



Central Park East I Elementary School

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March 15, 2021

Dear Families,

Exactly one year ago today, in the middle of everything shutting down, New York closed public schools.

Families expect to bring their children to school; you were gracious as school came to you, in your homes, cameras on. Through the hardest days, you logged children on and kept them learning. You shared devices. You stayed patient with our school system's confusing or absent communication. You stayed patient while CPE1 remade itself. In a year of stress and grief, you showed kindness and courage.

Much of what makes CPE1 special cannot easily fit on a computer screen, yet our staff managed to adapt singing, cooking, constructing, routines, group-work, and community. When in-person teachers re-designed classrooms and materials, the thought not only of safety, but beauty. While some schools have thirty or forty or fifty students in Zoom meetings, CPE1's remote teachers teach live, in small groups, every day. Some worked from home while they were sick. Some worked while they were mourning. They keep trying to bring children joy. And that's what your children are doing for us. They bring joy.

This has been the longest, hardest year. Closing school a year ago is only one part of that. This anniversary makes me sad and thankful. It's an honor to see how so many of you pushed through the impossible. For through the unknowns ahead, I'm thankful to be part of CPE1.

*Gabriel*

