



COMMUNITY DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL 30

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Resolution #153 In Support of Adding a Remote Option for the 2021-2022 School Year

WHEREAS, more than 60% of New York City students and their families, as well as many educators and school staff, participated either fully or partially in remote learning in the Spring of 2021;

WHEREAS, the majority of New York City public school students are not eligible to be vaccinated, and will therefore be unable to be fully vaccinated by the start of school on September 13;

WHEREAS, the rate of vaccination among 12–17 year-olds is lower than the vaccination rate of those 18 and older, with around 43% in that age group having gotten at least one dose;¹

WHEREAS, a more contagious variant of SARS-CoV-2, which makes children more susceptible to infection and transmission, is now the dominant variant in New York City;²

WHEREAS, while immunocompromised students may be eligible for medical accommodations, students with immunocompromised family members are not eligible for medical accommodations and may be putting those family members at risk by attending school in-person;

WHEREAS, most New York City school buildings do not have the space to provide consistent social distancing, which poses a particular risk at lunch when students will not be masked, especially in light of more transmissible variants;

WHEREAS, other large school districts in the United States, including the country's second largest, are offering a remote option to families;³

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According to *Chalkbeat*, “and about 43% of New York City’s 12- to 17-year-olds have gotten at least one dose” (<https://ny.chalkbeat.org/2021/7/28/22598166/its-either-remote-instruction-or-homeschool-for-this-bronx-family>).

² As of August 3, 2021, according to the NYC Department of Health, 72% of positive cases over the previous four weeks were identified as the Delta variant (<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-data-variants.page>).

³ The Los Angeles Unified School District announced in May that they would offer a remote option for 2021–22 (<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-05-24/post-covid-laUSD-fully-reopen-schools-in-the-fall>).

WHEREAS, many students and communities have found solace in virtual learning due to the lack of bullying students have faced for common in-person behaviors that are often shunned, stigmatized, and criminalized;⁴ therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Department of Education create a centralized remote option, administered at the city, borough, or district level, for families who choose not to take on the risk of their child contracting or transmitting SARS-CoV-2 at school, and that that option be trauma-informed and culturally responsive in line with Department of Education policy;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the establishment of a centralized remote option would not affect whether school-based programs are fully in-person, hybrid, or fully remote, nor would it affect what safety mitigations are implemented in school-based programs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education ensure that each student who has selected the remote option has a functioning, high-quality internet-connected device, as well as a headset and a keyboard for those who need them;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all families are informed about the remote option through both electronic and paper correspondence in their home language;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education ensure that opportunity for opting back in will be determined in advance and clearly communicated to all involved;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education will provide a process by which parents, teachers, administrators, and students can collaborate to continually improve remote learning for those who choose it.

Voted and Approved: August 9, 2021

⁴ Journalist Melinda Anderson has reported on the positive impact remote learning has had on many Black students (<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/28/opinion/virtual-school-racism.html?smid=url-share>).