

TOWN HALL Meeting June 25, 2020 - Summary

Please note that things within the DOE are changing daily. These answers are based on our Town Hall meeting on June 25, 2020.

Currently, we are looking at **two groups of learners** -

BLENDED learners that will have a mix of home and school learning, and we will most likely have two separate groups of blended learners.

REMOTE learners that are 100% at home.

What will the PTA look like? Fundraising will be different. We may not be able to host large gatherings, so how would we do our Fall Carnival and other school events? Where will our money go? The mission of a PTA is to support the school, students, and their families. So, what we spend money on next year could look very different than in previous years. The deadline to pass a budget is extended to October 31, 2020, although ideally we have one to present earlier than that.

Here are questions that were addressed during our meeting:

Remote Learning

For remote learning, is there an idea of the date that it would end?

Sadly-no.

Who will be teaching remote students that are 100% remote? Will students that are on the blended/alternating schedule receive any teacher support on their home days? Can there be any small group classes online? Would teachers be able to use DOE iPad cameras to live record their in class sessions with blended learning students?

Some of the challenges we face are the UFT (Teacher's union) contract. Currently, it states that if a teacher is teaching live 5 days a week, they will not be responsible for remote learning (because there are only so many hours in a contractual school day). According to a recent UFT town hall meeting, teachers may apply to stay at home for health reasons. It may work out that those teachers that are at home will be responsible for remote learners. These could be PS 110 teachers, or, they could be teachers from other schools.

We don't know what home days will look like for our blended learners. There is a strong possibility that they will NOT have teacher support on home days. Classroom teachers will be posting assignments on Google Classroom for the days that students are home.

Currently, there are privacy issues related to teachers recording classroom sessions, or going live. The current remote learning environment happened during a state of emergency and many aspects of the UFT contract were pushed to the side because of the state of emergency. Going forward in September, it is unclear if classroom teachers of the blended students will record or go live. Remote learners will have live instruction.

Some suggestions were - parent volunteers to host casual virtual meet ups on home days to possibly review work, or just engage in conversation. It was also suggested that maybe we could reach out to local colleges/universities and see if education students may want to volunteer to lead virtual small groups. What resources can we tap into? Will community based organizations be able to support our students on home days? What will families do if they need child care five days a week, but their child will only go 2-3 days? How will the DOE support these families? How can the PTA help?

An online platform - success maker - was also suggested and more research will be done - but this platform would support our blended learners and help them complete work on home days and then classroom teachers would see their progress and see what skills need to be worked on. This wouldn't work with remote only learners as it works best when mixed with classroom learning. It is something we can look into.

What if I select remote only and it's not working, and eventually I am more comfortable and want my child to come to school - can I opt in at a later date? And on the flip side, if I send my child for blended learning and then decide I am not comfortable, can I keep them home for remote only?

We will do our best to accommodate but it depends on health safety issues. We have to consider how/if we are maintaining pods of children, if there is room in class, etc.

It will be easier logistically to let a child go back to remote learning, harder to accommodate a new child entering in-person classes.

Will siblings share the same schedule?

We cannot guarantee it, but we will do our best to accommodate sibling schedule requests and allow families to have a schedule that works for them. Please understand that it may not be possible.

Work books/packets sent home

Can we arrange to have remote students receive their 'hard copies' so they don't have to always be in front of a screen? Maybe a pick up day the first week of school with an appointment?

We are planning to have a pick up time for parents to pick up Go Math books and other materials to support remote learners in ways that get them off their screens.

We have inquired to see if packets and other paper materials will be available for remote learners from the DOE.

Clearly articulated policies regarding attendance and grades, even if they change throughout the summer, or even during the year. Can we be as transparent as possible regarding grades and how remote (and alternating) students will be graded? Will we return to regular grading next year?

We are still waiting for DOE guidance on these issues but we will be as transparent as possible about guidance on attendance, grading, and middle school and high school admissions. As of right now, we do not know if NYS tests will take place in 2021.

Can there be more of a baseline among grade levels? Can we have the same standards across all grades as far as the number of live lessons presented, the number of small group meet ups per week, the number of large group meet ups, etc.

Of course we see how that would be helpful and we will do our best to provide baseline suggestions for teachers based on parent feedback and UFT parameters. As noted above, it may work out that remote learners are not being instructed by PS 110 teachers, which could make it more difficult to create a baseline specific for our school.

Any thoughts on keeping the same teachers as last year or at least starting out the first week or so with the old teachers and then moving on to the next years teachers to help manage the transition?

While we love this idea, and it would be wonderful for the children, unfortunately schedules won't allow for such a set up. Due to licenses and content speciality, looping wouldn't work. We will have nearly 100 new pk students, and new kindergarten students, and it would be difficult, what would those students do during the first week? We do hope to plan a socially distant gathering outside of school hours for students to 'say goodbye' to their teacher from this current year.

How do the teachers feel about teaching with a face mask on? Would it be harder to not see someone's face for pronunciation (applies to ALL teaching, especially of phonics for both ELA/Literacy in English and in French)

Some teachers spoke about their concerns regarding this - and how it applies to all subject areas, especially phonics. It was suggested that teachers wore masks with the clear panel (maybe the PTA purchases these?) Teachers also brought up face shields, but then it was mentioned that face shields should be worn in conjunction with face masks.

Could we close Monitor Street to extend more of the learning outside until it gets cold?

We can certainly look into it. If there are parents here who would like to help reach out to local electeds about this, please contact us.

Can we utilize the Garden classroom for more outdoor learning?

We are hoping to do this, and we are open to suggestions right now and we will see how we can make it work.

For those in the FDLP- if we go back to an every other day option, could the time in school be in French and do the English learning from home especially for those of us that don't speak it at home?

I hear that you want extra support for Anglophones, especially if there is an alternating schedule with fewer in-person days learning. If families only received French instruction on school days, what would the English counterpart do? Unfortunately, the numbers won't work - as each class will be broken into at least two groups, so there would be 4 groups per grade level, the schedule wouldn't work to only do French instruction in school. It was suggested that we can partner with the university that usually sends us interns from France to possibly host virtual meet ups on home days.

How will the FDLP students learn French and English while only attending school half the time? What support can we put in place to ensure their success?

We understand that parents are concerned and we hope to come up with creative ways to support the French instruction. Again, as stated above, we hope to seek out university students to help us. It was also suggested that maybe parents would volunteer to host virtual meetups. Once schedules are set, maybe we can form peer groups and encourage them to meet on home days.

How will IEP and ELL students be supported with this blended plan?

All IEP/ELL students will continue to receive their mandated services. They have virtually been receiving services since we went to remote in March.

How would bathrooms be regulated and sanitized?

Bathrooms will continue to be cleaned as per the regulations set forth by the DOH.

How would drop off and dismissal work for blended learners?

It was suggested that we stagger drop off and pick up times to reduce the number of people at one time. How would this impact working parents?

Will staff or students be required to have antibody tests if they will be in the school building? Daily temperature checks? Regular COVID testing? Tracing? What would happen if someone tested positive?

Testing was brought up in the UFT town hall as a possibility for staff. Otherwise, we will have to see what policy the DOE mandates for anyone in the building. Currently, the policy for a positive test was a 24 hour shut down with a deep clean. We are unsure what the plan will be going forward.

What have we learned from schools that were open for essential workers during this time?

There was one school open in district 14 these past couple of months, and enrollment was low, so we don't have a lot to learn from them since they didn't have a high volume of people to work with.