



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 15

Office: 131 Livingston Street, Room 301, Brooklyn, New York 11201

CEC15@schools.nyc.gov | tel. 718-935-4267 | [facebook.com/CECD15](https://www.facebook.com/CECD15) | CECD15.org

Resolution on Increased COVID-19 Testing in Schools and Increased Responsibility of the Situation Room

The Community and Citywide Education Councils (CCECs) are composed of parents who have been elected or appointed to serve as stakeholders of NYC School Community Districts, and specific cohorts of students, representing NYC public school students and their families.

Approved on September 28, 2021, the following resolution offers CEC 15's position regarding Increased Covid-19 Testing in Schools as well as Increased Responsibilities of the Situation Room.

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Health determined that “P-12 schools are required to offer COVID-19 screening testing to unvaccinated students on a weekly basis in geographic areas identified by the CDC as having moderate, substantial, or high transmission rates”¹;

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Health determined that “P-12 schools are required to ensure teachers and staff... have testing performed for COVID-19 at least once per week when a school is in a geographic area identified by the CDC as having low, moderate, substantial, or high transmission rates”²;

WHEREAS, positivity rates for the COVID-19 virus in District 15 neighborhoods remain high and have potential to increase as schools remain open, and with holiday and weekend travel³;

WHEREAS, rates of infection among children ages 0 - 17 continue to increase steadily⁴ putting Early Childhood Centers and Elementary Schools at a particular risk due to the fact that vaccines are not currently approved for children under 12;

¹ <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/09/2.62-determination.pdf>

² <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/09/2.62-determination.pdf>

³ <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-data.page#transmission>

⁴ <https://www.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/children-and-covid-19-state-level-data-report/>

WHEREAS, testing of any given population on a weekly basis is effective in preventing the transmission of COVID-19, regardless of the sensitivity of the test⁵;

WHEREAS, the DOE has indicated it will only test 10% of the consenting student population on a weekly basis, and will not include vaccinated individuals as part as the testing pool;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 testing for school populations remains optional with in-person learning and, given that there is no mandate for parents to authorize their children to be tested, the percentage of tests administered in any school population is significantly reduced;

WHEREAS, the hours of operation of the Situation Room have been reduced since last year causing delays in classroom closures⁶;

WHEREAS, there has been no guidance for Principals on how or what information to share about Covid-related cases in their school, and

WHEREAS, this communication to families and staff on Covid-related cases in schools was offered previously through the Situation Room. This change in communication protocol is causing unnecessary confusion and creating further mistrust of the system;

WHEREAS, school administrators are not empowered to independently quarantine classrooms;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Department of Education increase COVID-19 testing in schools for all consenting students and staff, regardless of vaccination status and across all ages;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the hours and staff of the Situation Room be increased to accommodate greater testing, as well as continue the communication method that families and staff have become accustomed to in this past year.

This Resolution was approved unanimously at a CEC15 Calendar Meeting held on September 28, 2021 by a vote of members present including: Camille Casaretti, Antonia Ferraro, Tia Schellstede, Vincent Lu, Nana-Poku Agyekum, Ivan Banda, Joseph Alexander and Alfred De Ingeniis.

⁵ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7325181/>

⁶ <https://ny.chalkbeat.org/2021/9/22/22687787/nyc-situation-room-quarantine-delay-schools>