



# COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 3

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## Vol 21 (P) No 2

### Resolution Calling for Standards of Learning for Virtual School

**WHEREAS**, on March 7, 2020, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo issued Executive Order Number 202 declaring a State disaster emergency for the entire State of New York as a result of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, a Public Health Emergency of International Concern;

**WHEREAS**, on March 12, 2020, Mayor Bill de Blasio issued Emergency Executive Order Number 98 declaring a Local State of Emergency in the City of New York due to steadily rising cases of COVID-19;

**WHEREAS**, on March 15, 2020, the NYC Department of Education (DOE) closed all public schools without detailed plans to operate the school system during an extended emergency, causing confusion amongst school leaders, staff, teachers, students, parents, and other caregivers;

**WHEREAS**, on March 16, 2020, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo issued Executive Order Number 202.4 further clarifying expectations on school districts to develop a plan for alternative instructional options;

**WHEREAS**, on March 23, 2020, the DOE allowed public schools to reopen and virtual teaching began, but without systemic guidelines regarding classroom meeting times, assignments, grades, and homework. Moreover, no technological specification was set; rather, software choice was left up to schools to handle individually;

**WHEREAS**, by not specifically defining remote learning throughout the district and being clear about what the expectations are or were, the DOE missed the opportunity to use research that has been widely circulated regarding the amount of screen time appropriate for children. This would have been an opportunity to lay the framework for how much live-virtual instruction would be available each day or week. Without this definition, many families commented that there was too much tech;

**WHEREAS**, in addition to lacking pedagogical specificity, hundreds of thousands of students were disproportionately affected by this unprecedented change, as they lacked reliable hardware and software used to interact with the school system in remote learning;

**WHEREAS**, on April 4, 2020, the DOE prohibited the use of Zoom software, citing security issues, despite the fact that many schools had been left to make their own programming choices in the first weeks of the shutdown, including the choice to use Zoom which now left them scrambling to find alternative means of remote teaching. This set off a sequence of events that complicated the ability

of thousands of students to remain connected to their teachers and fellow students. By May 10, 2020, this ban had been lifted, but left an indelible mark on parents and students;

**WHEREAS**, the DOE's survey of parents and older students in May 2020, noted that nearly half (47%) of all respondents reported that they, or their children, were learning less during remote learning. In addition only 29% of respondents reported having engaged regularly (more than once per week) with their teachers during remote learning;<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS**, the DOE once again missed the opportunity to solicit feedback pertinent to student and parent experience of the abrupt transition to remote learning, and looming concerns about health and safety protocols in the face of a documented nursing shortage<sup>3</sup>;

**WHEREAS**, on July 15, 2020 the DOE released a form to parents, asking them to select one of three options for potential resumption of schools for the 2020-2021 school year, including a fully remote learning option;<sup>2</sup>

**WHEREAS**, the fully remote learning option is being selected by new and returning families in District 3 with the expectation that they will continue to receive remote instruction from the school that their child has planned 2020-2021 enrollment;

**WHEREAS**, the DOE has issued no guidance or standards for remote learning. In addition, the DOE has not communicated to parents any information regarding remote learning, leaving a significant number of questions about how a student's weekly schedule will be structured, whether there will be live instruction or classroom assignments only, who will be teaching remote learning sessions, etc;

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, that CEC3 requests the establishment of standards and protocols regarding the following questions:

- i. How many hours will be required of students?
- ii. How many hours required of teachers; especially teachers with families?
- iii. How will the day be structured, grade by grade and from subject to subject?
- iv. What subjects can accommodate a fully digital experience? What subjects cannot?
- v. What should younger students be doing digitally which is considered age appropriate?
- vi. How will the DOE support students with IEPs and ensure students with IEPs engage with their related service providers?
- vii. Will DOE implement a policy as to which virtual platform related service providers utilize?
- viii. How will DOE ensure every child in District 3 has uninterrupted access to electronic devices?

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<sup>1</sup> Remote learning survey results - CEC3.org

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nycenet.edu/surveys/learningpreference>

<sup>3</sup> [https://f0b557d0-67a3-4752-b806-451f77c37713.filesusr.com/ugd/a806f4\\_182b5bd31118441891d56164b54abe13.pdf](https://f0b557d0-67a3-4752-b806-451f77c37713.filesusr.com/ugd/a806f4_182b5bd31118441891d56164b54abe13.pdf)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that CEC3 calls on the immediate halt of the remote learning/choice submission until established standards are set and communicated to parents and caregivers by the DOE.