

## MEDIA ADVISORY

February 8, 2021

### **#KeepNYCSchoolsOpen Reacts to Mayor's Middle School Announcement**

**New York City**—New York City middle school families and supporters of the #KeepNYCSchoolsOpen movement reacted with equal parts relief and skepticism to Mayor Bill de Blasio's announcement this morning that in-person, part-time learning would resume for some middle school students beginning February 25. In-person school will remain closed to families who had previously selected remote for their child last year.

"Although it took over three months for middle school to reopen after being arbitrarily shut down in November, we applaud the Mayor for reopening them on February 25th," said Daniela Jampel, a public school parent and organizer for #KeepNYCSchoolsOpen. "Once again, we implore the administration to follow the science and rescind the '2 Cases Rule' which unnecessarily shuts entire school buildings for 2 unlinked COVID cases and creates chaos and confusion among public school families."

"We also demand a plan to immediately reopen high schools for both academics and sports," she added. "We condemn the use of high schools as vaccination hubs when so many vacant buildings could be used for this purpose instead."

A growing number of epidemiologists and public health experts are calling for the reopening of New York City public schools, and a halt to the use of the two unlinked cases rule.

"The two case rule was not based on science or evidence and it is doing tremendous harm to the overall well being of children, as it unnecessarily closes school for long periods of time repeatedly with accumulated massive hours lost of in-person instruction," said Dr. Jennifer Lighter, an epidemiologist and Associate Professor of Pediatric Infectious Diseases, NYU School of Medicine. "It is time we create policy from evidence and prioritize children's needs."

According to the City's [website](#), 177 elementary and District 75 school buildings are closed today; since a single school building can contain multiple co-located schools, the actual number of closed schools is much higher. (The total number of elementary and District 75 schools that are eligible to be open is only approximately 850.) The City has shut down buildings housing public schools 1,355 times since September 14.

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