

ELIMINATING THE LEARNING GAP  
FOR DISADVANTAGED URBAN CHILDREN

# ROSYALYN YALOW CHARTER SCHOOL REOPENING PLAN 2020-2021

## **Introduction**

To assure equity in education for all students, Rosalyn Yalow Charter School's reopening plan emphasizes returning all students to in-person instruction. The New York State Department of Health and the Governor's office prioritize in-person instruction for students in early grades, special education students, and English language learners. These sub-groups account for 100% of Rosalyn Yalow's student body.

On April 23, 2020, the Rosalyn Yalow Charter School was named one of 582 high-achieving Recognition Schools, including 37 charter schools, from across New York, placing Rosalyn Yalow among the top 13% of schools in New York State.

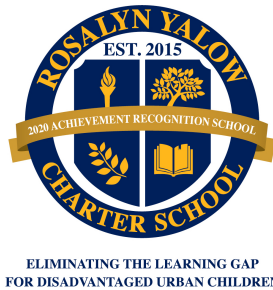
As our authorizer noted:

*"Recognition schools are those with high academic achievement and strong progress, that also perform acceptably for all subgroups for which they are accountable..."*

Yalow's in-person reopening plan reflects our continued commitment to reduce the achievement gap for all Rosalyn Yalow students, including special education students and English language learners. In-person learning is paramount to abating learning losses experienced by many of Rosalyn Yalow's current ELL students in both their English language development and their mastery of content area knowledge, as well as special education students.

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## **Vaccine Mandate for Teachers/Staff**

Beginning October 4, 2021, all Rosalyn Yalow teachers and staff are required to be fully vaccinated or submit a negative PCR COVID-19 test result weekly, each Friday, in order to enter the school.

## **COVID-19 Testing Program for Charter Schools**

Commencing October 25, 2021, Rosalyn Yalow Charter School began randomized COVID-19 testing of students. Testing is conducted by the NYCDOE in partnership with NYC Health + Hospitals and Test & Trace Corps. The number of students tested, the type of test used, and the frequency of testing will be equivalent to the random surveillance testing conducted in DOE schools. At this time, testing is scheduled weekly and will be conducted for 10% of unvaccinated students whose parents have provided the school with signed consent.

Parents may elect not to have your child tested. Consent forms in English, Spanish, French and Urdu were backpacked home to all families on September 21, 2021.

## **Social Distancing**

Rosalyn Yalow will maximize physical distance between people as much as possible when moving through the food service line and when masks are removed for eating and drinking. Cafeteria tables have been retrofitted with polycarbonate dividers. Rosalyn Yalow will prohibit sharing of food and beverages, unless students are members of the same household.

## **Face Coverings**

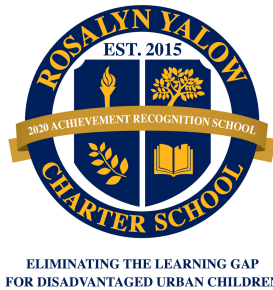
Adults and students must wear acceptable face coverings, excluding students who are unable to medically tolerate a face covering. Rosalyn Yalow will train all students, faculty, and staff on how to adequately put on, take off, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE.

Students, staff, and faculty should be prepared to don a face covering if another person unexpectedly cannot socially distance; for this reason, individuals must wear face coverings in common areas, such as entrances/exits, lobbies, hallways, and when traveling around the school. Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings and surgical masks that cover both the mouth and nose. (Masks with built-in respirator valves are not permitted because particulates can be dispersed into common areas.)

Rosalyn Yalow will operate on a *no mask, no entry* policy. Students must wear a face covering to ride the school bus and wear it while entering, exiting, and seated. The school will provide temporary masks when necessary, but all adults and children are advised to have their own masks.

## **Hygiene, Cleaning, and Disinfection**

Rosalyn Yalow will exceed hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Department of Health (DOH) to identify cleaning and disinfection frequency for each facility type. Rosalyn Yalow will provide and maintain hand-sanitizer stations throughout the school. Rosalyn Yalow will



conduct nightly and mid-day cleaning and disinfection for frequently touched surfaces, including desks, cafeteria tables, and door handles.

Rosalyn Yalow's disinfection protocol exceeds CDC guidelines by using UV-C lamps with ozone each evening for disinfecting every classroom and the cafeteria. UV-C lamps with ozone kill all airborne viral, bacterial, and fungal agents, the most germicidal effect in the ultraviolet spectrum.

Rosalyn Yalow will rely on NYCDOE Pupil Transportation to ensure that school bus companies and personnel follow all appropriate guidelines for cleanliness

### **Communications**

Rosalyn Yalow has posted completed reopening plans at the school and on the school website for faculty, staff, students, and parents/legal guardians to access. We have engaged with school stakeholders and community members when developing reopening plans, including parents, administrators, teachers, NYCDOH, NYC Department of Education Offices of School Health, School Food, and Pupil Transportation, the NYC Fire Department, and Montefiore Medical Center's School Health Program, and put in place a communications plan for parents/legal guardians, staff, and visitors. Communications will be provided in the language(s) spoken at home when necessary.

