



Binghamton City School District

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Dear Binghamton Families,

Here we are, in the midst of our seventh week of distance learning. Over the past several weeks, you and your child have become experienced, and perhaps even proficient, with virtual learning tools that may have seemed unfamiliar or intimidating prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I encourage you to embrace these new technologies and virtual opportunities in other facets of your lives. Virtual communication tools like Zoom offer a new, convenient way to connect for parent-teacher conferences. TeleHealth, and other similar platforms, have made it easier than ever to get professional medical attention or advice in your own home. Accessing mental health support right from home is now possible, thanks to resources such as New York State's free [Emotional Support Hotline](#). These are just a few examples of how technology can connect us with resources that have the potential to benefit our daily lives. Please continue to visit the district [website](#), where resources are being regularly added and updated.

Schools can only reopen by executive order from the New York State Governor, and in coordination with other regional counties and the New York State Health Department. I want to assure families that the Binghamton City School District will only open when it is safe to do so. We have been actively pre-planning for a number of possible scenarios, and, ahead of re-opening, will make any and all necessary modifications and adjustments to our facilities, security, and policies for staff, students and visitors to follow. This pre-planning calls for measures such as providing personal protective equipment, establishing new cleaning protocols, and determining social distancing expectations. Already, the district has put in place protocols for food service workers, such as wearing masks before they were required, and taking temperatures each day. The promotion of proper hand washing, tracking and communication systems for faculty and student illness, and, preparation of our nurse's stations for sick child pick-up and quarantine are additional considerations when schools re-open, to name a few.

The 'new normal' we're preparing for presents many challenges for institutions that pride themselves on the strong relationships we build and providing physical spaces where students come together to learn with and from one another. Our schools are committed to supporting the unique needs of our students and families, regardless of whether they are distance learning or returning to the classroom. Together, we will find our 'new normal' and emerge from this time apart as an even more unified school community.

With Patriot Pride,

Dr. Tonia Thompson
Superintendent of Schools

Educating, empowering and challenging all students to become productive, global citizens through innovative approaches to learning.