



Central Park East I Elementary School

September 26, 2021

Dear Families,

This afternoon, the New York City Department of Education's situation room informed me that Hansel's class will be closed for one day only: Monday, September 27.

The closure is based on Friday's news that a child in the class tested positive for COVID-19. That child had not been in class since Friday, September 17.

Hansel's class WILL BE CLOSED on Monday. The class **will re-open Tuesday, September 28.**

I disagree with the city's decision. If – *if* – children in the class were exposed back on September 17, anyone who caught the virus would have been contagious throughout the last week. Backdating closure to September 17 ignores any cases that might – *might* – be spreading still. A one-day closure adds no extra safety. Why keep disrupt families for that?

I spent lots of time on Sunday trying to get the situation room to change the decision. At least half the class got COVID tests this weekend, and so far, no one has tested positive. Everyone I talked to in the situation room agrees that it's probably safe for Hansel's class to return, yet the class is staying closed. Closures will remain automatic until a new citywide policy takes effect... tonight at midnight. For now, the city is sticking with the old policy.

Though I dislike the decision, we should honor it. I am comfortable doing *more* than the city requires; we should not do *less*. If we would not want one of the other schools in our building disobeying a closure order, we should uphold ours.

As it turns out, East Harlem Scholars Academy 2 (ESHA2) is also doing more than their classroom closure orders, and doing extra. A family with five siblings just

tested positive. All of ESHA2 is staying home Monday to allow for more contact tracing.

For now, **Hansel's class will be on line Monday.** He will send a Google Classroom link to the class to all families. If your child needs tech support, such as a reset password, please reach out to Stephanie (stephanie@cpe1.nyc).

I am grateful to everyone who found free COVID testing for their children this weekend. I am sorry to the adults in Hansel's class who have to change their plans for Monday. I appreciate again how understanding this community has been when it comes to everyone's health.

Gabriel