

May 6, 2020

Dear Families,

As we enter a new month, we continue to work to equip all of you, our families and our school communities, with the information, tools, and resources that you need for remote learning as we fight the COVID-19 pandemic together as a City. This has been an ongoing process, as we all blaze new trails in uncharted territory of fully remote learning. Throughout it all, the health, safety, and security of our communities has been our focus and priority.

As you may recall, security and privacy concerns for our students and staff, including unwanted and unsafe meeting interruptions, led us to prohibit the use of Zoom in early April. The decision was a difficult one, but after reviewing the risks, we know it was in the best interest of our school communities. As we indicated when we made this announcement in April, we would continue to engage Zoom and other online collaboration platforms to make sure that students, teachers, and everyone in the DOE community had safe, secure means to interact with each other that respected student privacy.

We are pleased to announce that now, following several weeks of collaboration with the company, we are now able to offer Zoom as a safe, secure platform for use across the DOE. All schools and students will have free access to a central, secure DOE account for learning and collaboration. Our work with Zoom included reaching an agreement about data encryption and storage, creating settings for our platform to make sure only DOE participants and specifically invited guests can enter classrooms or meetings and giving meeting hosts more control over their classrooms and meetings.

This means that:

- All staff and students must use the new DOE central account to access Zoom
- All DOE students and staff will be able to sign onto *nycdoe.zoom.us* with their DOE email and password, and will be able to use the full complement of features Zoom offers
- The central DOE account has been pre-arranged to ensure safety and security of all participants, which protects all members of our communities
- There is no cost for schools, teachers or service providers (for use of Zoom, as well as previously approved platforms like Microsoft and Google)
- We will add Zoom to all DOE-issued iPads

Please visit the Getting Started with Zoom page (<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learn-at-home/technical-tools-and-support/getting-started-with-zoom>) to learn more about accessing Zoom, including:

- How to access DOE Zoom
- New security settings and instructions for use
- Contacts for technical support for families

Our new agreement with Zoom will give your children another way to connect with their schools, teachers and school staff. We are excited to be able to have another safe and secure option for school communities to use during this unprecedented time.

As always, we are grateful for your flexibility and patience. We know how hard every one of you works to support your children's learning at home. And we are glad that you will now have access to another tool in Zoom that will help keep learning going.

Sincerely,



Richard A. Carranza
Chancellor
New York City Department of Education