

# What's Happening in NYC Public Schools

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[schools.nyc.gov/messagesforfamilies](https://schools.nyc.gov/messagesforfamilies)

## September 10, 2021

We can't wait to welcome New York City students back to the classroom on the first day of school: **Monday, September 13**. Please see below for important information about the upcoming 2021-22 school year—and visit our Back to School Checklist for Families ([schools.nyc.gov/checklist](https://schools.nyc.gov/checklist)) for additional suggestions on how you and your children can prepare for that special day!

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### Getting Ready

#### **Health Screening Tool**

Before entering school buildings each day, every student and staff member must complete the Health Screening Form to confirm that they are not experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, have not recently tested positive, and are not currently required to quarantine based on close contact with an infected person.

We recommend bookmarking [healthscreening.schools.nyc](https://healthscreening.schools.nyc) on your device so you can quickly and easily complete the form before sending your child to school each day.

Remember, if your child feels ill, do not send them to school! We want to keep your child and our school communities healthy and safe, and we must all do our part.

#### **Stay Connected with the New York City Schools Account**

Stay up to date on important announcements from the DOE and your school, including school closures and events happening in your district or citywide! With a **New York City Schools Account (NYCSA)** account, you can update your contact information, fill out important school forms online, see your child's grades, schedules, test scores, assigned transportation, attendance, and more. Learn more at: [schools.nyc.gov/nycsa](https://schools.nyc.gov/nycsa)

### **Submit an Updated Testing Consent Form for Your Child**

It is important that you provide consent for your child to participate in the in-school testing program. Submit your updated testing consent form for your child using your NYC Schools Account (NYCSA) at [schoolsaccount.nyc](https://schoolsaccount.nyc) or by downloading the form online at [schools.nyc.gov/covidtesting](https://schools.nyc.gov/covidtesting) and providing the completed printed form to your child's school.

Testing consent forms submitted in the previous school year expire on September 30, 2021. If you previously provided consent, your child may be tested this month as part of the in-school testing program—however, for your child to participate in the testing program for the remainder of this school year, you must submit a new consent form.

### **Additional Resources for Families**

As you prepare for the first day of school, please be sure to visit our website for the most up-to-date information on the 2021-22 school year: [schools.nyc.gov/homecoming](https://schools.nyc.gov/homecoming)

What's next? At [schools.nyc.gov/checklist](https://schools.nyc.gov/checklist) you'll find a **Back to School Checklist for Families** with steps you can take to prepare for a strong start to the school year.

## **COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing**

### **Vaccination**

Vaccination is the most important step you can take to protect you and your family from COVID-19. All New Yorkers aged 12 and older are now eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

In partnership with the NYC Test & Trace Corps and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), all school sites serving students 12 and older are offering Pfizer-BioNTech vaccinations to eligible New Yorkers during the first week of school to make it as easy as possible to get vaccinated and stay safe. (Second doses will be provided at the beginning of October.) No appointment is needed at these sites. You can learn more about site hours from your school or by visiting [schools.nyc.gov/covid19](https://schools.nyc.gov/covid19).

### **Vaccine Requirements for Eligible Students Participating in High Risk Extracurricular Activities**

#### **Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) Vaccination Policy**

As a reminder, COVID-19 vaccination will be **required** this year for DOE students and staff participating in Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) sports considered high-risk for potential COVID-19 transmission. High-risk sports include football, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, lacrosse, stunt, and rugby. Vaccination will also be required for participation in bowling because while the sport is not high risk, the locations where it occurs require vaccination.

Participants in fall high-risk sports must get their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine by the first day of competitive play, which varies by sport. Winter and spring PSAL participants have until the

beginning of their season to be fully vaccinated. For additional information about health and safety protocols for PSAL in the 2021-22 school year, please visit [schools.nyc.gov/PSAL](https://schools.nyc.gov/PSAL).

### **Extracurricular Activities Vaccination Policy**

Consistent with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and State guidance, COVID-19 vaccination will be required this year for students who are at least 12 years old and are participating in afterschool extracurricular activities considered high-risk for potential COVID-19 transmission.

High risk afterschool activities include:

- Chorus
- Musical Theater
- Dance / Dance Team
- Band / Orchestra / Marching Band
- Cheerleading / Step Teams / Flag Team

Please reach out to your school for additional information regarding participation in these activities.

### **Department of Education (DOE) Vaccination Portal**

You can upload an image of your child's vaccination card or NYC Excelsior Pass to the DOE's vaccine portal at [vaccine.schools.nyc](https://vaccine.schools.nyc). Submitting that information will support New York City's pandemic response and recovery efforts, helping to ensure that our school communities remain safe and healthy.

### **COVID-19 Testing in Schools**

Continuing the safety measures introduced in the previous school year, we will be conducting regular COVID testing of staff and students grades 1 through 12. That way, action can be taken right away to protect the school community if there's a positive case. As noted above, in order for your child to be included in the in-school testing program, you **must submit an updated testing consent form** for your child to your school.

- You can fill out the form using your NYC Schools Account (NYCSA): [schoolsaccount.nyc](https://schoolsaccount.nyc)
- Download the form online at [schools.nyc.gov/covidtesting](https://schools.nyc.gov/covidtesting)
- Don't have an NYC Schools Account? Learn more at [schools.nyc.gov/NYCSA](https://schools.nyc.gov/NYCSA)

## **At Your Child's School**

### **Visitor Safety**

#### **School Visitor Policy**

Effective Monday, September 13, all visitors to DOE school buildings are required to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination (1 dose), in order to enter the building, except in the case of an emergency. This proof may be provided in several ways. In order to enter the building, a visitor must:

- show identification,
- have proof of vaccination,
- complete the daily health screening form, and

- wear a face covering.

On the first day of school, 3K/Pre-K parents, in small groups, will be able to walk their children into the classroom and stay with them briefly on the first day of school without showing proof of vaccination. All other requirements apply. Please see [schools.nyc.gov/2021health](https://schools.nyc.gov/2021health) for more information.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

The first parent-teacher conferences of the 2021-22 school year will take place in the fall of 2021. As in the previous school year, for the safety of our school communities, all parent-teacher conferences will be held remotely in school year 2021–22. Your child’s school will be in contact regarding the specific date and time of their parent teacher conferences.

### **Face Coverings (Masks)**

Wearing face coverings or masks is one of the most important strategies for keeping our school communities safe. As mandated by the New York State Department of Health, all students and staff must wear a face covering when riding on school buses and on school property (indoors and outdoors), regardless of vaccination status, unless they have a medical exemption. Students who are not medically able to tolerate masks will be provided with alternative accommodations. We appreciate your support in reminding your student to wear a face covering every day to school. Forgot your mask or need a replacement? We will make sure to provide your child with one!