



02-1-2022 K12 Alert - Community Update Letter

February 1, 2022

Dear Croton-Harmon Tigers:

As we begin the month of February, we are very pleased to share that our schools continue to be places of dynamic teaching and learning for all of our students and staff members, every day. We commit to keeping you regularly informed about events in our schools and changes to any health and safety requirements and protocols which impact our district. With that commitment in mind, we ask that you closely review the information below.

Current School Year Calendar and Emergency Closures:

The school district calendar for the current (2021-2022) school year, shown [here](#), provides for six (6) days of emergency/weather closures of school before impacting the calendar for Spring Break in April. At this point, the district's schools have been closed for weather-related reasons on three (3) days. If weather or other reasons require the district's schools to be closed on further occasions this year, we will continue to observe traditional, "old fashioned" snow days, until we have reached the sixth (6th) closing day. If we need to close schools beyond six (6) days, our plan is to convert those additional days from "snow days" to "remote learning days". Doing so will allow for continuity in our teaching and learning, and for us to preserve the planned Spring Break as it is currently scheduled in the calendar. If we approach the sixth (6th) day of school closing this year, we will make sure to remind our community of this plan and provide links to further information about the remote learning plan and schedule.

Distribution of COVID-19 Rapid Tests:

New York State continues to supply our school district with COVID-19 antigen home tests that we are able to make available to any family within our district. This makes our ongoing efforts to mitigate the impact of the pandemic through testing more convenient than ever before. As a result, we will be ending our weekly Tuesday distribution of COVID-19 tests at the High School and will be shifting our approach to test distribution to be based out of each of our schools.

Beginning this Friday, February 4, if you are interested in obtaining a COVID-19 antigen home test at no cost, you can visit the welcome center window at the visitor's entrance of any of our schools between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. or between 3:00 p.m. and 3:20 p.m. each school day. Please be prepared to provide identification, as we intend to provide access to these rapid tests to parents and guardians of current Tiger students only.

Please feel free to contact your school's COVID Coordinator with any questions you may have.

Status of New York State Mask Requirement:

Last week we shared two communications with you regarding the Nassau County Supreme Court's decision to declare Governor Hochul's mask requirement for schools null and void, and then the appeal of that decision by the State Attorney General's Office and the resulting "stay" which was put into place. As an update, last evening the New York State Appellate Division in the Second Judicial Department issued an order indicating that the stay will remain in place for the duration of the appeal, which is anticipated to last until at least March 2. As a result, masks remain required for all students, staff and visitors to our schools until at least March 2, provided that Governor Hochul extends the current mask requirement, which is scheduled to expire on February 21. We will continue to provide you with updates on the status of the State requirement as soon as we receive them.

We recognize that the State-wide discussion about whether to continue the mask requirement can elicit a range of responses from all members of our school district community. As leaders, we view it to be our responsibility, and our opportunity, to listen closely to advice and feedback from many sources, including in this case our Medical Director, legal counsel and other authorities. In addition, it is always important for us to be informed by feedback from you, as members of our Tiger community. As we follow the trajectory of the pandemic and the current legal decision-making, it is possible that masks will no longer be required in New York State schools at some point in the upcoming weeks. If you would like to share your thoughts or questions related to that possibility in our Croton-Harmon schools, please feel free to contact me via email at stephen.walker@chufsd.org, or by phone at 271-4793, extension 4204.

The strength of our schools continues to derive from the outstanding talent and remarkable dedication of our staff and students, and from our community's ability to work together to find what unites us in support of our Tigers. Thank you sincerely for your ongoing support of our students, staff members, and our schools.

With Tiger Pride,

Stephen Walker

Superintendent of Schools