



Central Park East I Elementary School

July 21, 2020

Dear Families,

Of course this letter will have an update on school re-opening. First, think of the people you know who are struggling with their rent. That might be your family, or a neighbor, or a friend.

New Yorkers have only until **July 31** to apply for the COVID Rent Relief Program (RRP). The state is offering four months of assistance to anyone who:

- Lost income due to COVID-19
- Pays more than 30% of their income on rent
- Pays up to [125% of Fair Market Rent](#);
- And lives in a home with at least one U.S. citizen or meet [one of these immigration criteria](#). (The person applying does *not* need to be a citizen.)

This program does not apply for people who live in public housing. If you live in a New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) building, your rent can be lowered if you have lost income. ([Click here to reduce your rent with NYCHA](#), or call 718-707-7771 and press Option 5.)

The Rent Relief Program requires fast action. Losing income because of a global pandemic should not make any family lose the safety of home. If you qualify, please complete your application before the end of July. And if you don't qualify, please spread the word to someone who might.

Meeting for Families About Re-Opening

You are invited to a discussion about CPE1's re-opening this fall. You can click the Zoom link or call in by phone:

Date: Tuesday, July 21

Time: 6:00 P.M.

Link: <https://zoom.us/j/95546464112?pwd=QlBjMmxFWWFoWGtDbjNNTD0pUC9EQT09>

Meeting ID: 955 4646 4112

Password: 512884

Dial-In: 646.558.8656

Re-Opening and Scheduling

Our meeting will start with an overview of our schedule. This week, all New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) schools will submit schedules for in-person learning this fall. CPE1 has large classrooms. We can meet social distancing guidelines for *half* of our students at a time. That means each child can come to the school building for half of all school days. Basically, that's three days one week, then two days the next, then three days, then two days.

We will have a consistent schedule for all students. You will know in advance which days your child will be home or come to school. Families with more than one child will send all siblings together.

Re-Opening and Choices

NYCDOE is giving all families the choice to opt out of in-person learning. [You can opt your child out by clicking here](#). The deadline is August 7. If you opt out, you can come back to in-person learning at several designated times throughout the year. If you do not opt out by August 7, your child will be scheduled for in-person learning.

Some families may opt out due to pre-existing medical condition. Others may want to wait a little longer to hear about what expect, safety-wise. As always, CPE1 supports families' choices.

Measures for Safety

A few days ago, the state education department released its [school re-opening guidelines](#). If NYCDOE gives more specific instructions, we will follow them. Chancellor Carranza has announced some citywide measures, including:

- Hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes sent to schools
- Personal protective equipment sent to schools

- No-touch thermometers to check for fevers as students and staff enter
- Custodial staff receive electro-static disinfectant sprayers for nightly cleaning

At CPE1, we still have lots of disinfectant, gloves, and other cleaning supplies we ordered back in March. I appreciate the city's ordering more supplies and masks on behalf of all schools. That will streamline finding supplies for the future.

More on Safety

NYCDOE is taking requests to work at home from staff who have underlying medical conditions. But, for staff with children, partners, or parents at higher risk, coming in person to school is the only way to get paid. Some of you already know this COVID-19 reality: you keep doing your job, so you keep away from people you love.

Anyone making that trade deserves safety at work. September is coming fast, and no school has all of the information staff or families reasonably want. Principals usually try to sound cheerful when they communicate with families. I'm just trying for directness. When reducing risk affects so many children, their families, staff, and their families, we all deserve candor.

In the end, I trust people, not policy. My confidence and thanks go to CPE1 staff, who think so much about children and routines, who already see cleaning classrooms as part of educating children, who have high expectations for honesty, who see how everyone's safety is bound together.

We do not have all of the answers, but there is so much to discuss. Please join Tuesday evening's discussion if you can.

Summer Reading Choices

Educators and researchers long have known about 'summer reading loss.' Children who barely read over summer fall behind. This year, summer arrived in March. Long ago, most CPE1 children finished the books we sent home. Public libraries closed. The iPads NYCDOE sent to so many students could not access the New York Public Library's collection of e-books.

Finally, your child has more reading options. First, public libraries just began loaning grab-and-go books outside of library branches. Second, the public library's reading apps have been loaded onto students' NYCDOE iPads. For everyone else, you [can click here to get a library card and download the app](#). (The library does not collect citizenship information. Everyone has a right to read free books.)

NYCDOE students now can access [Sora, a free collection of books](#). I want to make a plug for NYCDOE's own school library system, which you can access if you email a quick request to libraries@schools.nyc.gov. The school library website has



many different collections, including hundreds of books for younger children reading independently. Children reading books like the one at left need *dozens* of books for summertime practice, so the

school library system's collections are very valuable.

Helping children read while schools are closed is just one more challenge of having children home for a long time. Please help your child take advantage of these new reading resources.

Gabriel

