



July 28, 2022

Dear Families,

This year's first community gathering will take place *before* school starts. Please join us on the evening of September 6 for CPE1's welcome-back event.

On September 6, new and returning families will get to meet one another. Children can talk and play together on the yard again, which helps many feel ready for the first day.

That first day is getting closer. Our classrooms have been deep-cleaned, the floors shined. I spent much of this week thinking about our math curriculum. A quiet summer is a sign of stability: we expect our fulltime staff from June to be back for September.

Six weeks ago, [I wrote that our hiring committee found a teacher to fill the opening in our 2-3 class](#). However, still don't have enough money in our budget to hire the teacher we want, because there still have been changes yet with our school system's serious budget situation.

We will introduce that teacher as soon as we have the money to hire officially. For now, here is more about the citywide budget cuts, and how they impact CPE1.

### **Context for Citywide Cuts**

Mayor Adams wants to cut New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) funding. He says his proposed cuts are based on lower enrollment across the city. Between Fall 2019 to Fall 2021, NYCDOE

enrollment fell by 87,348 students, which translates more than \$300 million in cuts.

But the cuts go deeper. NYCDOE plans to give schools less money for each student still enrolled. For example, the city will give elementary schools about \$26 less per student than last year, and about \$45 less to support special education. Lowering the funding for each student adds up to about \$100 million in extra cuts.

Other cuts are disguised. The city has given most schools less money to start the year because NYCDOE predicts enrollment will fall again. Schools that eventually have more students than predicted will receive extra money around December. But most schools don't hire teachers in December; schools plug holes with substitute teachers, who get paid less and don't get benefits. Quietly, this will shrink the number of permanently hired teachers, even more than the obvious budget cuts.

### **Impact of the Cuts on CPE1**

As of today, our budget is about 14% smaller than in 2021-2022. Every allowable dollar is going toward personnel, and we still don't have enough to pay our fulltime staff.

Several things could help us in this tough situation. On August 4, [a judge will decide whether the city can cut budgets or give more money to schools.](#)

Also, this will be our final year as a [Comprehensive Support and Improvement \(CSI\) school.](#) We qualify for a one-year CSI grant to have an instructional coach. For four years, Jim has served as a reading intervention specialist. This year, while Jim maintains his Reading Recovery role, he also will become a literacy coach. The grant will close most of our budget gap.

Rising enrollment could help as well. NYCDOE has projected that our school will shrink, though so far, we have sixteen new K-5 students, with more to come, I hope. However, NYCDOE will not give us more money for new students until December. We want to bring Tim back again two days per

week as a visual arts teacher. Unless the city reverses budget cuts, we will have to delay Tim's start date until winter.

I wrote back in June that all this uncertainty requires patience. That's especially true for families of second and third graders, who waiting until their new teacher can be announced. I am sorry for all of the delays. I hope to have good news to share soon.

### **Two Ways You Can Prepare for the Year Ahead**

We need emergency contact information for every child. [We ask all families to fill out this form before the first day of school.](#) We combine several forms into one so you have less to do in the fall. [Please complete this form for each child you have at CPE1.](#)

A second way to help is to complete your school meal form. School breakfast and lunch are free for *all* NYCDOE students, but lunch forms still matter. [Please take a few minutes to fill out this public school lunch form.](#) (If your child already receives SNAP benefits, you don't have to do this.)

Schools cannot see the income you report. However, our school can get extra funding as more families complete the form. And, as you can tell, this year, schools could use extra funding...

In August, you'll receive more updates and CPE1's schoolyear calendar. For now, I hope you're enjoying the pace of summer, and a little extra time with your family.

Gabriel