

Updates September 2021

- At the September 21, 2021 NDCS Board of Trustees Meeting, the Board voted to uphold the NYC vaccine mandate for school staff effective immediately. At this time staff at both New Dawn Schools are 100% vaccinated.

Updated Reopening Plan for 2021-2022

The original reopening plan for 2020-2021 is included below. A thumbnail of the updates of the plan include:

- All students will attend school in person. There will be no remote option.
- New Dawn Charter Schools will work with the NYC DOE to test up to 30% of the unvaccinated students in the building. This will be done at specific times on specific days on a first come, first test basis until 30% is tested.
- Parents must complete a unanimous survey stated whether their student is vaccinated or not.
- Students 18 and younger must have parents sign consent forms to be tested; students over 18 may sign their own consent forms.
- Staff will not be tested by the school.
- The school will follow the testing/vaccination mandates set by NYC and NYS.
- Currently, staff must submit a PCR test every Monday, or if they do not wish to do this, submit proof of vaccination.
- (This will be updated as things change) Staff must have proof of their first vaccination by September 27, 2021.
- In the event of an exposure, the school will follow all CDC guidelines and protocols. Parents will be notified immediately.

New Dawn Charter Schools Reopening Plan for 2020-2021 Updated for 2021-2022

Background

On March 15, 2020, Mayor Di Blasio closed New York City schools, followed by the closure of all NYS schools by Governor Cuomo. New Dawn Charter Schools anticipated these regulations and moved ahead with a full remote learning plan to ensure that all students would not only have access to their learning, but regular contact with their mentors and teachers. Remote learning has been ongoing since this closure was announced without interruption.

New Dawn Charter Schools has two sites. Our magnet school, New Dawn Charter High School (Brooklyn), is located at 242 Hoyt Street. The Queens campus opened for the first time in September 2019 at 161-06 89th Avenue, but is now permanently located 89-25 161st Street in September. Both schools have been open weekly for students to access materials throughout the entire closure period. The Brooklyn campus has served as the main hub particularly when the number of cases was so high in Jamaica. Many parents and families picked up Chromebooks at the Brooklyn campus. Eligible families also received tablets from the NYC DOE. For 2021-2022, the school is fully open, with no remote option available.

The generalities of this plan are organized along the lines of the DOH guidance of people, places and processes.

I. People

A. Social Distancing and Face Coverings

Classrooms are currently organized with the recommended three feet between all desks including the teacher's desk.¹ There will be no elevator use and moving between classes will be limited to movement in specific directions. While transitions are the largest areas of exposure, according to the NYC DOH, social distancing does not need to be observed for periods under 10 minutes. Our transitions between classes is three minutes. All students will be expected to wear masks during transitions.

Students and staff will be expected to wear masks while in the building at all times except when eating lunch.² We understand from the NYC DOH that students who are medically and/or behaviorally incapable of wearing masks can receive waivers and will not be expected to adhere to this. Our cohort groupings are very small, keeping the number of students in the building at any one time very low. Face masks and hand sanitizer will be available at the front desk at check in, as well as in every room along with wipes.

School begins at 9:00 am. When students check in, temperatures will be taken at the front desk. We will have staff and marked spots so that students will be socially distanced during the start of the school day. All staff, consultant, vendors, etc., will complete the check-in procedure every day at the front desk. Teachers arrive significantly earlier than students. It is also the school's policy that all staff should be fully vaccinated. If they are not, they must arrive each week with a negative PCR test before they enter the building.

Six to twelve feet distancing will be maintained during PE and the basketball season will be determined by PSAL regulations. The school will be completely closed to all individuals who are not students or who are not the parents of students with an appointment.

Signs will be posted throughout the school regarding public health protections against COVID-19 as outlined in the NYS DOH Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

B. Gatherings

There will be no gatherings other than in the classrooms where desks will be separated by 3 feet. We currently have no small spaces for use by students. We do have individual offices, but these spaces are occupied by only one person. While staff will be onsite, all staff meetings connecting our two sites will be held over Zoom with the content teachers appropriately socially distance within a classroom. One classroom will be for the three math teachers, another for the three History teachers, etc. Each school will have professional development and regular meetings in person, no zoom meetings will be held for staff in the same building.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html#:~:text=%E2%80%A2Due%20to%20the%20circulating,such%20as%20screening%20testing.>

² <https://abc7ny.com/masks-in-school-emergency-regulation-regulation-new-york-state-department-of-health/10981493/>

Both schools have just recently replaced their HVAC systems and will use HEPA filters. Students will eat lunch during a staggered time period, one half of the group will participate in activities outside or on the second floor in the BK campus, and outside in the Queens campus, and the other half will eat lunch. . Bathrooms will be monitored to ensure only one student is using it at a time—which both schools already do.