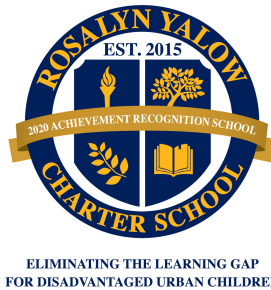
### **Return to School**

Daily temperature checks will be mandatory for every adult and child entering the building—contractors, vendors, and visitors—performed by Yalow administration or a nurse from the NYC Department of Health (DOH). Personnel performing in-person screening will follow DOH guidelines.

If there are no buses, all students should have one adult with them for arrival who must stay until the temperature screen takes place. Any individual who presents with a temperature greater than 100.0°F will not be allowed to enter the school, and will be immediately sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment.

Rosalyn Yalow will follow the DOH requirements for determining when individuals, particularly students, *who screen positive* for COVID-19 symptoms can return to school. Returning to school after quarantine requires documentation of evaluation by a healthcare provider and symptom resolution, or if COVID-19 positive, release from quarantine as required by DOH and NYSED. Current DOH guidelines specify that staff and students may return to school at the end of their *infectious period*, typically 10 days. The infectious period is when someone with COVID-19 may potentially spread the virus to others.

- The start date of the infectious period is two days before the person had their first symptom or two days before their positive COVID-19 test date if they did not have symptoms.
- The end date of the infectious period is 10 days after the person had their first symptom or 10 days after their COVID-19 test date if they did not have symptoms.
- The test date is the date when the sample for the test was taken, not the date when the test results were reported to the provider or patient.



Students and staff who have not developed symptoms they may return to school in coordination with NYC Test and Trace and the DOH.

### **Quarantine**

A student who screens positive upon arrival at school or becomes symptomatic while at school will be escorted to a designated isolation room and parents/guardians will be notified to pick the child up.

### **Ventilation**

Rosalyn Yalow will increase ventilation with outdoor air to the greatest extent possible (e.g., opening windows and classroom doors, maximizing airflow in building ventilation systems) while maintaining health and safety protocols.

### **Operational Activities**

All classrooms have been retrofitted with clear protective polycarbonate barriers to enable students to more safely sit at desks. Extra furniture has been removed from classrooms to create more space. The school will be cleaned nightly, in addition to using UV-C lamps in each room to eliminate any COVID-19 particulates.

We will limit the number of parents and visitors in the building. Parents may request virtual appointments with teachers.

### **Fire Safety Drills**

Rosalyn Yalow will continue to conduct mandatory fire and lockdown drills according to the existing statutory schedule. **Food Service**

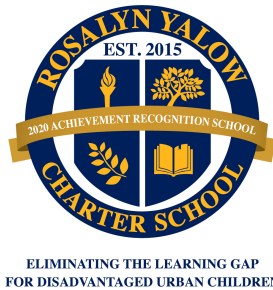
Rosalyn Yalow partners with the NYCDOE Office of Food and Nutrition Services to provide breakfast, lunch, and snacks to students in compliance with Child Nutrition Program requirements. Students are required to wear face coverings walking to and from the cafeteria. Cafeteria tables will be cleaned using disinfectant wipes between seating of student groups. The NYCDOE provides a certified food handler to distribute student meals and assist with cleaning cafeteria surfaces.

### **Transportation**

Yellow bus service is still erratic For those students in need of transportation, the NYC Office of Pupil Transportation has supplied Yalow with free student metro cards.

The school continues working with the Office of Pupil Transportation to ensure that students who are homeless, in foster care, or have disabilities receive safe and effective transportation as required by law (McKinney-Vento). Students must wear acceptable face coverings at all times on public and school buses (e.g., entering, exiting, and seated), and maintain appropriate social distancing, unless they are members of the same household.

Rosalyn Yalow will rely on NYCDOE Pupil Transportation to ensure that school bus companies and personnel follow all appropriate guidelines for safety.



## **Mental Health, Behavioral, Emotional Support Services and Programs**

The social-emotional health of our students is very important. Montefiore Medical Center’s School Health Program is partnering with Rosalyn Yalow to provide students and their families with mental health services, resources, and referrals to address mental health—behavioral, and emotional.

Montefiore will provide teletherapy via videoconference and eventually open a satellite clinic in Yalow’s 650 Grand Concourse campus. Parents must sign consent forms to begin teletherapy.

Rosalyn Yalow’s 10 in-house teacher-social workers in kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grades will support students having difficulty transitioning back to in-person instruction. Faculty and staff have been trained on how to talk with, and support, students during and after the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency.

