



January 12, 2022

Dear Families,

This letter is all about communication and COVID. With the unprecedented surge now, our communication is shifting.

Since September 2020, I have been notifying families when children or staff test positive or show symptoms in school. Last fall, when schools first came back to in-person learning, I wanted families to be able to get their children, in the middle of the day, if they felt worried. Back then, all public schools closed when the city positivity rate climbed up to three percent; today, the positivity rate is ten times higher.

To keep up with changing times, I will send one message a day on Remind, sharing the number of confirmed new cases in each class. Twelve percent of our students have tested positive since Thanksgiving, nearly all of them in the last three weeks.

We have begun to send home rapid testing kits for students when COVID cases are confirmed. A letter will be attached to the kit, giving a little more detail about when the person who tested positive was last in school. Students who have come back to school after testing positive will not test again for three months.

Yesterday, we experimented with testing two whole classes at the start of the day. We used the rapid tests the city gave us to send home after someone tests positive. I believe it would be safest to test all students, every day, before they come into class. However, I do not think CPE1 can sustain that. We cannot enough staff and rapid tests to guarantee

testing everyone multiple times per week. (As promised, we *will* have the planned, extra testing for pre-K children when they return to the building next week.)

We are keeping the safety routines we have practiced since the start of the year, such as extra disinfecting and lunch upstairs in every classroom instead of the cafeteria. Classrooms are cold this week as we continue to bring in lots of fresh air. Again, the routine we are changing involves communication.

Thank you to everyone for finding out a way to keep up with school during these challenging weeks.

Gabriel