



The Hon. Eric Adams
Mayor of New York City
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

January 6, 2022

Re: Request for Temporary Remote Option for New York City Schools to Allow for Testing and Vaccination of Students

Dear Mayor Adams,

Happy New Year and we hope you're well. We write to you as city and state legislators to ask for immediate action amid the surge in COVID-19 cases, driven up due to the omicron variant. Many of us write as parents of school-aged children as well, representing communities hardest hit by COVID-19 at the height of the pandemic. As students returned to school this week and many of us ask parents to test their children before their return to school buildings, we must ensure that we facilitate a process for families to do so. We urge you to provide a remote option for all schools for about two weeks, until Tuesday, January 18th for parents to test and vaccinate their children to slow down the spread of COVID. This time will provide schools with more time to receive shipments of masks, testing kits, and other tools to execute universal weekly and baseline COVID-19 testing. This remote option should be centralized and ensure that schools have the adequate staff to support this. The implementation of this should occur without punitive measures being taken against parents and families.

On Monday, it was reported that only "67% of students returned to the classroom." This demonstrates the hesitance by many parents to return their children to schools as the virus continues to transmit in high numbers. To be clear, we are not asking for the closure of schools but simply an adaptable response to an increasingly alarming issue impacting the health of New Yorkers. This is not a request for the New York City Department of Education (DOE) to implement something it has not carried out previously. Last academic year teachers and staff provided an option of remote instruction to students who accessed the classroom remotely.

It's important to note the impact the surge in cases could have on staff and students' mental wellbeing as we enter a third year of the pandemic. It is difficult for faculty, staff, and students to remain focused on studying and teaching as they hope they aren't exposed to the coronavirus. Providing families the time to test and vaccinate their families will provide benefits in the long term and slow the spread of COVID-19 transmissions. We also urge the DOE to

extensively review the provision of N95, KN95, or KF94 masks and testing kits to staff and families as some of our offices have heard anecdotes of inconsistency in their provision.

We appreciate the enormity of the current task to address all of these issues and more during this difficult time for New York City. As elected officials we will also work in our communities to increase vaccination rates during this time period. We are here to assist the work of your administration and look forward to your response and action.

Respectfully,

Jessica González-Rojas
Member of Assembly, 34th AD

Jessica Ramos
State Senator, 13th SD

Shekar Krishnan
NYC Council Member, D25

Andrew Hevesi
Member of Assembly, 28th AD

Jabari Brisport
State Senator, 25th SD

Carlina Rivera
NYC Council Member, D2

Catherine Nolan
Member of Assembly, 37th AD

Julia Salazar
State Senator, 18th SD

Sandra Ung
NYC Council Member, D20

Jo Anne Simon
Member of Assembly, 52nd AD

Cordell Cleare
State Senator, 30th SD

Tiffany Cabán
NYC Council Member, D22

Phara Souffrant Forest
Member of Assembly, 57th AD

Jamaal Bailey
State Senator, 36th SD

Linda Lee
NYC Council Member, D23

Rebecca Seawright
Member of Assembly, 76th AD

Gustavo Rivera
State Senator, 33rd SD

Lynn Schulman
NYC Council Member, D29

Nathalia Fernandez
Member of Assembly, 80th AD

Toby Ann Stavisky
State Senator, 16th SD

Chi A. Ossé
NYC Council Member, D36

Karines Reyes, R.N.
Member of Assembly, 87th AD

Michael Gianaris
State Senator, 12th SD

Sandy Nurse
NYC Council Member, D37

Liz Kreuger
State Senator, 28th SD

Charles Barron
NYC Council Member, D42

Alessandra Biaggi
State Senator, 34th SD

Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.
State Senator, 15th SD

