

Virtual Learning Series

Coffee Break: Meeting Families' Needs

Follow-up Questions and Responses

Question: As students transition back into at-school learning, whether in a month or in the new school year, are there needs educators or partner organizations need to consider proactively?

Any transition is a routine change for both students and families. Communication will be most important to make students and families feel comfortable and safe. Partner organizations should consider creating engagement opportunities with families to answer questions and learn how they can meet families where they are. It is likely that even when schools open, families will still be facing barriers from COVID-19, including lost wages, housing issues, and food insecurity. While students going back to school will help bring families back to “normal” schedules, the needs will likely still be elevated. Educators should continue engaging with families to support families' connection to necessary resources in the school and across the city. Collaboration among school staff will be especially important to ensure schools are meeting family and student needs.

Question: What are some ways that people are engaging their parents at their schools? Especially when parents are not computer literate and English is a second language?

Here are a few ways that Healthy and Ready to Learn (HRL) and our partners are engaging with families:

- HRL is hosting weekly workshops with our partners, Counseling in Schools. [Join our mailing list](#) to get more information and invite your school's families. These are also being broadcasted live on Facebook Live (@HRLNYC). They take place every Thursday at 3:00 PM EDT.
- Create a space for families to chat on a virtual platform like Zoom (video) or Whatsapp (text).
- Continue with “Family Engagement Tuesdays” and contact families to discuss a student's progress with virtual learning. [Positive messaging](#) is really encouraging for families who are having challenges with this transition.
 - Talking Point is a great online app that can translate into over 160 languages! (www.talkingpoint.org)
- Bring in partners for virtual discussions on relevant topics with families. This includes individuals that can support families' needs like access to food and technology issues.