



THE LEGISLATURE
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

September 7, 2021

Meisha Ross Porter
Chancellor
New York City Department of Education
52 Chamber Street
New York, New York 10007

Re: Protecting Students in New School Year by Providing Remote Learning Option

Dear Chancellor Porter:

In less than 13 days our students, teachers and staff are returning to schools having experienced two distinct and ongoing pandemics. While Covid-19, is responsible for the loss of over 700,000 lives across the nation, it has disproportionately devastated communities of color. Additionally, a second pandemic has caused an unprecedented level of political polarization resulting in untold human trauma due to increased acts of racism, violence, and continued oppression of minoritized groups. Our communities will require a level of understanding, support, and compassion at levels not seen before.

That support, understanding and compassion begins with providing parents and children with a remote learning option that will accommodate the great trepidation that has taken hold in homes throughout our City due to the increasing rates of community spread of the Delta variant of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).

Parents are stressed with the concern that they will be sending their children into virus infected classrooms. There is no doubt that the stress has been transferred to and impacting the wellbeing of our school-aged children. The obvious realities parents and children are facing revolve around not having an approved vaccination for children 12 and under to protect them and the tight spaces children returning to school will have to endure in classrooms.

As you know, the greater New York City area was the epicenter of the Covid-19 pandemic. The concerns and well-founded fears of parents as a new school year begins need our full respect and attention. Even as I prepare this letter, new reports from health agencies around the world are documenting other mutations to Covid-19 that make it deadlier and more contagious than anything we have seen.

Therefore, with all these factors in mind, we ask that you consider the mental health impact and health risks of opening up schools without a remote learning option. We are not out of this Pandemic. Placing our children in environments where community spread is certain and at a moment in time when there are no vaccinations available to protect them is the wrong decision that overrides the innate instincts of parents to protect their children.

We are unequivocal in our request that the New York City Board of Education provide a remote learning option before our schools open in less than two weeks.

We look forward to your response on this most urgent of matters facing our children and communities.

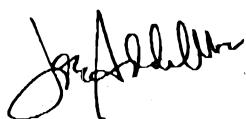
Sincerely,



Catalina Cruz, Esq.
Member of Assembly
39th A.D.



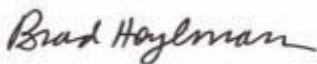
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15th A.D.



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Member of Senate
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Member of Senate
27th A.D.



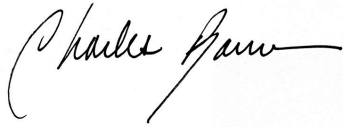
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85th A.D.



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Member of Assembly
30th A.D.



Marcela Mitaynes
Member of Assembly
51st A.D.



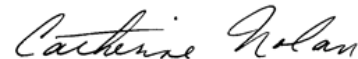
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