

# What's Happening in NYC Public Schools

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## March 4, 2022

Our “Stay Safe, Stay Open” plan has succeeded in allowing us to keep New York City public schools open and remain among the safest places for young people to be during the COVID-19 pandemic. As our schools did their part in reducing transmission rates, so have New Yorkers as a whole. We are pleased to announce that as a result, we will be implementing changes in our current COVID-19 health and safety policies in our schools in accordance with the latest guidance.

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## COVID-19 Health and Safety

### Face Covering Policy Updates

We are pleased to announce that face coverings will be optional on school grounds for students in kindergarten through grade 12 beginning Monday, March 7.

To maintain the safety of our staff and students, we will continue to practice strict COVID-19 protocols, including increased ventilation, a daily health screening, and test kit distribution. Wearing a face covering will become optional indoors, outside, and on school buses. Anyone

who chooses to wear a mask may continue to do so, and your child may request a mask from their school if they need one.

The indoor mask mandate is still active for children in LYFE, EarlyLearn (Infants & Toddlers), 3-K, Pre-K, and 4410 classrooms. These children, ages two years old and older, and all staff in these classrooms, must continue to wear a face covering indoors. Since children under the age of five are not yet eligible to receive the vaccine, face coverings remain our strongest defense against COVID-19 for our youngest learners.

In addition, any staff member or student in grades Kindergarten or higher returning on Day 6 following a positive COVID-19 diagnosis or after having COVID-19 symptoms without taking a COVID test is still **required** to wear a well-fitting mask at all times on school property through Day 10.

Face coverings are strongly recommended for any staff member or student who knows they have been exposed to COVID-19 within the previous 10 days. Mask wearing is still required in medical rooms and nurses' offices, as well as in School Based Health Centers. Nurses will have face coverings on hand for anyone entering who may need one.

## **Social Distancing**

There are no requirements for social distancing in public spaces, including classrooms, cafeterias and auditoriums.

## **Visitor Policy**

Visitors are still required to show proof of vaccination and complete the daily health screening ([healthscreening.schools.nyc](https://healthscreening.schools.nyc)) before entering a DOE building.

## **Vaccination**

As a reminder, vaccination is the best tool we have to fight COVID-19 and to keep our schools safe for all our students. Children ages 5 and older are eligible to be vaccinated against COVID-19. If your child is eligible but not yet vaccinated against COVID-19, you can make an appointment for vaccination at [vaccinefinder.nyc.gov](https://vaccinefinder.nyc.gov) or call 311 to find a vaccine site near you. The vaccine is free for all New Yorkers, regardless of immigration or insurance status. We thank you for your continued partnership.