

MONTCLAIR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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Superintendent of Schools

Weekly Community Message No. 6

Jonathan Ponds, Ed.D.

January 22, 2021

Dear Families, Caregivers and Staff,

It is with deep regret that I inform you that I am unable to properly staff our schools for in-person, hybrid teaching and learning on January 25, 2021. As a result, I cannot open our buildings to students as planned. My team and I will be meeting with the Montclair Education Association (MEA) along with a third-party mediator this weekend to facilitate an agreement. We are also working in consultation with our legal counsel.

The decision to delay our opening of school buildings is disheartening. For all our families and students who were anxiously awaiting the return to in-person instruction, I realize how unsettling this news is.

All students in all grades will remain fully remote during this time, continuing to follow their original remote schedules. They will participate in live, synchronous teaching and learning until personnel and staffing issues are resolved.

We remain concerned for the emotional well-being of every student, please be sure to reach out to your principals and counselors for any support you need. The district has access to resources, information, and counseling services to meet the social and emotional needs of our students. Additionally, the [Counseling Corner](#) and [Community Resource Guide](#) on our website contain a host of useful resources, including hotlines, local health agencies, educational materials, articles, videos and more.

We will communicate as soon as possible when in-person learning can begin, and we will continue to provide weekly updates.

Please see below for some additional important information:

Food Service

Beginning January 25, meals will be distributed Mondays and Thursdays 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM at Bullock, Nishuane, Northeast and Montclair High School.

Technology

Reminder: The Technology Department is asking all families who are using personal devices to utilize their Google Chrome Browser when participating in virtual learning. Our district has invested in many online tools and various applications that work best with the Chrome browser.

Please call our Technology Support Line (301-259-1510) should you require any assistance. Lastly, please contact your child's building administrator if you are in need of a device.

I want to emphasize that educating children is the district's primary focus, and we will continue to work tirelessly to expedite in-person learning. Despite challenging circumstances, our children (many of whom are featured in our Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., [website article](#)) have been impressively resilient. We are committed to their continued health and academic success.

Sincerely,
Dr. Jonathan Ponds
Superintendent