



Important Reopening Message

August 31, 2021

Dear Irvington School Community,

It is hard to believe that the summer recess is coming to a close already, but I am truly excited to welcome our staff back next week and then our students on Thursday, September 9th.

The past 19 months have introduced challenges that have never been seen during our lifetime. We have all dealt with different levels of hardship, trauma, and difficulty. In the school community, however, we have collaborated closely to provide for all of our children. Further, we have rallied to support one another and kept the Irvington Bulldog spirit alive despite a global pandemic. As we head into the new school year, we unfortunately still face the very real challenges presented by COVID-19 that will continue to affect each of our lives for the months to come. It will also continue to impact the school experience of children across the nation.

In the Irvington UFSD, we developed strong partnerships with the school community, the Village of Irvington, state agencies and our elected officials that helped to provide a highly successful experience for our students during the pandemic. This could not have been possible without the tireless efforts of the IUFSD faculty and staff and a strong home-school partnership. As we look forward to welcoming our students back on September 9th, I am confident that we will continue to build upon this success and in doing so our students will begin to enjoy more traditional school experiences, while experiencing one of the finest educations available in New York.

In my recent communications, I have provided overviews of what we should expect in terms of mitigating COVID-19 in each of our schools. Due to many complex reasons, the State of New York has been delayed in issuing guidance for schools. Despite this challenging reality, we have been actively planning all summer following recommendations from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), meeting regularly as an administrative team, and meeting with the District's Reopening Steering Committee. While we have been advised that more guidance from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) is forthcoming, school district leaders have been informed that the New York guidelines will closely mirror the CDC's recommendations. Therefore, while we expect that there may be some modest initial adjustments to our plan and that other revisions will necessarily have to be made during the course of the school year, we are confident that the District's 2021-22 Reopening Plan is in line with all (and will exceed many) health and safety protocols that will come our way.

The [comprehensive 2021-22 Reopening Plan](#) has been published to the [District website](#) and a [quick reference guide](#) can be found here. It is to be expected that each school will have unique protocols based on the age of its students, nature of its programs, and the layout of its facilities. These school-specific details will be communicated by each school principal or in the case of athletics, the Director of Athletics.

Additionally, to help inform contact tracing efforts, the District will be collecting information regarding each student's COVID-19 vaccination status. Submitting this information will be voluntary and will only be used to inform these efforts. If no

information is submitted, the student will be considered to be unvaccinated for contact tracing purposes. A communication will be sent specifically on this topic later this week.

Prior to the start of the school year, you will receive continued updates from your child(ren)'s school. Additionally, I will host a [Facebook Live broadcast](#) at noon on Wednesday, and a District newsletter will be distributed on Saturday. Each of these communications will provide additional information about the start of the school year. Should there be any critical information that needs to be shared or if there are any notable changes to the Reopening Plan, please be assured that I will communicate with you in a timely manner.

While we had hoped for an opening to the new school year that would have fewer restrictions, I am so eager to greet your children on our first day together. The fact that we are able to welcome our students back to full, in-person attendance is something that should make us smile, knowing that they will be together once again, able to enjoy learning with their peers and teachers as well as participating in all of the joyful experiences that come with attending the amazing Irvington schools.

As excited as I am to start the school year, let's not forget to have fun over the remaining days of the summer recess. Please take time to forge a few more memories and take pride in the wonderful school community that is here for all of us.

Every student, every day,

Kris

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