## **Extracurriculars**

Yalow’s Saturday Academy closes the literacy gap by closing the gap between home and school. Saturday Academy combines personalized instruction, workshops training parents to teach reading at home, and professional development for teachers. Parents must attend 5 one-hour Family Workshops at Yalow long with their student about effective strategies for reading with their student. In order to participate in person, the parent/guardian must show proof of COVID-19 vaccination.

With the exception of Saturday Academy, schoolwide assemblies and family gatherings have been suspended until further notice.

## **Vulnerable Populations**

Rosalyn Yalow will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate all vulnerable populations, including students, faculty, and staff who might be at increased risk for COVID-19 and individuals who have reason to feel uncomfortable returning to an in-person instruction environment. Such accommodations may entail special PPE provided for students and/or staff populations. The school will communicate any policy or procedure changes accordingly.

## **Technology & Connectivity**

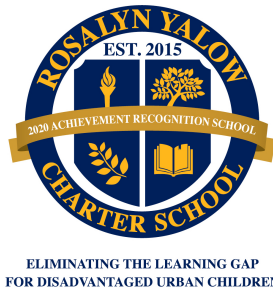
Rosalyn Yalow is providing Internet service and Chromebooks to those who need them. Every quarantined child will be able to participate in distance learning.

## **Budget & Fiscal**

Rosalyn Yalow will continue to meet existing state aid reporting requirements. All student data reporting to NYC and NYS, such as student attendance, annual report, and related fiscal data, will continue, except where modified by law, regulation, or executive order.

## **Attendance & Chronic Absenteeism**

Rosalyn Yalow will collect and report daily teacher/student attendance for both in-person and remote instruction and make daily phone contact with students not at the school.



## Teacher Evaluation System

Rosalyn Yalow’s goal is for all teachers to improve overall effectiveness in educating their students. The Rosalyn Yalow teacher evaluation system remains unchanged. Teachers are evaluated on their performance, student learning, data, lesson plans, and other important instructional attributes. Teachers are evaluated both formally and informally on a daily basis—including when instruction is conducted virtually. Data from evaluations guide teacher professional development.

## Special Education

18% of Rosalyn Yalow’s students are special education students, with IEPs specifying integrated co-teaching, SETSS, or related services. In-person instruction is a priority for high-need students with disabilities.

*Integrated Co-Teaching: Grades K-5* uses a model of 1 general education teacher, 1 teacher-social worker, and 1 special education teacher. The special education teacher supports group lessons in core subjects and provides small-group instruction in groups of no more than 4 (separated by

*SETSS Services:* Students will be provided their SETSS mandate daily as recommended by their IEPs.

*Related services:* Speech, occupational therapy, counseling, and physical therapy will be provided by outside specialists assigned by the DOE to our school based on the written mandates on a student’s IEP.

*Remote Special Education Services:* Integrated co-teaching services will be provided online. The teachers will support the students with modified lessons as specified.

*Remote SETSS services* will be provided by a special education teacher in a group session to meet the IEP recommendations.

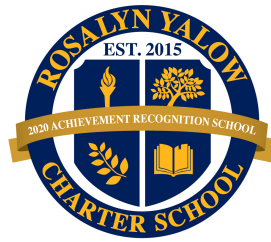
*Remote Related services:* Speech, occupational therapy, counseling, and physical therapy will be provided through teletherapy—by videoconference. Group sizes may vary, or the service may be individual if scheduling proves difficult.

## English as a New Language

32% of Rosalyn Yalow’s current students are English language learners (ELLs). Rosalyn Yalow conducted the NYC Home Language Identification Survey (HLIS) for each student entering Rosalyn Yalow within 30 days of the start of school—October 8, 2020—to identify newly enrolled ELL students, and will test all students who enroll thereafter.

*In-person learning is more effective than remote instruction to abating learning losses.*

Rosalyn Yalow will provide all communications to parents/guardians of ELLs in their preferred language to ensure that they have equitable access to critical information about their children’s education. As always, Rosalyn Yalow will ensure that all ELLs are provided with the required instructional units of study in their English as a New Language (ENL) program based on their most recently measured NYS English language proficiency level.



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## **Working with Health Authorities**

If a confirmed COVID-19 case arises within a classroom it may be necessary for a class to transition to remote learning. Classroom closure triggers, however, are always evolving and will be made in consultation with DOH.

## **Conclusion**

Rosalyn Yalow will fully implement its approved charter authorized by the New York State Board of Regents on March 2, 2020.

We believe that this reopening plan optimizes the health and safety of our students, teachers, and staff, given the challenges we all face due to COVID-19. We will closely monitor additional guidance and requests from all stakeholders and update our reopening plan accordingly. The most current reopening plan will always be posted on the school's website.