

Dear KIPP Newark Families,

In August, we shared our commitment to updating you on our planned reopening of Monday, 10/26 by Monday, 10/5. As we head into October, we couldn't be more grateful for your flexibility, persistence, and partnership. The pandemic has upended work schedules, child care, and our instructional program, and your support of your children's academic experience amidst all of the other challenges inspires all of us.

We are writing today to share a few important updates about our new in-person return date and our approach to staggered return for our students.

Delayed In-Person Opening: January 11, 2021

As you know, the research about COVID-19 keeps evolving, the guidance keeps changing, and our plans to reopen our school buildings have needed to remain flexible to accommodate these changes. We spent the last few months determining the factors that would enable us to open in the midst of the pandemic while making every effort to protect the health of our staff and students. **We are writing today to share that we have made the decision to extend 100% remote learning for students until January 11th, and will firmly plan to return on this date.**

We did not make this decision lightly given how much we want to see our students back in our classrooms. The health and safety of our students and staff remain our top priority and the following factors shaped this decision:

- Cases have been rising in New Jersey. Even if the case transmission rate and case numbers remain stable from this point, we anticipate that other conditions surrounding the virus, such as availability of testing, PPE, contact tracing, and treatment options, will improve by the time our buildings reopen in January.
- We are revamping our ventilation systems in accordance with new guidance and those renovations will be completed by January because of long lead times from our vendors.
- We believe that a staggered start for students and families, with time spent orienting smaller groups of students to their classrooms with all of the new health and safety precautions, will help ensure that we can have a safe and smooth start to Quarter 3 instruction.

Staggered Return for Students

At KIPP, we have always believed in the importance of taking the time to build a strong classroom community and to teach routines and procedures thoroughly at the start of the year. Given the new safety protocols we will have in place, and possible roster shifts depending on

family preference for remote vs. hybrid, we know that this time is even more important. Therefore, we've planned the following schedule, with many more details to come in the weeks ahead:

- **All KIPP teachers will return in person on Monday, 1/4** for professional development and classroom set-up time
- Students will have asynchronous assignments to complete the week of 1/4 daily.
- **Students will return in small groups the weeks of 1/11 and 1/18 during our Orientation Weeks** to see their classroom, get to know each other and their teacher, and learn general classroom routines and procedures as well as COVID safety procedures.
- **Our hybrid program will begin on Monday, 1/25**, with all students who have selected the hybrid model returning that week in person.

Families will still have the option to choose 100% remote instruction for their child.

Family Survey: Please Complete When It Arrives on Monday, 10/5!

On **Monday, 10/5**, we will send you an updated survey asking you to select your preference for 100% remote or hybrid when we return in January. We know that your preferences may have changed since taking the survey in August, and we want to make sure that our model is responsive to family preferences.

- **100% Remote Option:** Your child will continue to receive live instruction like s/he does right now. The schedule may change slightly, but our goal is to preserve the overall approach (while continuing to make it better and better!).
- **Hybrid Option:** Your child will attend school in person 1-4 days/week and do remote live instruction the remaining days. Class sizes will be no larger than 15 students due to social distancing requirements, and we will confirm the exact number of days - and ask you for your preference of which days your child attends - once we know the number of families who are requesting in person instruction.

The survey will be sent to you on the evening of Monday, October 5. Please make sure to complete as soon as possible!

Local Resources for In Person Child Care and Support - Newark

- We have potential opportunities to partner with Newark Public Schools and the City of Newark to have KIPP students do their live instruction in a supervised in person space.

If you are interested in learning more, please [FILL OUT THIS INTEREST FORM](#) and we will reach out with more specific resources.

- **Boys and Girls Club:** The Boys and Girls Club of Newark currently has spots available for families who need daytime supervision for their students. The BGCN provides meals, remote learning supervision, and other activities for students age 6 - eighth grade. There is a monthly cost that can be covered by select tuition assistance programs, such as Program for Parents. For more information, please reach out to the Clubhouse at 973-242-1200.
- **KIPP Newark Evening Learning Program:** We are launching an evening learning program on Monday October 5th for K/1 students struggling with attendance and in need of evening live instruction as opposed to the typical daily schedule. Please reach out to your school's Director of School Operations for more information and to find out if your child could be a good fit for this program.

Additional Resources

- **Meal Program:** Our meal sites (Life, NCA, THRIVE & BOLD) are open every Monday & Wednesday from 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM and 3:30 PM - 5:30 PM. All students receive free breakfast and lunch. Free family groceries are available at Life & NCA every Wednesday.
- **Nutrition and SNAP Benefits Workshop:** We are excited to share we will be hosting quarterly nutrition and wellness workshops for families. The first workshop will cover strategies on how to stretch food dollars and how to apply for SNAP benefits (New Jersey's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). The date and workshop link will be shared soon!
- **Family Hotline:** If you have any concerns or need assistance please contact the Family Hotline at 973-679-7199.
- **Family Support Seminar Series:** Our next family seminar is scheduled for Wednesday, October 7th at 7:00pm. The seminar will cover "Creating Structures During Unstructured Times." We look forward to seeing you all! To register, fill out this form here: <http://forms.gle/1S6grafQbKApawB2A>

Family Town Hall: Wednesday, October 7 at 6:00 p.m.

We know that this decision may lead to many questions and a desire for more information. Your questions have proven incredibly helpful in our planning and that we are being as responsive as possible to feedback and concerns. Please feel free to [RSVP](#) to our next Family Town Hall on **Wednesday, October 7 from 6-7 p.m.** and submit any questions you'd like us to address there or via future communication. As we've shared in the past, we know that circumstances can change quickly, and we may not have all of the answers, but we will continue to commit to frequent and transparent communication.

Reminders: Residency Verification, Immunizations, Physicals, and Lunch Applications

Though students are not returning to buildings until January 2021, it is important that families fully complete all of their beginning of year documentation requirements, including the lunch application, residency verification, immunizations, and physicals. This will ensure that your child is ready to start and that your family's correct information can be used in state reporting. Please do not delay in these important elements of your child's enrollment, and reach out to your school's main office with any questions.

We know that this decision has many implications for families, so please know that we are here to continue to partner in finding solutions. We are committed to ensuring all of our children and families are safe, connected, and learning in the months ahead, and cannot wait to see our students back in person in January.

Love,

Ms. Belcher