

Schenectady City School District



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August 27, 2021

Dear Van Corlaer Families:

As the opening of school is quickly approaching, I wanted to reach out to share some additional guidance surrounding the re-opening of Van Corlaer Elementary School.

You are probably already aware of the fact that the Schenectady City School District does not have a virtual learning option for this year. Unless your student is medically fragile and submitted a doctor's note to apply for the Capital Region BOCES program, all students are expected to attend in person, starting September 9th, 2021.

Our staff has been working really hard to get everything ready for the safe return of our students. Using the re-opening guidance, we will be following the mitigation strategies for communities in red (meaning there is currently high community transmission). **That means facemasks are required at all times when students are indoors, including on the bus.** Throughout, we will be providing mask breaks for students and using other prevention strategies to maintain a safe learning environment. (I have enclosed the district's reopening plan with our Safety and Protection Protocols for review).

The recommendation for re-opening is to maintain 3 feet of social distancing with the use of masks. In addition, while we are in red, **no visitors are allowed in the building.** Thus, on opening day, teachers will be meeting and greeting parents outside from 8-8:15 at the appropriate entry and exit door for their class. (Please see enclosed map to locate where you will bring your student and pick them up each day). Similar to last year, **all students who walk or are dropped off for school will not be allowed to enter the building until 8:00 am,** so we are asking families to plan accordingly.

Breakfast and lunch will still be provided to all students daily. We have developed new protocols for breakfast, lunch, and recess to ensure students are able to eat while reducing the risk of spreading the virus. These measures are also designed to assist us with contact tracing should an individual test positive for COVID-19.

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We will continue to rely on proper handwashing, the use of hand sanitizer, and respiratory etiquette. During the opening days of school, we have designed lessons to help students understand all of these measures.

We are asking for help from all of our families. Please make sure you are checking your student's temperature and ensuring they are free from any illness each morning, prior to sending them to school. We will not be asking you to complete a daily attestation at the door each morning, so it is critical that **if your child is not feeling well, you keep them home.**

Our staff will continue to use the enhanced cleaning and disinfection protocols this year. We will also have procedures in place for contact tracing and quarantining.

The Schenectady City School District's plan is based on recommendations from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Schenectady County Department of Health, and the New York State Education Department (NYSED). The strategies we are implemented are designed to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19, while providing the opportunity for students to return to in-person teaching and learning. The district is continuously looking at the level of community transmission to make decisions on which layers of protection need to be in place.

As the level of transmission changes, protocols may change, and those will be communicated to families through a variety of methods including back pack letters, mailings, One Call Now, and messages on class Dojo. Thus, it is critical that phone numbers and email addresses are updated as they change. We are hoping to have a high level of participation in Class DoJo for our building this year, as it enables the teacher to communicate and share pictures or other information, quickly. In addition, as the Principal, I am also able to share messages school wide with all DoJo participants.

Please feel free to call our main office at 518-370-8270 if you have questions or concerns. In an emergency, you are able to reach me on my cell phone at 518-903-5149.

I look forward to partnering with our families this year. When we work together, we can accomplish anything!

Thank you for your continued support,

Michaela Miranda

Principal, Van Corlaer Elementary School