



Binghamton City School District

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Dear Binghamton Families,

We began the month of February welcoming our students back into the buildings. It is wonderful to see their “eyes” smiling and to hear their voices once again in our halls. I deeply appreciate your patience and understanding as we cautiously continue to navigate the local COVID-19 cases. There is nothing more important than the health and safety of our students, families and employees, and our district administration strives to make every decision with the best interest of our entire school community in mind.

Education workers are included in New York State’s 1B priority group for the COVID-19 vaccination. According to a survey recently completed by 430 of the districts nearly 1,000 employees, 88% have either received at least their first vaccination or are scheduled to receive it soon. A huge thank you to our employees for their continued commitment to ensuring a safe environment for all. While we all must continue to exercise diligence in the form of coronavirus precautions and protocols, it is a relief knowing that we are making progress toward normalcy and recovery after nearly a year of battling this virus. While we realize that it will take time before a vaccine is approved and available for children, we are advocating for COVID-19 vaccines to be available to students through our schools. Access and equity in the vaccine distribution process is critical.

The district is leveraging resources in preparation for the upcoming school year, with COVID-19 considerations in mind. Many unknowns remain regarding the amount of state and federal aid schools will receive. District leaders are dedicating tremendous time and careful planning to crafting a balanced and responsible budget not only for the 2021-2022 school year, but one that will assist in sustaining a viable budget over the next three years. Administrators are exploring high school level courses that may be able to be delivered in an online format in the future, after all students return. We are also planning to continue making virtual opportunities available whenever possible, such as options for parent teacher conferences and access to curriculum through google classroom.

February is Black History Month, and inside and outside of the classroom, our students and staff are celebrating the culture, accomplishments and sacrifices of African Americans. Binghamton High School students, Shamoy Dixon and Jaden Durham were highlighted on local news outlet WIVT, speaking about what Black History Month means to them. Each of our buildings have several examples of how black history is being celebrated and I encourage you to ask your child about it.

One of the greatest assets of the Binghamton City School District is our beautiful diversity, and the curriculum opportunities associated with Black History Month is one wonderful example. While there is much to celebrate, Black History Month is also a reminder of the injustices that people of color have endured and continue to endure.

As a district, we are firm in our resolve to acknowledge and address these issues. We are determined to support each of our students in reaching their true and full potential through embracing their culture and home language, and ensuring that no one factor is a predictor to their educational outcome. It is our responsibility to confirm our schools are environments where every single child has the support, resources, and ability to succeed. We appreciate your partnership and support in this effort.

With Patriot Pride,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tonia". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Tonia Thompson
Superintendent of Schools

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