



Central Park East I Elementary School

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June 12, 2020

Dear Families,

Yesterday, principals received more specific news yet about what to expect for fall. Here is some tentative information about schools' budget and social distancing in September. Of course, this is all subject to change, depending on how COVID-19 continues to affect the city.

You know we are expecting a budget cut. On Thursday afternoon, principals were told to expect to lose about three percent of our total budget. For us, that equals nearly one full teaching position. But, that does not mean we have to lose a teacher.

We have managed our budget very carefully, knowing (even before COVID-19) that the budget would be shrinking over time. CPE1 has not over-hired or overspent. *If* the cut stays around the *predicted* three percent, CPE1 will not have to cut current staff. However, we will not be able to spend on much more than staff. Fortunately, we loaded up on books and supplies – including disinfectant and cleaning supplies – using this year's budget. And thankfully, the city has promised to provide safety equipment for schools, so we will not have to find and purchase masks on our own.

The New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) also announced to principals that we will start next year with a mix of in-person and online school. That news is expected, but disappointing. We want to be back, fully together, in our regular school. We have not heard when or how the decision to re-open completely would be made.

The city wants to meet the Centers for Disease Control's current guidelines for social distancing. NYCDOE believes CPE1 can hold a maximum of about 130 students at a time. We have to work out specifics, but the gist is clear: on any school day, about one-third of our students would be at home, learning at a distance. Some staff will be working at home as well. Now comes the planning.

Every school staff will plan this mix of in-person and online learning. We will consider scenarios for how and when children work in school, and how and when they learn at home. As CPE1 staff prepare, we have to hear from you. Please join us (by computer or by phone) on **Wednesday, June 17, at 5:30.**

This summer, we must develop a schedule that mixes learning at home with learning at school. We must make consistent, sensible school schedules that allow families to plan the other parts of their lives. We must keep developing productivity, creativity and community. And we must do it all in a way that brings excitement and joy to children.

Early next week, you will receive a link to Wednesday evening's discussion. Please join us for this first conversation.

Gabriel