C. Operational Activities

Students will be scheduled per the instructional design of our program. Students in Cohort A will attend class during period 1-4 to train for their internship experiences. Cohort B students will be attending classes. Each week these cohorts swap. Cohort C attends class every day. Using new tools developed by Jupiter Ed, our SIS, students will have regular access to resources and notices and progress monitoring their own grades and progress toward graduation, just as we have always done

D. Movement and Commerce

Staff arrive by 8:45 to be ready to receive students by 9:00 am. Everyone checks in with security before entering the school. All our students are between 16 and 22 years of age and ride subways and busses to attend school. Teachers will be responsible for disinfecting shared objects (pens, pencils, desktops, calculators, Chrome books) between each class.

II. Places

A. Personal Protective Equipment

Everyone will be expected to wear a mask and masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer will be available for all students and staff. Everyone may bring their own masks if they wish.

B. Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection

The Director of Operations at the school oversees the janitorial companies and all were training on deep cleaning and disinfection during COVID-19 as outlined in the CDC and DOH, Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19. “Stop the spread” posters will be displayed. Records will be kept of all cleanings.

Students will be trained on appropriate procedures in September. All appropriate hand sanitizers (60% alcohol or greater), soap, water, paper towels, etc. will be available with the appropriate signage. Wipes will be available in all classrooms and office spaces. Sanitizers and hand wipes will be available next to all high touch surfaces.

Space will be cleaned throughout the day and deep cleanings will occur at night. In the event we have a staff or student who has been exposed to, or has, COVID-19 the janitorial staff will follow the guidelines as listed by the NYS DOH and be supervised by the Director of Operations.

C. Coordination and Phased Reopening

A COVID-19 Safety Coordinator will be assigned at each school and overseen by the Director of Operations.

D. Communications Plan

We have involved administrators, teachers, Board members, parents/families, NYC DOH, Department of Education, and attorneys in the development of this plan. Parents and students will be notified by webpage, social media, email, and texts. We will work with local institutions on the monitoring strategies for public health conditions because they have been so helpful so far.

III. Process

A. Screening and Testing

All students and staff will have a temperature check at the front desk. Anyone with a temperature of 100 or higher will be sent home. If the person has a temperature two days in a row, they will not be allowed back to school until they return with a doctor's note. If a student or staff tests positive for COVID we will follow the guidelines as set forth by the CDC. Since this changes regularly, please see: https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/Pre-K_to_Grade_12_Schools_MasterGuidance.pdf for updates. We will update this plan accordingly.

In addition, all employed adults, vendors, repair people, etc., will complete a survey as outlined in the NYS DOH Guidelines. No one other than those with direct school business will be allowed into the buildings and then they must complete the survey. No screenings will take place at the schools but we have relationships with walk-in clinics nearby that we can refer students to for testing.

B. School Health Offices

We have identified a dedicated area to separate individuals who become sick during the day with the appropriate adult supervision.

C. Tracing and Tracking

We are hoping that the NYC DOH will revise its thinking on notifying the school if they find anyone who is positive or has been exposed to COVID-19. This would be a great help in keeping our students and staff safe. When a student has the measles we are immediately notified, why not for COVID-19 as well. In the meantime, we will follow all protocols with reporting students we find who are positive or have been exposed. We will follow all guidelines listed in the Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure.

Below are the specifics for opening the two schools.

Summer Semester

After celebrating a very successful spring semester using our hybrid model for the 2020-2021 school year, both campuses have joined together to teach the summer semester. New Dawn students have high attendance, high pass rates in course completion, and for the Brooklyn campus, our highest graduation rate EVER. We are very proud of the work that our students and staff have accomplished since moving to this remote model. The summer semester will conclude on August 20th, with classes ending officially August 13th and final exams August 16-20th. Students must submit final exams and complete their Regents courses in order to earn a Regents waiver for the summer 2021.

