

July 13, 2020

Dear Families,

I hope you and your children are having a happy summer and staying healthy and safe. Summer can be an important time for resting and recharging—especially given the past few months, which have been so challenging for students, families, and staff alike.

Together, we have risen to meet that challenge—and your children have proven what they are capable of under remarkable circumstances. This summer, I urge you to keep the learning going!

We have an unconventional start to the school year ahead of us, and we know that all students will be best positioned for success if they remain socially and emotionally engaged, and actively involved in academic exploration over the next several weeks.

To support your children’s path to academic success, we have pulled together learning resources that will be both fun and intellectually stimulating for you and your family: Summer Reading, Summer Enrichment, College Bridge for All, and other supports that are ongoing throughout the summer months. Please read on to learn more—I encourage you to take advantage of as many of these as you can!

### Summer Reading

One of the best ways for children to keep their minds active and their creativity flowing is to continue to read throughout the summer. Since just the end of the school year, New York City students have accessed over 30,000 books and logged over 7,500 hours of reading with the eBook reader, Sora. The DOE is thrilled to continue to offer our 3K–12 students free access to hundreds of eBooks and audiobooks through Sora. We encourage you to read to your children and to encourage them to read independently. You just need your DOE account name and password to access the collections. Visit [schools.nyc.gov/summerreading](https://schools.nyc.gov/summerreading) to learn more.

In addition, the New York City School Library System has also curated a special collection of K–12 fiction and non-fiction eBooks for NYC public school students. Visit [galepages.com/nycdoe11/ebooks](https://galepages.com/nycdoe11/ebooks) to view the complete collection. To access the eBooks, please email [libraries@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:libraries@schools.nyc.gov) to receive a username and password.

### Summer Enrichment Challenges and Activities

Who says learning can’t take you to exciting new worlds? This summer, families can choose to virtually “visit” extraordinary people and places on more than 100 free virtual field trips. These virtual resources will help students to encounter remarkable events in history and learn more about fascinating topics: from animals to aerospace, New York City’s water supply to national parks, honeybees to hip-hop, and so much more. Our dozens of partners include Audubon New York, the Paley Center for Media, the Queens Botanical Garden, the Staten Island Zoo, the Wildlife Conservation Society. They can’t wait to help you explore the streets of New York and beyond.

The DOE is also hosting several citywide challenges for students to participate in during the weeks of July 13 through August 17. It doesn’t matter which borough you’re from or which grade you’re in: you can join a fun competition where you can show others your hard work and talent. These exciting summer challenges range from expressing yourself through dance or song, to creating a pixel portrait of yourself in Minecraft, to a New York City bird watching challenge.



You can find more information on Sora, virtual field trips, and the citywide challenges at [schools.nyc.gov/summerlearning](https://schools.nyc.gov/summerlearning).

### College Bridge for All

We're so proud of the graduating Class of 2020 – we joined forces with Jennifer Lopez, Alex Rodriguez, Lin-Manuel Miranda, and many more proud New Yorkers in celebrating them with a citywide virtual graduation ceremony at the end of June. If you missed the citywide celebration, you can view it at [nycclassof2020.com](https://nycclassof2020.com).

We are continuing to support our graduates along their next steps with free individualized coaching through the College Bridge for All program. From now through September, graduates have access to coaches who are trained to support them in their transition to all pathways, whether that's college, a career training program, a vocational program, service, or employment. Please encourage your graduate to fill out the Senior Contact Form at [bit.ly/classof2020nyc](https://bit.ly/classof2020nyc).

### Ongoing Supports

A quick reminder of these continuing services:

- **Summer School** runs through mid-August. For more information, visit [schools.nyc.gov/summerschool](https://schools.nyc.gov/summerschool).
- **Remote Learning.** Want to brush up on your digital skills? Visit [schools.nyc.gov/learn-at-home/technical-tools-and-support](https://schools.nyc.gov/learn-at-home/technical-tools-and-support) to learn more about Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and other remote-learning platforms.
- **“Let’s Learn NYC!”**, the educational public television program produced by WNET/THIRTEEN and the DOE, starts up again on July 13 and airs 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. (EST) through August 28 on channel 13 on your local television network. Let’s Learn NYC! episodes can also be watched online at [thirteen.org/programs/lets-learn-nyc/](https://thirteen.org/programs/lets-learn-nyc/). Episodes will continue to focus on foundational reading and writing skills, mathematics, social studies, and science for children in 3-K through second grade. Find more information here: [schools.nyc.gov/letslearn](https://schools.nyc.gov/letslearn).
- **Meal Hubs** provide free grab-and-go meals to all New Yorkers. Service is available from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Visit [schools.nyc.gov/freemeals](https://schools.nyc.gov/freemeals) for more information and to find the Meal Hub nearest you.
- **Regional Enrichment Centers** provide emergency childcare to the children of essential workers, and operate Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. through August. Find more information here: [schools.nyc.gov/RECs](https://schools.nyc.gov/RECs).

While you are making the most of summer, I know you are also eager to hear what education will look like for your child this fall. I want to thank the more than 400,000 families that completed our Return to School survey. Your feedback has been an important part of our decision-making. As always, the safety of our students, families, and staff members continues to be our first priority. We are closely tracking guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the State of New York, and the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.



Initial planning guidance has been shared with schools and families, and you can find the most up-to-date information at [schools.nyc.gov/returntoschool2020](https://schools.nyc.gov/returntoschool2020). Please know that our plans will be flexible as necessary, and we'll continue to adjust and update as the public health landscape continues to evolve, and as we get closer to reopening.

A safe return to schools in the fall will require a partnership not only with school leaders and educators but also with you, our families and students. I will continue to keep you informed as we receive the necessary guidance. I have said it before but it's no less true now: You are our most important partners and I am grateful for you today and every day.

Enjoy your summer. Please stay safe and healthy—and keep the learning going!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard A. Carranza'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'R' at the beginning.

Richard A. Carranza  
Chancellor  
New York City Department of Education