



Chancellor's Parent Advisory Council

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January 31, 2022

Chancellor David Banks
Department of Education
Tweed Courthouse
52 Chambers Street
New York, New York 10007

Dear Chancellor Banks,

CPAC's Proposal for a Remote Learning Platform

Previously proposed suggestions that has not come to fruition.

In order, to have robust and equitable remote learning platform for every child, we need to strengthen our information and communication infrastructure. Our suggestion is to make every school building become a hotspot for the community. Strengthen the connectivity bandwidth and access by creating a separate DOE network for parents and students to access through NYCSA and NYCSstudents.net email accounts. Once those towers are established, make the libraries, parks, government buildings or a central location in a community a hotspot as well.

In addition, make the close captioning on the DOE Zoom's be available in all languages so the attendees can choose the language they feel comfortable to receive the information. This will be a good start to closing the language barrier for families who want to be involved and engaged in meetings and classrooms across the city.

We are requesting the Department of Education support school leaders to collaborate with families to provide a high-quality education for ALL students. We encourage you to consider the needs of ALL children (including gifted & talented, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, at risk students and general education students). Keep in mind, that there cannot be a one-size-fits-all educational plan.

Implementation of Remote Learning Platform

Our proposal is to keep school buildings open while providing a remote learning option. To create and implement a remote learning option that has a high standard of academic excellence that is equitable and accessible for all (a central remote learning option may be the best way to ensure that this is achieved). The remote learning option needs to reflect the elementary, middle school, and high school environment. This means the social-emotional aspects of a school community is incorporated into a remote learning foundation, such as lunch periods are done communal where the students can eat and interact with other students. Students are also interacting outside of an academic classroom setting.

Utilize the Google Classrooms teachers across the city have already created to allow schools to pivot to remote learning in the event of school/classroom closures, this should be used for the benefit of all students. It is simply not enough to post lessons and assignments, along with limited teacher office hours. Under these conditions, the opportunity exists for incomplete or poorly completed assignments and students falling further behind in what has turned into an avalanche of lost learning.

We strongly encourage you to push forward to allow school leaders and School Leadership Teams to begin detailed planning to take place before the February mid-winter recess so families can make the final decision to either return to in person learning or opt out to a remote learning option for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year.

Enhance Remote Learning

DOE's current one-size-fits-all plan for remote learning is ineffective. We believe the goals for remote learning should be different based on the school level/tier (i.e., Pre-K, Elementary, Middle School & High School.) We suggest:

- High School's goal should focus on a rigorous academic experience to be college, career and civic ready. Having the opportunities and resources for a well-rounded academic career which includes social and emotional wellness. Create remote classes for AP Courses not available at all high schools so students have access to those courses.
- Middle School's goal should be understanding the fundamentals, passing NYS ELA & Math exams and NYS Regents while incorporating social and emotional wellness as well as High school and college readiness.
- Elementary school's goal should be learning the fundamentals, phonics, literacy
- Pre-K's goal should be focused on SEL, socialization and a strong foundation.
- After extended winter recess/breaks from school, all schools should go fully remote for at least two weeks to reduce the possibility of school-based spread and mandate testing to return.
- Bring back Regional Enrichment Centers (REC) for essential and working families who need children to attend school in-person after recess/breaks.
- Allow unvaccinated teachers to teach remotely, synchronous remote students either by school or district (possibly centrally) and supervised by unvaccinated principals, superintendents and/or executive superintendents.
- High school students who excel in specific subject areas could be recruited to support other students for test prep and tutoring elementary and middle school students. Students can receive community service hours in return.
- In the area of Social Emotional Learning, there is a critical need to create a safe space – both in person and remotely for students to socialize and interact with their peers.

We would like remote learning to mirror in person learning before the pandemic. There is a need to have a baseline/foundation where each school will build upon the remote platform. The remote learning platform foundation must have:

- ❖ Interactive learning classrooms
- ❖ Classrooms that mirror in person learning
- ❖ Enrichment activities such as: clubs, town halls, assemblies, spirit weeks, etc.; not just handing in an assignment.
- ❖ Social interaction rooms: Just for socializing and interacting with students in other classes that students wouldn't typically see.

Order of preference of implementation:

1. Central based
2. Borough based
3. A combination of a Central/ Borough/District/School based
4. District based
5. School based

A central based approach will also help to address staffing issues in the schools.

Cc: First Deputy Chancellor Daniel Weisberg; Chief of Staff Savita Bharadwa; Deputy Chancellor of Teaching and Learning Carolyn Quintana; Deputy Chancellor of Family and Community Engagement and External Affairs Kenita Lloyd; Chief of Student Pathways Jade Grieve; Chief of School Culture, Climate, and Well-Being Jawana Johnson