Looking ahead

New Dawn Charter Schools is committed to continuing to offer students high quality, individualized instruction while COVID-19 continues to threaten the health and safety of our families. It is our belief

that in order to have a safe environment, students and staff must follow the guidelines as set forth by the CDC and the NYC DOH. As this time, we believe students will be better served in an entirely in person model. If there is guidance to close or switch back to remote/hybrid models based on the variants and percentages of infection in either area of the school, we will follow those guidelines. We are fully transparent with our families and communities, as we know the risks and implications for the greater good if these guidelines are not followed or ignored. Our students often travel great distances to get to our locations, so this is another reason why we are committed to providing the safest in person instructional model, yet are prepared to make shifts when directed by the CDC or NYC DOH.

With safety in mind, we have developed a system of instruction that maintains the regulations as set forth by the New York State Department of Health, and the New York State Department of Education.

These regulations for the NYS DOH can be found here:

[https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools MasterGuidance.pdf](https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/Pre-K_to_Grade_12_Schools_MasterGuidance.pdf) and the regulations for reopening from NYSED can be

found here: <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/reopening-schools/nys-p12-school-reopening-guidance.pdf>

Phase 0: Remote Learning Continues.

This is NOT our current state of activity and only use this model to serve our students and families in this model if the Governor releases new guidance on returning to this mode of instructional programming.

Phase 1: Orientation

This phase was incorporated during the 2020-2021 school year, when guidance finally allowed students to attend school in person. We will adapt this strategy in the event that we must return to a remote option and then come back to in person learning- based on the guidance from the Governor.

If the Governor announces that schools begin face to face instruction, the following will take place:

Staff

All staff and students are expected to report to school on September 8, 2021. Appropriate social distancing professional development will also take place on this day.

New Families

New Dawn enrolls new families throughout the school year, but September is the biggest portion of our enrollment period. Therefore, we are holding new family orientation throughout the month of September. Families will schedule their orientation with the Parent Coordinators of both schools. The Parent Coordinator at our Brooklyn campus is Ms. Kim Fields, and can be reached at 347-505-9105 to make an appointment. The Parent Coordinator at our Queens campus is Ms. Connie Francis, and can be reached at 347-947-2580 to make an appointment. It is important to note that the Queens campus is openly enrolling students ages 16-21 and have LESS than 29 credits. The campus in Brooklyn is accepting students ages 15-21 and with all credit levels.

Returning Students

During September, those students who struggled during the spring semester and summer semester will be schedule to attend school specifically to get support to catch up. These students have already been

identified and our School Wellness Counselor and Dean of Schools are contacting these families. We will also have more laptops and Chromebooks available for those students who do not have the technology.

Also during September, students will be brought to the school for classes on appropriate behavior during COVID-19 which will include, but not be limited to, facial coverings disposal and cleaning, disinfecting items, hand washing, etc.

Students will be hearing from their school leaders and mentors about their scheduling and testing appointments. Please look to Jupiter for any important messages that relate to scheduling and enrollments.

Health and Safety.

Any person entering either campus will be subject to an evaluation prior to entering the building. Temperatures will be checked at the door along with our usual daily intake procedures. Temperature checks are in line with the NYSED/DOH regulations, which are linked above.

1. Any person that attempts entry without a mask will be turned away.
2. Any staff that refuses to submit their vaccination or negative weekly PCR test will be turned away.
3. Anyone that refuses a temperature check will be refused entry.
4. Anyone that has a temperature 100° or over will be refused entry.
 - a. Any student that is sent home with a temperature of 100° two days in a row cannot return to school without a medical clearance.
 - b. Any staff that is sent home with a temperature of 100° two days in a row may not return to school without proper medical clearance.
5. Any student or staff that becomes ill during the school day will be isolated or immediately sent home. They will not be allowed to return to school without the proper clearance.

When students enter the building, they will go directly to the cafeteria for breakfast and immediately report to first period at 9:00 am. Students and staff will follow the proper walkways and stairwell access for entrance and egress per DOH and NYSED regulations. All desks will be kept three feet apart.

No student will take off their mask for excessive periods of time, particularly inside school buildings when social distancing is not permissible.

Phase 2: Face to Face Instruction.

For the 2021-2022 school year, there is ONLY a face to face instructional programming option.

Phase 3. Hybrid Schedule Continues- ONLY if the Governor announces this in the future.

Phase 4. Normal scheduling, with increased safety precautions.

In the event that the Governor makes the announcement that students can return to school full time after a period of remote or hybrid instruction during the 2021-2022 school year, we will continue to schedule face to face learning per our regular model. However, we will continue to with all safety precautions but social distancing to ensure that all of our students, families, and staff are safe.

Phase 5. Regular scheduling.

This is the current and only option, with the distancing and safety precautions as described above in place. This will not change unless directed by the Governor.