



## UTICA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Superintendent of Schools

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February 24, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

On Tuesday, February 23, 2021, the Utica City School District's Board of Education approved the start of in-person hybrid learning for all K-6 elementary students beginning on March 8, 2021.

Since the closure of schools back in March of 2020 due to the spread of COVID-19, the Utica City School District has made it a priority to protect the safety and well-being of our faculty, staff, students and their families. Over the past several weeks, we have finally seen a significant decrease in the COVID-19 infection rate in Oneida County from a high of over 11% back in January to its current level of under 1.5%. This significant decrease in the COVID-19 infection rate, along with the rollout of the state's vaccination program has provided a much safer environment in which to open our schools to in-person learning under our hybrid plan beginning with our K-6 elementary school students.

Your child's school principal has prepared a detailed mailing with all of the important information about your child's cohort assignment and weekly schedule. The mailing also includes very important information on the procedures that have been put into place at your child's school to ensure the safety and well-being of our students, faculty, staff, and their families. We appreciate your cooperation and support in order to keep everyone safe.

It is important to note that we are mandated to follow all health and safety measures that are required by the United States Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the New York State Department of Health (NYDOH), the Oneida County Health Department, and the New York State Education Department in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This includes, but is not limited to, maintaining 6-foot social distancing in classrooms, daily temperature screenings, wearing of face coverings, etc. All of this important information will be included in the mailing sent by your child's principal.

Also, during the Tuesday, February 23, 2021 Board of Education meeting, the Utica City School District's in-person hybrid learning plan was modified to provide the opportunity for remote students to receive live instruction on the days they are home. This adjustment was made based on feedback from parents and teachers. Rather than having two (2) check-ins as originally scheduled, remote students will have the ability to log-on with their teacher during the live portion of their ELA, Math, and Science lesson as well as during their Specials (Art, Music, Physical Education, Library, etc.) using the same schedule that the students and teachers are currently using. All of this information will also be included in the mailing from your child's principal and will be communicated by your child's classroom teacher. Affording your child the opportunity to log in during the live lesson times is an important way to help keep them on track. Once again, should you have any questions, I encourage you to reach out to your child's teacher and principal.

In closing, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation for the flexibility, understanding and perseverance that everyone has shown during this very difficult and unprecedented time.

Sincerely,

Bruce J. Karam  
Superintendent of Schools