



Binghamton City School District

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December 17, 2021

Dear Binghamton Families,

We will soon break for winter recess, and as we look ahead to 2022 and the remainder of our school year, we know we have more work to do. This is especially true in regards to school safety, in particular, at Binghamton High School.

We are focused on crafting a comprehensive action plan to ensure a better, safer BHS. We have spent the past two days engaging with BHS staff members, communicating with law enforcement, and identifying those involved in Wednesday's bathroom fire, and the subsequent fight that took place outside, so they may be held accountable. We are seeking input from BHS students and families, as their voices are integral to our plan as we move forward, and hosting a Zoom webinar for families on Monday evening to share the outcome from those surveys and present a draft of our reentry plan. Here, you may read [Principal Richman's letter to families](#), which details the steps we've already taken, and those we intend to take in the days and weeks ahead. Our commitment remains strong to creating a productive and healthy academic environment.

Despite recent challenges, I am so proud of the accomplishments in the classroom, on our fields, gyms and auditoriums throughout the district. With only three months since our return to full in-person instruction, our students have accomplished so much. And, be assured that there are wonderful things on the horizon for the Binghamton City School District as we head into 2022. Thank you to the voters who took to the polls on Dec. 14 to approve the district's upcoming capital project. This project will bring significant and needed upgrades to our buildings and facilities, resulting in no impact to the tax levy. The design phase of this work will begin in January, and construction will begin in summer 2023. In addition, our feasibility study work continues, with our community focus group meeting bi-weekly through the month of January. Exciting changes are ahead for our school facilities, and we are eager to watch them come to fruition.

Students will return to school on Monday, Jan. 3. Please note that there will be an early dismissal day on **Friday, Jan. 28**. This will only apply to elementary and middle school students, as high school students will be participating in Regents exams. Elementary schools will dismiss at 10:50 a.m., and middle schools will dismiss at 11:30 a.m. Lunch will be served prior to dismissal. Our faculty and staff will spend the afternoon engaged in professional learning around diversity, equity and inclusion.

On behalf of myself and the Board of Education, we extend our warmest wishes for a happy, healthy holiday season to all of our amazing students and families. As you celebrate, please continue to be cautious of the ongoing threat of COVID-19, as numbers in Broome County continue to climb. Let's continue to support one another in our commitment to health, safety, and student success. There is truly nothing more important than ensuring that your child feels comfortable, supported, and loved at school. I appreciate your partnership as we work to encourage a school community of proud and positive Patriots.

With Patriot Pride,

Dr. Tonia Thompson
Superintendent of Schools

Educating, empowering and challenging all students to become productive, global citizens through innovative approaches to learning.