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**CITY LAUNCHES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION COVID-19 SITUATION ROOM**

*Multi-agency partnership provides a single point-of-contact for rapid information sharing and response to COVID-19 cases in schools*

**NEW YORK**—Mayor Bill de Blasio and Chancellor Richard A. Carranza today announced the opening of the DOE COVID Response Situation Room—a multi-agency partnership between the Department of Education, Department of Health and Mental Health, and the Test & Trace Corps—to facilitate a rapid response to positive COVID-19 cases in public schools. The Situation Room provides a single point-of-contact between schools and agency partners responsible for performing both testing, contact tracing, and ensuring the appropriate interventions are being taken by school communities.

“The Situation Room is the precise system we need to identify, trace, and treat positive cases within our school communities,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “My pledge is simple: every case will be met with swift and decisive action to keep transmission low and our kids and teachers safe.”

This unprecedented school year requires all hands on deck, and that’s exactly what we’ll have in the Situation Room, resulting in quick, decisive action for our schools and clarity and transparency for all families,” said **Schools Chancellor Richard A. Carranza**. “Our principals will now have a one-stop shop to raise concerns and receive rapid, coordinated responses that put the health and safety of our school communities first.”

“Keeping our students and teachers safe requires an unprecedented response to an unprecedented time. Through our multi-agency partnership we are ensuring a clear path of communication, decisiveness, and transparency to give Principals and school leaders in correct information they need in order to lead their communities as well as providing families and staff with the transparency and clarity of action they deserve. Our focus is the health and wellbeing of our school communities and we will achieve this together.” said **Buildings Commissioner Melanie E. La Rocca**.

Beginning today, school leaders can call the Situation Room if they receive notice from a staff member, student, or parent/family member of a positive COVID-19 test or if a student or staff member is isolating or sent home with symptoms. School leaders are encouraged to contact the Situation Room if they have any alerts, questions, or concerns related to responding to suspected or confirmed cases.

Upon reporting a possible case to the Situation Room, DOHMH will verify the case and, if needed, trigger a Test + Trace investigation. Case response will begin within three hours for NYC residents, with documented cases being confirmed as quickly as 15 minutes. Schools will communicate to all families and students within school anytime a case is laboratory confirmed and what next steps need to be taken - including whether or not students and staff need to quarantine or if the school will be temporarily shut down.

The Situation Room will be open Monday through Friday, 5:30 AM – 9:30 PM, and Sunday, 11:00 AM – 9:30 pm. Response to reported cases will follow the previously announced health and safety policies found [here](#).

In the interest of the health and safety of our entire city, DOHMH recommends that all New Yorkers get tested, whether or not you have symptoms or are at increased risk. School staff and students can receive free, expedited COVID-19 testing at [22 city-run testing locations](#). Testing is one component of stopping the spread that, when combined with social distancing, face coverings, proper hand hygiene, and staying home when you are sick, can significantly decrease the risk of transmission.

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