



# Pearl River School District

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**Marco F. Pochintesta, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools

August 6, 2021

Dear Pearl River School District Community,

As we transition into the month of August, I write to update you on our plans for the reopening of our schools on September 1, 2021. You may have learned that the long-anticipated guidance from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) will not be forthcoming. New York State Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker stated, “With the end of the state disaster emergency on June 25, 2021, school districts are re-established as the controlling entity for schools. Schools and school districts should develop plans to open in-person in the fall as safely as possible, and I recommend following guidance from the CDC and local health departments.” In addition, State Education Department Commissioner Dr. Betty Rosa informed school districts that CDC guidelines should be the basis of preparing for the 2021-22 school year.

Despite the lack of guidance from the NYSDOH, I can share the following information with you regarding our plans for reopening. The Pearl River School District will return to full in-person learning for all of our students in grades K-12 on September 1, 2021. We will follow social distancing protocols of three feet wherever possible to accommodate all of our students in their classrooms. We will not offer an optional remote learning platform, however, we will support our students with remote learning in cases of quarantine.

There are additional details concerning our return to school that still need to be addressed. In order to do this well and make the most of the opportunity to exercise local decision making, we will immediately reconvene our school health subcommittee to consider questions such as masking, temperature checks, daily attestation completion and surveillance testing for COVID-19. The school health subcommittee, composed of parents, school staff, and advised by our district physician, provided us with the protocols we followed for our reopening in September 2020. I anticipate that the work of the subcommittee will be concluded and I will have their recommendations on or about August 17th. Please expect an update from me at that time.

I look forward to welcoming all of our students and staff back as we enter the new school year.

I am confident that we will have a great return and together we will make 2021-22 an excellent year for our students.

Sincerely,

Marco F. Pochintesta, Ed. D.