-return-to-school-for-all-new-york-city-students-in-september>)

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Education did not inclusively engage all NYC public school families about their reopening plans before the mayor has made his announcement on May 24th; only one of the five boroughs citywide listening tours had happened, which was Staten Island (May 17, 2021); dates for the other boroughs were on: May 24<sup>th</sup> – Manhattan, May 27<sup>th</sup> - Queens, June 7<sup>th</sup> - Bronx, and, June 9<sup>th</sup> - Bronx;

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Education did not outline specific COVID-19 School Reopening plans for September 13th in which students are to be in attendance for the first day of school;

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Education has not updated the “capacity blue book” to reflect the current social distancing protocols; the DOE has solely referred their decision-making to the facts of science given by CDC and the city’s health professionals;  
<http://www.nycsca.org/Community/Capital-Plan-Reports-Data#Enrollment-Capacity-Utilization-69>

**WHEREAS**, on June 9th, during the Chancellor’s Bronx Town Hall, a parent had expressed a capacity concern in overcrowded school buildings in which the Bronx has many, gave an example of 60% of students in-person with social distancing (3ft) at its full

capacity of the school building and his question to the Chancellor was where are you going to put these 40% of students whom are coming back in September. Deputy Chancellor Karin Goldmark and Kevin Moran, Chief of Operations responded by saying, they are assessing each school individually and if those schools are unable to meet their needs “other locations that are not being used” or “altering programming” to fully ensure all students can be in-person this upcoming school year in a building.

**WHEREAS**, if those schools need to be in two separate buildings in order to accommodate all of their students coming back in-person this may cause a harmful impact on students socially and emotionally more isolated and the inability to learn. Separating is counteracting against their purpose to those very same students who been fully remote for the entire past school year and trying to bring them back together.

**WHEREAS**, the details of “other locations that will be used” was not clarified whether teachers and paraprofessionals will be at these sites to teach the students or what will the programming look like at these sites;

<https://learndoe.org/chancellor/>

**WHEREAS**, with the current social distancing guidelines and DOE’s “capacity blue book”, it will NOT permit students to return to school buildings safely because many of the schools in low income and poor communities are already operating over 100% and in some of those campuses they are already at its highest 150% to 210% capacity and utilization.

**WHEREAS**, by eliminating the remote option for students, the Department of Education is NOT considering the trauma caused by COVID which holds heavily in low income/below poverty communities of color in NYC.

**WHEREAS**, COVID vaccination rates are 10-20 percent lower in poor communities of color than in other parts of NYC.

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-data-vaccines.page#people>

**WHEREAS**, COVID infection rates are unstable and as of today (July 13, 2021), they are increasing as well as variants of the COVID19 virus.

<https://www.newsbreakapp.com/n/0auIcqSZ?s=a4&pd=06r6FRVi>

**THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED**, that we call on the Department of Education and the mayor of NYC Bill De Blasio to keep and continue all learning options to include full in-person and full remote for families in the upcoming school year 2021-2022 to ensure the health and safety of all our children and families during this unprecedented time of COVID-19, the constant mutations of variants and increase of cases.

Cc: First Deputy Chancellor Donald Conyers, Chief Strategy Office Edie Sharp, Deputy Chancellor Adrienne Austin, Chief Academic Officer Linda Chen, Chief Information Officer Anuraag Sharma