



BUFFALO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent

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Happy New Year and Welcome Back To School!

With the clear consensus from our many constituents to fully reopen schools on January 3, 2022, we have added layers of safety protocols to mitigate against the spread of COVID-19 and maintain in-person learning. Our priority is the safety of all students, staff, and faculty.

The science tells us that the omicron variant spreads more easily. It is critical that we strictly follow the Center for Disease Control's most recent health and safety guidelines. Moreover, I have personally ensured that the district has ordered an emergency supply of 500,000 KN95 masks, which are of a higher quality and are more effective at stopping the spread of the omicron variant of COVID-19. We strongly urge you to adhere to the following:

- Do not come to school if you are ill!
- Properly wear your mask every day. Per New York State Department of Health there will be NO MASK BREAKS except when eating or drinking
- Maintain social distancing
- Frequently wash your hands and do not touch your face
- If you are in "close contact" with someone who has COVID-19, follow ALL instructions for quarantining as determined by public health authorities

The following are more ways to help stop the spread of Coronavirus:

- All students (5 years of age and older) and staff should be vaccinated and, if eligible, get a booster dose
- Get tested immediately if you have symptoms or are a "close contact" of someone with COVID-19
- Wear masks in all public places and avoid large gatherings and crowded places
- I strongly urge parents and staff to consent to the district's free, in-school randomized COVID-19 testing because testing helps to keep everyone safer

Each child will receive a free home COVID-19 rapid antigen test kit this week for your family's use. We are deeply appreciative to New York State Governor Kathy Hochul for the 31,000 rapid antigen COVID-19 test kits that we received today.

I will work with our BPS and Health Advisory teams to monitor and evaluate all essential data points for each of our buildings. In the event that any BPS school has so many staff absences due to Covid, that it jeopardize the safety and welfare of faculty, staff, and children, I will work with the school's team, the ECDOH, our Medical Advisory Team, and my Executive Team to make an informed determination regarding temporary school closure. Should a school need to temporarily close, the announcement will be made via our multiple communication platforms no later than 6:00 pm.

Know that we all want our children healthy and in school, learning, every day. If we all do our part, our collective conscientious actions will mitigate possible school closures. Together, we can make the best of 2022 for all!

Dr. Kriner Cash
Superintendent

"Putting Children & Families First to Ensure High Academic Achievement for All"